

The Inevitable Journey
3 الرحلة المحتومة

الجنائز، الأحكام وبمظانث

Funerals

Regulations & Exhortations

2ND EDITION



محمد بن مصطفى الجبالي

Muhammad Mustafā al-Jibāly

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The Inevitable Journey - Part 3
الجنائز: أحكام وعظات
Funerals, Regulations & Exhortations

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ،
وإِنَّمَا نُوفِّيكَ أَجْرَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ،
فَمَنْ زُحْمِحْ مِنَ النَّارِ وَأُدْخِلَ الْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ
وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ ﴿١٨٥﴾
آل عمران ١٨٥

«Every soul will taste death. And only on Resurrection Day will you be given your full compensation. Whoever is removed from the Fire and admitted to Jannah has surely attained success. And what is the life of this world except the enjoyment of delusion. »

[Āl ‘Imrān 3:185]

الرَّحْلَةُ الْمَحْتَمَةُ - الْجُزْءُ الثَّلَاثُ
THE INEVITABLE JOURNEY - PART 3

الْجَنَائِزُ: أَحْكَامٌ وَعِظَاتٌ
FUNERALS
REGULATIONS & EXHORTATIONS

Second Edition

مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ مُصْطَفَى الْجِبَالِيِّ

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مَنْشُورَاتُ الْكِتَابِ وَالسُّنَّةِ

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS v

PRELUDE xv

Opening Sermon	xv
Defining Our Mission	xvii
1. Correcting Our Beliefs and Practices (xviii)	
2. Inviting to the True <i>Dīn</i> (xix)	
3. Warning Against Deviant Beliefs and Practices (xx)	
4. Purifying the Sunnah (xx)	
5. Liberating the Islāmic Thought (xx)	
6. Presenting the Islāmic Solution (xxi)	
Conclusion (xxii)	
Technicalities	xxii
Transliteration (xxii)	
Translating and Referencing Qur'ān and <i>Ḥadīth</i> (xxiv)	
Notable Utterances (xxv)	

PREFACE xxvii

The Inevitable Journey	xxvii
This Book	xxvii
General Description (xxvii)	
Sources and References (xxviii)	
Practical Considerations (xxx)	
Additional Material (xxx)	
Understanding Issues of <i>Ghayb</i>	xxx
Acknowledgements	xxxi

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION 1

A Lively Lesson from Death	1
A Taste that No Human-Being Is Spared (1)	
No Hiding from Death (3)	
Preparing for the End	4

Distractions of the Worldly Life (4)	
Rest in Death? (5)	
Ready for Death? (6)	
Important Provisions from This Life (6)	
Frequent Remembrance of Death (7)	
Beware of Their Ways	8
Sincerity in Performing Acts of Worship	9
A Word Concerning <i>Bid'ahs</i>	12

CHAPTER 2

ARRIVAL OF DEATH 15

What a Dying Person Should Do	15
Good Thoughts about the Lord (15)	
Between Fear and Hope (15)	
Loving to Meet Allāh (16)	
Returning the People's Rights (17)	
Final Instructions and Will (19)	
What to Do for a Dying Person	19
Prompting with the <i>Shahādah</i> (19)	
Avoiding Sinning and Innovations (22)	
Presenting Islām to Non-Muslims (22)	
What to Do When a Person Dies	23
Closing the Eyes (23)	
Supplication (24)	
Covering the Entire Body (25)	
Hurrying with the Funeral (25)	
Burial in the Place of Death (26)	
Paying off the Debts (27)	
Miscellaneous Innovations	32

CHAPTER 3

GRIEVING & MOURNING OVER THE DEAD 33

Submission to Allāh's Decree	33
Patience (33)	
<i>Ihtisāb</i> (34)	
Patience and <i>Ihtisāb</i> for Losing a Child (35)	
<i>Istirjā'</i> (36)	
Permissible Acts of Grieving	38

Uncovering and Kissing the Dead Person (38)	
Weeping (39)	
Mourning	40
Definition (40)	
Mourning up to Three Days (41)	
A Widow's Mourning (42)	
Mourning for Less than Three Days (42)	
Men's Mourning? (45)	
Woes of Wailing	45
Wailing Is an Act of <i>Jāhiliyyah</i> (46)	
The Prophet's Covenant Against Wailing (46)	
Wailing Is an Act of Disbelief (47)	
No Exception (47)	
Punishment in the Grave and the Hereafter (47)	
Reason for the Punishment (49)	
Announcing Death	49
Defining <i>Na'y</i> (49)	
Prohibition of <i>Na'y</i> (50)	
Permissible forms of <i>Na'y</i> (50)	
Other Prohibited Acts of Grieving and Mourning	53
Hitting the Body and Tearing the Clothes (53)	
Shaving the Hair (54)	
Disheveling the Hair and Scratching the Body (54)	
Growing the Beard as a Sign of Mourning (54)	
Condolence	55
Virtue of Consoling the Muslims (55)	
A Show of Kindness and Concern (55)	
What to Say? (56)	
Duration of the Consolation (58)	
Making Food for the Deceased's Family (61)	
Rubbing over an Orphan's Head (62)	
Designating a Place for Receiving Condolences? (62)	
Question/Answer Summary	63
Miscellaneous Innovations	64
Dealing with the Body (64)	
Announcement of Death (65)	
Grieving and Mourning (65)	
Condolences (66)	

Various Acts (67)

CHAPTER 4

SIGNS OF GOOD AND EVIL ENDS 69

Introduction	69
Signs of a Good End	69
Evidences for Good Signs	70
Saying the <i>Shahādah</i> (71)	
Sweat on the Forehead (72)	
Dying on Friday (72)	
Martyrdom on the Battlefield (73)	
Plague (75)	
Abdominal Illness (76)	
Pleurisy (76)	
Defending One's Property (77)	
Guarding in Allāh's Way (78)	
Dying While Doing a Good Deed (78)	
Execution by an Oppressive Ruler (80)	
Praise by Righteous Muslims (80)	
Miscellaneous Signs (82)	
Untrue Signs	86
Signs of an Evil End	86
Evidences for Bad Signs	87
Dying While in a State of Disbelief (87)	
Dying while Performing an Act of Disobedience (88)	
Committing Suicide (88)	
Refusing to Say the <i>Shahādah</i> at the Time of Death (90)	
Addiction to Alcohol (91)	
Ill-Treating the Parents and Lacking <i>Ghayrah</i> (92)	
Sudden Death (92)	
Dying Before Repenting from a Major Sin (92)	

CHAPTER 5

WASHING THE BODY 95

Reports from the Sunnah	95
Washing Zaynab, the Prophet's Daughter (96)	
Washing Allāh's Messenger (97)	
Covering the 'Awrah	98

Special Cases	101
Washing a Spouse (101)	
Washing a Man in a State of <i>Ihrām</i> (101)	
Washing Martyrs? (102)	
Reward for Washing a Muslim	104
Taking a Bath after Washing a Body	105
Question/Answer Summary	106
Practical Procedure	108
Funeral Homes, Legal Documents, and Fees (108)	
Washing Supplies (109)	
Washing Sequence (110)	
Miscellaneous Innovations	111

CHAPTER 6

SHROUDING THE BODY 113

Recommended Shrouds	113
A Good Shroud (113)	
Number of Sheets (115)	
The Shroud's Color (116)	
Perfuming the Shroud (117)	
Moderateness in the Shroud (118)	
Special Cases	119
Shrouding a Man in a State of <i>Irām</i> (119)	
Lack of a Good Shroud (119)	
Shrouding Martyrs (121)	
Additional Shrouding for Martyrs (121)	
Shortage of Shrouds (123)	
Reward for Shrouding a Muslim	125
Question/Answer Summary	125
Miscellaneous Innovations	126

CHAPTER 7

CARRYING AND FOLLOWING THE *JANĀZAH* 129

Ruling	129
Carrying the <i>Janāzah</i>	130
The Bier (130)	
The Bearers (131)	
How to Carry the Body (131)	

<i>Wuḍūʿ</i> for The Bearers (132)	
Virtue and Rewards in Following a <i>Janāzah</i>	132
Reminding of the Hereafter (132)	
Two Great Chunks (132)	
Among the Qualities Leading to <i>Jannah</i> (134)	
Recommended Acts	134
Hurrying with the <i>Janāzah</i> (134)	
Walk or Ride? (138)	
Standing for the <i>Janāzah</i> ? (139)	
Prohibited and Disapproved Acts	140
Wailing and Fire (140)	
Other Sounds (141)	
Women Walking with the <i>Janāzah</i> ? (143)	
Transporting the <i>Janāzah</i> in a Car? (143)	
Transporting the <i>Janāzah</i> in a Closed Coffin (144)	
Question/Answer Summary	145
Miscellaneous Innovations	145

CHAPTER 8

THE *JANĀZAH* PRAYER 147

Ruling	147
Exceptions to the Ruling	148
A Child Dying before Puberty (148)	
An Early Fetus (150)	
Martyrs (151)	
Praying <i>Janāzah</i> for the Sinful	153
Sinful Muslims (153)	
Those Who Have Repented (154)	
Those Who Die While in Debt (155)	
Non-Muslims	157
Hypocrites (157)	
Disbelievers (160)	
<i>Janāzah</i> Prayer in Absentia	162
Where to Perform the <i>Janāzah</i> Prayer	165
At the <i>Muṣallā</i> (165)	
In the <i>Masjid</i> (168)	
Amidst the Graves? (168)	
In a Graveyard (168)	

At a Specific Grave (169)	
Preparing for the Prayer	171
<i>Wuḍū'</i> (171)	
Praying in <i>Jamā'ah</i> (172)	
Who Leads the Prayer? (173)	
Number of People in the Prayer (175)	
Arranging the Rows (176)	
Position of the <i>Imām</i> (178)	
Position of the Deceased's Head (178)	
Multiple Bodies (179)	
Prohibited Times (181)	
Mentioning the Deceased's Name (182)	
Manner of Performing the Prayer	182
Raising the Hands (185)	
Supplications (191)	
The <i>Taslīm</i> (196)	
Voice Level in <i>Taslīm</i> (197)	
Coming Late to Join the <i>Janāzah</i> Prayer (198)	
Question/Answer Summary	199
Practical Procedure	201
Miscellaneous Innovations	202
CHAPTER 9	
BURIAL 205	
Ruling	205
Dealing with Disbelievers	205
Burial (205)	
Separate Graveyards (208)	
Burial Places	209
Graveyards (209)	
The Location of Death (210)	
The Battlefield (210)	
In The Houses? (211)	
Burial Time	212
Hurrying the Burial (212)	
The Three Prohibited Times (212)	
Burial During the Night (212)	
Grave Description	214

Wide, Deep, and Good (214)	
A Hole vs. a <i>Laḥd</i> (215)	
Practical Considerations (217)	
Who Lowers the Body	218
Men (218)	
Relatives (219)	
Husband (220)	
No Intercourse (221)	
Burying the Body	222
Entering From the Feet-Side (222)	
How to Place the Body (224)	
What to Say (224)	
Multiple Bodies in One Grave (225)	
Throwing Three Handfuls (227)	
Disinterment (227)	
Practical Considerations (228)	
After the Burial	229
Supplicating (229)	
Reminding the People Near the Grave (229)	
Raising the Grave a Hand-Span (240)	
Mounding the Grave (240)	
Marking the Grave (241)	
Spreading Pebbles over a Grave? (241)	
Taking a Bath (241)	
Wrong Acts Related to Making Graves	242
Plastering a Grave (242)	
Building-up a Grave (242)	
Raising a Grave (242)	
Writing on a Grave (244)	
Ways of the Disbelievers (244)	
Question/Answer Summary	245
Miscellaneous Innovations	247
Before the Burial (247)	
During the Burial (247)	
After the Burial (248)	

CHAPTER 10**VISITING THE GRAVES 249**

Ruling	249
Women's Visits to the Graves	251
Ruling (251)	
Frequent Visits (254)	
Visiting Disbelievers' Graves	255
Ruling (255)	
Purpose of the Visit (256)	
What to Say? (256)	
Etiquettes of the Visit	257
Purposes (257)	
Quietness (257)	
Supplicating (258)	
Raising the Hands with the Supplication (261)	
Facing the <i>Qiblah</i> While Supplicating (261)	
Wrong Acts Related to the Visit	262
Saying Things That Would Anger Allāh (262)	
Facing the Graves in Prayer (262)	
Praying among the Graves (263)	
Making the Graves Places of Prayer (264)	
Gathering or Celebrating by the Graves (267)	
Traveling to Visit the Graves (268)	
Reciting Qurʾān over the Graves (269)	
Sacrificing Animals Near the Graves (270)	
Walking with Shoes among the Graves (271)	
Sitting or Standing on a Muslim's Grave (272)	
Going to Toilet among the Graves (273)	
Placing Flowers, Branches, or Leaves on a Grave (273)	
Lighting Candles by a Grave (275)	
Mutilating or Disturbing the Bodies (275)	
Question/Answer Summary	277
Miscellaneous Innovations	278
Specific Days and Times (278)	
Unsubstantiated Rituals (279)	
Praying and Reciting Qurʾān (280)	
The Prophets and Righteous (280)	
Various Acts (282)	

REFERENCES 283**ARABIC TERMS 285**

A: Glossary of Common Terms	285
B: Index	294

PRELUDE

Opening Sermon

إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ لِلَّهِ، نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ،
وَتَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا.
مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ، وَمَنْ يَضِلَّ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ.

Al-ḥamdu lillāh. Indeed, all praise is due to Allāh. We praise Him and seek His help and forgiveness. We seek refuge with Allāh from our souls' evils and our wrong doings. He whom Allāh guides, no one can misguide; and he whom He misguides, no one can guide.

وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ.
وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ.

I bear witness that there is no (true) god except Allāh — alone without any partners. And I bear witness that Muḥammad (ﷺ) is His 'abd (servant) and messenger. ¹

«يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ،
وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ» آل عمران ١٠٢

«O you who believe! Revere Allāh the right reverence, and do not die except as Muslims.» ²

1 The above two paragraphs, together with the following three portions of Qurʾān, are called *Khuṭbat ul-Hājah* (the Sermon of Need). Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) often started his speeches with this sermon, and was keen on teaching it to his companions. The *ḥadīths* in this regard are recorded by Muslim, Abū Dāwūd, an-Nasāʾī, and others, and are narrated by Ibn Masʿūd, Ibn ʿAbbās, and others (رضي الله عنهم). A full discussion of the various reports of this sermon is provided by al-Albānī in his booklet, "*Khuṭbat ul-Hājah*", published by al-Maktab ul-Islāmī, Beirut.

2 *Āl ʿImrān* 3:102.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ، وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا، وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً، وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ، إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا﴾ النساء ١

«O people! Revere your Lord who has created you from a single soul, created from it its mate, and dispersed from both of them many men and women. Revere Allāh through whom you demand things from one another, and (cherish the ties of) the wombs. Indeed, Allāh is ever-watchful over you.»¹

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا ۖ يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ، وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ، وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا﴾ الأحزاب ٧٠-٧١

«O you who believe! Revere Allāh and say just words. He will then rectify your deeds and forgive your sins. He who obeys Allāh and His Messenger has certainly achieved a great victory.»²

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الْحَدِيثِ كِتَابُ اللَّهِ،
وَحَيْرَ الْهَدْيِ هَدْيُ مُحَمَّدٍ (ﷺ)، وَشَرَّ الْأُمُورِ مُحْدَثَاتُهَا،
وَكُلُّ مُحْدَثَةٍ بِدْعَةٌ، وَكُلُّ بِدْعَةٍ ضَلَالَةٌ، وَكُلُّ ضَلَالَةٍ فِي النَّارِ.

Verily, the best speech is Allāh's (ﷻ) speech; the best guidance is Muḥammad's (ﷺ) guidance; and the worst matters (in creed or worship) are those innovated (by the people), for every innovated matter is a *bid'ah* (prohibited innovation), and every *bid'ah* is an act of misguidance leading (those who start it) into the Fire.³

1 An-Nisā' 4:1.

2 Al-Aḥzāb 33:70-71.

3 Muslim and others have recorded from Jābir Bin 'Abdillāh (رضي الله عنه) that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) used to start his speeches with this paragraph.

Defining Our Mission

Our goal in our works is propagating the true *Da'wah* that derives from Allāh's (ﷻ) Book and His Messenger's (ﷺ) *Sunnah*. This is a duty that every Muslim should cherish. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ، وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ﴾^١ آل عمران ١٠٤

«Let there arise from you a group of people inviting to the good, enjoining the right and forbidding the wrong. Those will be the successful.»¹

This *Da'wah* has two fundamental aspects:

- (a) *Taṣfiyah*: Cleansing and purifying the Islāmic beliefs and practices.
- (b) *Tarbiyah*: Guiding and educating the people according to the purified teachings.

Allāh (ﷻ) indicates that this was the Prophet's (ﷺ) message:

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ، يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ﴾^٢ الجمعة ٢

«It is He who has sent among the unlettered a Messenger from themselves reciting to them His *āyāt*, purifying them, and teaching them the Book and Wisdom — although they were before in clear deviation.»²

1 Āl 'Imrān 3:104.

2 Al-Jumu'ah 62:2.

This is also an obligation on every Muslim according to his ability, as Allāh (ﷻ) commands:

﴿وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ، وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ﴾ المائدة ٢

«Help one another in righteousness and piety; and do not help one another in sinning and transgression.»¹

Our mission is then to propagate the Islāmic teachings in various areas as follows:

1. CORRECTING OUR BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

We should revere, study, comprehend, and implement the noble Qurʾān and the Prophet's authentic Sunnah in accordance with the understanding and practice of the righteous *salaf*: the *ṣaḥābah* and their true followers, who are described in the following:

﴿وَالسَّابِقُونَ السَّابِقُونَ أُولَئِكَ مِنْ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُمْ
بِإِحْسَانٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي تَحْتِهَا
الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا، ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ﴾ التوبة ١٠٠

«The first to embrace Islām among the *Muhājirūn* and the *Anṣār*, and also those who followed them in the best way, Allāh is pleased with them and they with Him. He has prepared for them gardens beneath which rivers flow: They will abide therein forever. This is the supreme success.»²

Thus, the guidance of the *salaf* is the only true guidance. Furthermore, the beliefs of the *ṣaḥābah* are the only acceptable beliefs:

1 *Al-Mā'idah* 5:2.

2 *At-Tawbah* 9:100.

﴿فَإِنْ آمَنُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا ءَامَنْتُمْ بِهِ فَقَدِ اهْتَدَوْا﴾ البقرة ١٣٧

«So if they believe as you believe ¹, they are indeed truly guided.» ²

Allāh warns against following any guidance other than the Messenger's (ﷺ) and his companions' (رضي الله عنهم):

﴿وَمَنْ يُشَاقِقِ الرَّسُولَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ الْهُدَىٰ،
وَيَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ سَبِيلِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ، نُؤَلِّهِ مَا تَوَلَّىٰ، وَنُصَلِّهِ جَهَنَّمَ،
وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا﴾ النساء ١١٥

«Whoever opposes the Messenger, after guidance has become clear to him, and follows other than the way of the believers ³, We will give him what he has chosen and let him into Hell — What an evil destination!» ⁴

2. INVITING TO THE TRUE *Dīn*

We should contribute to educating and guiding the Muslims to adopt the true *Dīn*, act according to its teachings, and adorn themselves with its virtues and ethics.

We should also contribute to inviting the non-Muslims to the unadulterated truth of Islām.

This is the only way for any person to attain Allāh's acceptance and achieve happiness and glory. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَالْعَصْرُ ۚ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ ۚ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا
الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ﴾ العصر ٣-١

«By time, the human being is surely in loss, except

1 The address here is to the *ṣaḥābah* (رضي الله عنهم).

2 *Al-Baqarah* 2:137.

3 The description “believers” here applies first and foremost to the *ṣaḥābah* (رضي الله عنهم).

4 *An-Nisā* 4:115.

for those who believe, do righteous deeds, enjoin upon one another the keeping to truth, and enjoin upon one another patience (in adversity).»¹

3. WARNING AGAINST DEVIANT BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

We should caution the Muslims and exhort them against any beliefs or practices alien to the pure teachings of Islām, such as *shirk* and *bid'ahs*.

4. PURIFYING THE SUNNAH

We should contribute to cleansing the Sunnah of weak and fabricated narrations. Wrong beliefs and practices deriving from weak reports have marred the beauty of Islām and prevented the Muslims' advancement.

The duty of purifying the Sunnah is so vital that the Messenger (ﷺ) praised those who perform it by saying:

«يحمل هذا العلم من كل خلف عدوله، ينفون عنه
تحريف الغالين، وانتحال المبطلين، وتأويل الجاهلين.»

«This knowledge will be carried by the trustworthy ones of every generation — they will expel from it the alterations made by those going beyond bounds, the false claims of the liars, and the false interpretations of the ignorant.»²

5. LIBERATING THE ISLĀMIC THOUGHT

Guided by the Islāmic principles, we should contribute to reviving the

1 *Al-'Aṣr* 103:1-3.

2 Recorded by Ibn 'Adiyy, al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, Ibn 'Asākir, and others. It is reported from a number of *ṣaḥābah* including Abū Hurayrah, Ibn Mas'ūd, and Anas (رضي الله عنه). All of its reports have various levels of weakness, but they add up collectively to make this *ḥadīth ḥasan*, as is indicated by al-Albānī in *Mishkāt ul-Maṣābīḥ* (no. 248), and as expressed by al-Ḥalabī in *al-Ḥiṭṭah* (p. 70).

unobstructed Islāmic thought and opposing stubborn adherence to *mathhabs* and prejudiced loyalty to parties. Neglecting this in the past has caused rust to dwell on the hearts and minds of Muslims, diverting them from the pure original sources of Islām, and causing them to deviate from the honest Islāmic brotherhood called to by Allāh (ﷻ):

﴿وَأَعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا﴾ آل عمران ١٠٣

«And hold fast, all together, by the rope of Allāh, and be not divided among yourselves.»¹

And by His Messenger (ﷺ):

﴿وكونوا، عبادَ الله، إخواناً﴾

«Be, worshipers of Allāh, brothers.»²

6. PRESENTING THE ISLĀMIC SOLUTION

We should contribute to providing realistic Islāmic solutions to contemporary problems, and strive toward resuming a true Islāmic way of life and establishing a true Islāmic society governed by Allāh's law. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَأَنْ أَحْكَمَ بَيْنَهُمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ﴾ المائدة ٤٩

«Hence, judge between them in accordance with what Allāh has revealed, and do not follow their errant views.»³

We call upon all the Muslims to support us in carrying out this noble trust. This will surely elevate and honor us and spread the eternal message of Islām all over the earth, as is Allāh's true promise:

1 *Āl 'Imrān* 3:103.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

3 *Al-Mā'idah* 5:49.

«هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَىٰ الدِّينِ
كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ» ﴿الصف ٩﴾

«It is He who has sent His Messenger with Guidance and the Religion of Truth, in order to make it prevail over all (false) religion, however hateful this may be to the pagans.»¹

CONCLUSION

This work is, therefore, a humble response to our realization of a great responsibility: the responsibility to help bring forth before the English-speaking public writings that refine Islām and present it pure and simple, as close as possible to the way it was understood and practiced by its early righteous pioneers — the *salaf*.

Technicalities

TRANSLITERATION

We make a serious attempt to limit the use of transliterated Arabic terms to the following two situations:

- a) There is no English expression that can reflect the same meaning as the original term.
- b) The Arabic term is of such importance that it is essential to familiarize the readers with it.

At the end of this book, we have included a glossary defining common Arabic terms that fulfill the above criteria. In addition, we have included an index of the Arabic terms that are more pertinent to this current work, indicating the page on which they have been defined.

Except for proper nouns, transliterated Arabic terms are *italicized*. In general, the rules of English pronunciation can be applied. The

¹ *Aṣ-Ṣaff* 61:9.

following table includes additional symbols employed in this book to help pronounce the Arabic terms.

Symbol	Stands for	English Equivalent Sounds
ā, Ā	(ا) <i>Alif</i> (long vowel a)	Mostly: <u>M</u> an, <u>s</u> ad. At times: <u>F</u> ather, <u>h</u> ard, <u>g</u> od.
ū, Ū	(و) <i>Wāw</i> (long vowel u)	<u>R</u> oot, <u>s</u> oup, <u>f</u> lute.
ī, Ī	(ي) <i>Yā'</i> (long vowel i)	<u>S</u> eed, <u>l</u> ean, <u>p</u> iece, <u>r</u> ec <u>e</u> ive.
’	(ء) <i>Hamzah</i>	The first consonant vocal sound uttered when saying: <u>a</u> t, <u>i</u> t or <u>o</u> h.
Th, th	(ث) <i>Thā'</i>	<u>T</u> hree, <u>m</u> oth.
H, h	(ح) <i>Hā'</i>	No equivalent. Produced in the lower throat, below “h”. Resembles the sound produced after swallowing.
Kh, kh	(خ) <i>Khā'</i>	No equivalent. Produced in the back of the mouth and top of the throat.
<u>Th</u> , <u>th</u>	(ذ) <i>Thāl</i>	<u>T</u> here, <u>m</u> oth <u>e</u> r.
Ṣ, ṣ	(ص) <i>Ṣād</i>	A deeper “s” sound. Somewhat close to the “sc” in “ <u>m</u> usc <u>l</u> e”.
Ḍ, ḍ	(ض) <i>Ḍād</i>	Sounds deeper than a “d”. Produced by touching the tongue to the mouth's roof.
Ṭ, ṭ	(ط) <i>Ṭah</i>	Similar but deeper than a “t”.
Z, z	(ظ) <i>Zah</i>	A deeper <u>thāl</u> , produced by touching the tip of the tongue to the back of the front teeth.

Symbol	Stands for	English Equivalent Sounds
‘	(ع) ‘Ayn	Produced in the bottom of the throat, underneath “h”.
Gh, gh	(غ) Ghayn	A gurgling sound produced in the back of the mouth, just above the <i>khā</i> . Similar to the “R” in some French accents.
Q, q	(ق) Qāf	Somewhat similar to the “c” in “coffee”.

TRANSLATING AND REFERENCING QUR’ĀN AND ḤADĪTH

The Qur’ān contains Allāh’s exact words that cannot be precisely translated into other languages because of possible misinterpretations and limited human understanding. One can at best translate the meanings as understood by the Muslim scholars. This is what is attempted here. When citing Qur’ānic *āyah*(s), the Arabic text is presented, followed, between double angle quotation marks (⟨⟩), by the English meaning in **boldface**. This is then followed by a footnote specifying the *sūrah*’s name and number, and the number(s) of the *āyah*(s) cited.

Similarly, when citing a *ḥadīth*, the Arabic text for the Prophet’s (ﷺ) words is presented, followed by its meaning, in **boldface**, between single angle quotation marks (◊). If the *ḥadīth* contains a supplication or exaltation, we generally also include a full transliteration of its text. This is then followed by a footnote specifying the *ḥadīth*’s location in the compilations of *ḥadīths*. A *ḥadīth* recorded by al-Bukhārī or Muslim is automatically considered authentic. Otherwise, the footnote would usually indicate its degree of authenticity as verified by al-Albānī (رحمته الله), and a reference to the works where he made such a verification.

NOTABLE UTTERANCES

Out of love, appreciation, gratitude and other noble feelings, a Muslim is encouraged to utter certain phrases at the mention of Allāh, His messengers, the angels, the *ṣaḥābah*, or other righteous Muslims. We present these phrases in condensed Arabic calligraphy as follows:

Phrase	Mentioned with	Transliteration	Meaning
	Allāh's Name	<i>Subhānahū wa ta'ālā.</i>	He is exalted above weakness and indignity.
	Allāh's Name	<i>'Azza wa-jall.</i>	He is exalted and glorified.
	Allāh's Name	<i>Jalla jalāluh.</i>	Exalted is His glory.
	Muḥammad and other prophets	<i>Šalla 'llāhu 'alayhi wa sallam</i> ¹ .	May Allāh's peace and praise be on him.
	Prophets and angels	<i>'Alayh is-Salām.</i>	Peace be on him.
	A male companion	<i>Raḍiya 'llāhu 'anhu.</i>	May Allāh be pleased with him.
	A female companion	<i>Raḍiya 'llāhu 'anhā.</i>	May Allāh be pleased with her.
	Two companion	<i>Raḍiya 'llāhu 'anhumā.</i>	May Allāh be pleased with them.
	More than two companions	<i>Raḍiya 'llāhu 'anhum.</i>	May Allāh be pleased with them.

1 Uttering this is sometimes described as, "saying *ṣalāh* upon the Messenger".

Phrase	Mentioned with	Transliteration	Meaning
ﷻ	A past scholar or righteous Muslim.	<i>Raḥimahu 'Llāh.</i>	May Allāh have mercy on him.

When coming across any of these symbols, the reader is advised to utter the complete phrase in order to obtain the reward of saying the appropriate *thikr* or *du'ā*.

PREFACE

The Inevitable Journey

We inevitably go through the journey starting in this life and extending into the grave, before our final abode in the hereafter. In the process, we pass through stages of sickness, death, and the intermediate life in the grave (*al-Barzakh*). These are the subjects that “The Inevitable Journey” discusses over a sequence of titles:

1. Sickness, Regulations & Exhortations
2. The Final Bequest, Islāmic Inheritance and Will
3. Funerals, Regulations & Exhortations
4. Life in *al-Barzakh*

We present the subject matter of this series from the authentic texts of the Qur’ān and Sunnah, guided in their explanation by the understanding of eminent *‘ulamā’*. We strive to eliminate all elements of superstition and falsehood that have traditionally crept into this side of the human life in various cultures.

All books in this series are meant to be useful handbooks in their subject matter. Thus, whenever possible, the material is presented in table format for easy reference, discussion, and study.

This Book

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

This book is the third in the series. It deals with death, which is an unavoidable occurrence that marks the end of every human’s worldly life.

There are many regulations established in the Sunnah regarding

death. They guide a Muslim in matters of mourning, preparing the body, walking with the funeral procession, digging the grave, burial, visiting the graves, and so on. In this book, we present a detailed coverage of those matters, and include summaries and diagrams to help with the practical procedures.

Thus, this book can be used as a fairly complete reference and handbook on this important subject. We believe that it is the most complete book on funerals, based on authentic texts, in the English language. All praise and thanks are due to Allāh (ﷻ).

SOURCES AND REFERENCES

The main source and backbone for this book is al-Albānī's, "*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz*". The work done on that book is as follows:

1. A nearly complete translation has been included, as is shown in the table below.
2. The material was reorganized in accordance with the logical flow of this book (see the table).
3. Analysis of the authenticity of narrations was summarized and moved from the main text to footnotes.
4. Some of the lengthy discussions (especially in Chapters 17 and 18 of that book) have been summarized for space limitations, and because they are not directly relevant to this book.
5. The innovations at the end of that book have been reduced to the ones most commonly known or practiced in our time, and were placed, together with some additional ones that were brought to our attention, at the end of the relevant chapters of this book.

Chapter Number(s) in <i>Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz</i>	Location in This Work
1	Chapter 2 (Some in Parts 1 and 2 of the <i>Inevitable Journey</i> series)
2, 3	Chapter 2
4, 5, 6, 7	Chapter 3
8, 9	Chapter 4
10	Chapter 5 (Section on <i>Niyyah</i> : Chapter 1)
11	Chapter 6
12	Chapter 7
13	Chapter 8
14	Chapter 9
15	Chapter 3
16	Chapter 11 of <i>Life in al-Barzakh</i>
17	Chapter 10
18	Chapter 10 (Some in Chapter 9)
Appendix (Innovations)	Its introduction: Chapter 1; Rest: Divided among various chapters

In our attempt to make this a complete handbook, we gathered as many authentic reports as possible relating to every stage of the discussion. Thus, in addition to *Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz*, other references and sources have been used, many of which are included in the "References" list at the end of this book.

The second edition of this books only contains minor corrections and changes to the first edition.

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In many places of this book, we have include sections, tables, or paragraphs, providing practical guidelines. The purpose of this is to enable the reader to apply the texts to real-life situations and, in some cases, to deal with certain laws or restrictions applicable in some countries. Our reference for the latter is mostly our observations of funeral practices in various parts of the United States, as well as summary sheets published by some funeral-home associations.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL

During the process of making this book and lecturing over its content, the author had the chance of preparing stand-alone summaries and handouts. These can be useful as study aids or overhead transparencies for discussion groups. Although no full package of these handouts has been prepared to accompany this book, we will be happy to accommodate specific requests in their regard.

Understanding Issues of *Ghayb*

Many situations and concepts discussed in this series (The Inevitable Journey) relate to *ghayb*¹. In dealing with such issues, we should apply the following important rules:

- a) Any matter of *ghayb* that is mentioned in the Qurʾān or authentic *ḥadīths* should be accepted and believed in without any doubt.
- b) The texts concerning *ghayb* have real meanings that are within the human reason, and at least competent Muslim *ʿulamāʾ* understand them. Otherwise, Allāh would not have addressed the people with them.
- c) Unless there is authentic evidence to the contrary, *ghayb*

1 Matters that are beyond our human perception.

incidents should be understood and interpreted in accordance with the literal apparent meaning of the texts.

- d) The physical laws of this life cannot always be applied to matters of *ghayb*. So, instead of hastily concluding that a particular incident does not make sense, we should realize that it is governed by different laws and should be accepted without *kayf* — without imposing our limited knowledge attempting to interpret or misinterpret it.

Acknowledgements

All praise and thanks are due to our Lord (ﷻ) who facilitated the completion of this work. May He further reward all the Muslims who helped and supported this effort in various ways. In particular, may Allāh (ﷻ) reward my *shaykh* and teacher, Muḥammad Nāṣir ud-Dīn al-Albānī whose works have benefited today's Muslims beyond description, Ziyād Yamūt and Muṣṭafā Rajab for their continual encouragement, 'Alī al-Ḥalabī for clarifying some questions, 'Abdullāh al-Jibālī for helping in designing the cover, Sundus al-As'ad and Ālā' al-Jibālī for proofreading the manuscript, Mu'īn ud-Dīn 'Alī Khān for collecting information about the American funeral standards and regulation, and the attendees of my Friday-night study circle at Arlington, Texas, for providing useful questions and input.

We ask Allāh (ﷻ) to make this humble effort helpful and fruitful to the Muslims, forgive our shortcomings, purify our work from hypocrisy and conceit, and accept it from us.

Our Lord, forgive us and all of the believers, and bestow Your peace and praise upon our Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ).

Muhammad al-Jibālī
15 Rabī'ath-Thānī 1424
15 June 2003

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A Lively Lesson from Death

A TASTE THAT NO HUMAN-BEING IS SPARED

Death is a definite occurrence that every human will face and taste its bitterness. Every moment brings us closer to it, as Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ، وَإِنَّمَا تُوَفَّوْنَ أُجُورَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، فَمَنْ زُحِرَ عَنِ النَّارِ وَأُدْخِلَ الْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ، وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ﴾ آل عمران ١٨٥

«Every soul will taste death. And only on the Day of Resurrection will you be given your full compensation. Whoever is removed from the Fire and admitted to *Jannah* has surely attained success. And what is the life of this world except the enjoyment of delusion.»¹

No human being is spared the agonies of death — not even the prophets and messengers. Allāh (ﷻ) says to his Messenger (ﷺ):

﴿وَمَا جَعَلْنَا لِبَشَرٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ الْخُلْدَ، أَفَإِن مَّتَّ فَهُمْ الْخُلْدُ وَاِنَّا لَنَرَاهُمْ جَاهِلِينَ﴾
﴿كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ، وَنَبْلُوكُم بِالشَّرِّ وَالْخَيْرِ فِتْنَةً، وَإِلَيْنَا تُرْجَعُونَ﴾ الأنبياء ٣٤-٣٥

«We have not granted immortality to any human

1 *Āl 'Imrān* 3:185.

before you. So if you die, would they be eternal? Every soul will taste death, and We try you (people) with both evil and good, and to Us you will be returned.»¹

‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that in his final illness, Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) had near him a can of water. He would dip his hand into the water, wiped his face with it, and say:

« لا إله إلا الله. إن للموتِ سكرات. »

⟨There is no (true) god except Allāh. Verily, death has states of drunkenness.⟩

After repeating this a number of times, he stretched his hand and said:

«اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَأَرْحَمْنِي، وَأَلْحِقْنِي بِالرَّفِيقِ الْأَعْلَى.»

⟨O Allāh! Forgive me, have mercy on me, and let me join the highest company.⟩

The Prophet (ﷺ) then passed away, and his hand fell limp.²

The taste of the death agonies takes a long time to recede, even for righteous people. Jābir (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«حدثوا عن بني إسرائيل ولا حرج، فإنه فيهم الأعاجيب.»

⟨Take liberty in relating things from the Children of Isrā’īl, because amazing incidents happened among them.⟩

Then he (ﷺ) related:

«خرجت طائفة من بني إسرائيل حتى أتوا مقبرة لهم من مقابرهم،

1 *Al-Anbiyā’* 21: 34,35.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī.

فقالوا: "لو صلينا ركعتين، ودعونا الله عز وجل أن يخرج لنا رجلاً ممن قد مات نسأله عن الموت." ففعلوا، فبينما هم كذلك، إذ أطلع رجل رأسه من قبر من تلك المقابر، خلاسي، بين عينيه أثر السجود. فقال: "يا هؤلاء ما أردتم إلي؟ فقد مت منذ مائة سنة، فما سكنت عني حرارة الموت حتى كان الآن. فادعوا الله عز وجل لي يعيدني كما كنت."»

«A (righteous) group of the Children of Isrā'īl went out to one of their graveyards. They said (to each other), "Let us pray two *rak'ahs* and then implore Allāh (ﷻ) to raise for us a man from among the dead to ask him about death." They did that, and after a little while, a man raised his head from one of the graves. He was brown in color, with the trace of *sujūd* between his eyes. He said, "O people! What do you want from me? I have died one hundred years ago, and the heat of death did not subside from me until just now. Supplicate to Allāh (ﷻ) for me to restore me (dead) as I was."» ¹

NO HIDING FROM DEATH

At our appointed time, death will reach us regardless of where we are. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿أَيْنَمَا تَكُونُوا يُدْرِكُكُمُ الْمَوْتُ، وَلَوْ كُنْتُمْ فِي بُرُوجٍ مُّشِيدَةٍ﴾ النساء ٧٨

«Wherever you may be, death will overtake you, even if you were in strongly elevated fortresses.» ²

Even if we try to run away from death, it will meet us head-on.

1 Recorded by Aḥmad (in *az-Zuhd*), 'Abd ul-Ḥamīd (in *al-Muntakhab*), and Ibn Abī Dāwūd (in *al-Ba'ith*). Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 2926).

2 *An-Nisā'* 4:78.

Allāh (ﷻ) says:

«قُلْ إِنَّ الْمَوْتَ الَّذِي تَفِرُّونَ مِنْهُ فَإِنَّهُ مُلْقِيكُمْ، ثُمَّ تُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ
عِلْمِ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨﴾ الجمعة ٨

«Say: Verily, the death from which you flee will meet you; then you will be returned to the Knower of both the *ghayb* and the witnessed worlds, and He will tell you what you have done.»¹

At the appointed time that Allāh (ﷻ) had set for our death, no one can stop our soul from leaving our body:

«فَلَوْلَا إِذَا بَلَغَتِ الْحُلُقُومَ ﴿٦﴾ وَأَنْتُمْ حِينِيذٍ تَنْظُرُونَ ﴿٧﴾ وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ
إِلَيْهِ مِنْكُمْ وَلَكِنْ لَا تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٨﴾ فَلَوْلَا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ غَيْرَ مَدِينِينَ ﴿٩﴾
تَرْجِعُونَهَا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿١٠﴾ الواقعة ٨٣-٨٧

«Then why, when it (the soul) reaches the throat, and you at that moment are looking on, and We (Our angels) are nearer to him than you, but you do not see, then why do you not — if you are exempt from the recompense — bring it back (to the body) if you were truthful?»²

Preparing for the End

DISTRACTIONS OF THE WORLDLY LIFE

Are we prepared for that certain day? Are we busy getting ready for it as we would for an inescapable travel or an impinging test, or are we too engrossed in our worldly pleasures? Allāh (ﷻ) says:

1 Al-Jumu'ah 62:8.

2 Al-Wāqī'ah 56:83-87.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تُلْهِكُمْ أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُكُمْ عَن ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ، وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَٰلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ ﴿٩﴾ وَأَنْفِقُوا مِن مَّا رَزَقْنَاكُم مِّن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِيَّ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ، فَيَقُولَ رَبِّ لَوْلَا أَخَّرْتَنِي إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ قَرِيبٍ فَأَصَّدَّقَ وَأَكُن مِّنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿١٠﴾ وَلَن يُؤَخَّرَ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِذَا جَاءَ أَجْلُهَا، وَاللَّهُ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١١﴾﴾ المنافقون ٩-١١

«O you who believe! Let not your properties or your children divert you from the remembrance of Allāh; whoever does that, they are the losers. And spend of that with which We have provided you, before death comes to one of you and he says, “My Lord! If only You would defer me for a little while, then I should give *ṣadaqah* and be among the righteous.” But Allāh defers no soul when its appointed term arrives. Allāh is well acquainted with all that you do.»¹

REST IN DEATH?

When death overtakes us, will we find rest in it, or will others find rest in our departure? Abū Qatādah Bin Rabī (رضي الله عنه) reported that a funeral passed by Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ), and he said, «مُسْتَرِيحٌ أَوْ مُسْتَرَاخٌ مِنْهُ.» <(He) rested, or others rested from him.> He was asked, “What do you mean by, ‘resting or rested from him’?” He replied:

«العبد المؤمنُ يستريحُ من نَصَبِ الدنْيَا. والعبد الفاجر يستريحُ منه العبادُ والبلادُ والشجرُ والدوابُّ.»

<A believing servant rests from the worries of this life. But as for a corrupt person, the people, land, trees, and animals rest from him.>²

1 Al-Munāfiqūn 63:9-11.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

READY FOR DEATH?

Some people claim that they wish for death and are ready for it. But is this a true claim, and can they maintain their claim when death approaches them? Allāh (ﷻ) blames some people of the past who made such claims by saying:

﴿وَلَقَدْ كُنْتُمْ تَمَنَّوْنَ الْمَوْتَ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَلْقَوْهُ، فَقَدْ رَأَيْتُمُوهُ
وَأَنْتُمْ تَنْظُرُونَ﴾ آل عمران ١٤٣

«You did indeed wish for death before you met it.
Now you have seen it openly with your own eyes.»¹

This surely indicates a lack of *īmān* in Allāh and His promises. A true believer is ready for any kind of test that may afflict him for the cause of Allāh — unlike those whom Allāh (ﷻ) describes as:

﴿وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَقُولُ ءَامَنَّا بِاللّٰهِ، فَإِذَا أُوذِيَ فِي اللّٰهِ جَعَلَ فِتْنَةَ النَّاسِ
كَعَذَابِ اللّٰهِ، وَلَئِنْ جَاءَ نَصْرٌ مِنْ رَبِّكَ لَيَقُولُنَّ إِنَّا مَعَكُمْ. أَوَلَيْسَ اللّٰهُ
اللّٰهُ بِأَعْلَمَ بِمَا فِي صُدُورِ الْعٰلَمِينَ﴾ العنكبوت ١٠

«There are among the people those who say, “We believe in Allāh.” But if they are harmed for the sake of Allāh, they consider the people’s harm similar to Allāh’s punishment; and if victory comes from your Lord, they would say, “Verily we were on your side!” Is not Allāh best aware of what is within the breasts of the peoples?»²

IMPORTANT PROVISIONS FROM THIS LIFE

Let us then be sincere and truthful with ourselves. This life is but a test, so let us live it with this knowledge, and take from it what we

1 *Āl ‘Imrān* 3:143.

2 *Al-‘Ankabūt* 29:10.

need for our next life. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا،
وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفُورُ﴾ ◉ الملك ٢

«The One who created death and life, that He may test you as to which of you is best in deed. And He is the Almighty, the Forgiving.»¹

FREQUENT REMEMBRANCE OF DEATH

Death should thus be a constant reminder for us, and a means of controlling our desires and restraining our greed. Anas and Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«أكثرُوا ذَكَرَ هَاذِمِ اللذَاتِ: الموت، فإنه لم يذكره أحد في ضيقٍ
من العيش إلا وسَّعه عليه، ولا ذكره في سَعَةٍ إلا ضيَّقها عليه.»

«Frequently remember the destroyer of pleasures, death. None would remember it while in a tightness of living but it would expand it for him, and none would remember it while in an ease of living but it would tighten it for him.»²

Remembering death maintains for a person a balanced view of life. He would not go to the extreme of despair in the face of afflictions, nor would he go to the extreme of arrogance and carelessness when favored by an easy life.

Furthermore, when a person remembers death while performing an act of worship, he would be more likely to perfect that act. Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

1 Al-Mulk 67:2.

2 Recorded by Ibn Hibbān, al-Bayhaqī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī in *Irwā' ul-Ghalīl* no. 682.

«أذكر الموت في صلاتك، فإن الرجل إذا ذكر الموت في صلاته
لحريٌّ أن يحسنَ صلاته، وصل صلاةَ رجل لا يظنُّ أن يصليَ
صلاةً غيرها. وإياكَ وكلَّ أمرٍ يُعتذرُ منه.»

«Remember death in your prayer. Verily, when a man remembers death in his prayer, he is apt to perfect his prayer. Pray the prayer of a man who does not expect to pray another prayer. And avoid every matter that would require an apology.»¹

Beware of Their Ways

Since death is a common factor to all humans, funeral practices and procedures are present in all cultures. Many of those practices are devised by people who do not fear Allāh, have no concern about what pleases or angers Him, or derive their practices from false and deviant religions.

As foretold by Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ), many Muslims have the inclination to follow the footsteps of other nations, even if that leads to a certain destruction! This is very apparent in many of the funeral rites and practices. We sadly find that, instead of adhering to the texts of the Qur'ān and Sunnah, many Muslims import practices from the Christian, Jewish, or even pagan cultures!

In the folds of this book, we sometimes warn about practices that involve imitation of the disbelievers. However, every Muslim should work on developing a sense of identity, uniqueness, and honor in regard to Islām. He should be ever-alert in regard to any action departing from the Sunnah and straying into the prohibited territory of imitating the *kuffār*.

The differences in funeral procedures between the Muslims and non-Muslims, practical though they may be, are surely based on deep conceptual and faith-based differences. What is the purpose of a funeral service? In contrast to what we mentioned earlier in this

1 Recorded by ad-Daylamī (in *Musnad ul-Firdaws*). Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 2839).

chapter, and what will be reemphasized throughout this book, look at how a non-Muslim answers this question:

“For those who are left behind, a funeral provides a place for family and friends to gather and to reminisce; an opportunity to celebrate the life and accomplishments of a loved one; a chance to say goodbye; and the focal point from which the healing process can begin. The funeral identifies that a person’s life has been lived, **not that a death has occurred**. It is also important to notify the community that this person has died. There are people beyond the immediate family who have the right to grieve a death. For instance, what would have happened in the United States if there had not been a funeral for President John F. Kennedy?”¹

Do you see in this any mention of Allāh or the hereafter? Do you see any hint of lessons to be learnt by the survivors to take heed and improve the way they conduct their lives? How then could the disbelievers’ practices be of any good? We indeed praise our Lord Allāh (ﷻ) for being so merciful to us as to guide us to His Straight Path.

Sincerity in Performing Acts of Worship

There are many acts of worship relating to death that will be discussed in this book. We find it important to emphasize a very vital point applicable to all of them: sincerity. To many people, most of the funeral rituals are mere formalities that have to be done to please a friend or exchange favors with a relative. This attitude is very dangerous and may result in Allāh’s anger and punishment.

All acts of worship, including *janāzah* rituals, must be performed with a sincere and pure intention, directing them solely to Allāh and seeking His pleasure through them. In the following, we present a brief

1 From a question/answer sheet published by the “International Cemetery and Funeral Association, Reston, Virginia”.

summary of Islāmic injunctions in this regard.

Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ أَنَّمَا إِلَهُكُمْ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ، فَمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا، وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا﴾ ﴿الكهف ١١٠﴾

«Say: I am only a human being like you. It is revealed to me that your god is one God. So whoever wishes to meet his Lord, let him do righteous deeds, and associate none in the worship of his Lord.»¹

Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ﴾ ﴿البينة ٥﴾

«And they were not commanded except to worship Allāh with sincerity.»²

‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

﴿إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ، وَإِنَّمَا لِكُلِّ أَمْرٍ مَا نَوَى، فَمَن كَانَ هِجْرَتُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ، فَهَجْرَتُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ، وَمَن كَانَ هِجْرَتُهُ إِلَى دُنْيَا يُصِيبُهَا أَوْ أَمْرَةٍ يَنْكِحُهَا، فَهَجْرَتُهُ إِلَى مَا هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِ.﴾

«(Good) Deeds are only by (correct) intentions, and a person only receives (a reward) for what he intended. Thus he whose migration was (intended to be) for Allāh and His Messenger, his migration is (accepted as being) for Allāh and His Messenger. And he whose migration was for the sake of a worldly benefit, or a woman to marry, his migration

1 Al-Kahf 18:110.

2 Al-Bayyinah 98:5.

is (recorded as being) for that which he intended.> ¹

Ubayy Bin Ka'b (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«بشّر هذه الأمة بالسناء، والتمكين في البلاد، والنصر، والرفعة في الدين،

ومن عمل منهم بعمل الآخرة للدينا، فليس له في الآخرة نصيب.»

<Give to this ummah the tidings of glory, dominance over the lands, victory, and supremacy in religion; any of them who does the deeds of the hereafter for the sake of the worldly life, will have no share in the hereafter.> ²

Abū Umāmah (رضي الله عنه) reported that a man came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and asked him, “If a man goes to fight (for Allāh’s cause) seeking the reward as well as praise (from the people), what does he get?” He (ﷺ) replied, «لا شيء.» **<He gets nothing.>** He repeated his question three times, and each time Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) replied, «لا شيء.» **<He gets nothing.>** Then he said:

«إن الله لا يقبل من العمل إلا ما كان له خالصاً، وأبتغي به وجهه.»

<Verily, Allāh only accepts the deeds that are done purely for Him, and are done for the sake of His Face.> ³

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«قال الله عز وجل: أنا أغنى الشركاء عن الشرك، فمن عمل لي

عملاً أشرك فيه غيري فأنا منه بريء، وهو للذي أشرك.»

<Allāh (ﷻ) says, “Among the partners (that the people join with Allāh), I am in least need of shirk

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

2 Recorded by Aḥmad, Ibn Ḥibbān, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* 66).

3 Recorded by an-Nasā'ī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* 66).

(deeds not done purely for Allāh); thus whoever performs for Me a deed but joins others with Me, I (totally) disown it, and it is only for the one whom he joined as partner.”¹

A Word Concerning *Bid'ahs*

The general masses of Muslims in our time are far from the true and sound understanding of Islām deriving from Allāh’s Book and His Messenger’s Sunnah. This paramount ignorance has resulted in numerous wrong beliefs and practices (or *bid'ahs*), which are usually based on weak *ḥadīths*, misinterpretations, imitation of disbelievers, non-Islāmic cultural values, etc.

The *bid'ahs* are most apparent in situations of death and funerals, where the people often take more liberty in doing things that they presume are justified by their situation of grief and mourning. By this, they miss great chances of increasing their record of good deeds, settling instead for additional acts of disobedience!

Because of this, we have included at the end of almost every chapter a section warning of some of the common *bid'ahs* related to that chapter. Realizing that there are many more *bid'ahs* practiced by people of various cultures — to an extent that makes it impossible for us to encompass them, the list that we provide should be merely taken as a limited number of mind-opening examples.

In addition, we find it necessary to provide here a brief overview of the meaning and definition of *bid'ahs*.

Several *ḥadīths* of the Prophet (ﷺ) indicate that every *bid'ah* is an act of misguidance. From detailed studies of the subject of *bid'ahs*, and based on a large amount of evidence, we summarize in what follows the basic criteria that, if a certain action fulfills, it would be classified among the abhorred *bid'ahs*:

- a) Any statement, action, or belief that conflicts with the Sunnah.

¹ Recorded by Ibn Mājah. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* 66).

- b) Any act that had been prohibited by Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) — even if it is done with the intention of pleasing Allāh.
- c) Any act that requires proof with a clear text or command, but has none. There is an exception to this in acts that were done continuously by a *ṣaḥābī* without objection from other *ṣaḥābah*.
- d) Any practice of the disbelievers that has become associated with an Islāmic act of worship.
- e) Any act that some scholars — especially those of later generations — state, without an evidence, that it is recommended.
- f) Any act of worship that is only described in a weak or fabricated *ḥadīth*.
- g) Excessiveness in worship.
- h) Any act of worship that is unrestricted by Allāh, but people restrict it to a specific place, time, description, or number.

We ask Allāh, the Almighty, to guide all the Muslims to His Book and the Sunnah of His Messenger in all the affairs of their life — He is All-Hearing, and He answers the supplications.

CHAPTER 2

ARRIVAL OF DEATH

What a Dying Person Should Do

As much as his senses allow, a dying person should try to conclude his life with good deeds that will guarantee for him *Jannah* and save him from all forms of punishment. As it becomes harder for him to maintain a balanced mode of action and speech, those attending him should help him in that.

GOOD THOUGHTS ABOUT THE LORD

A dying person should have good thoughts and hopes toward his Lord (ﷻ), remembering His great generosity, and looking forward to His blessings and forgiveness. Jābir Bin ‘Abdillāh (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Messenger (ﷺ) said:

« لا يموتن أحدكم إلا وهو يحسن الظن بالله تعالى . »

«None of you should die without having good expectations in Allāh (ﷻ).»¹

BETWEEN FEAR AND HOPE

A dying believer should be in a state of combined fear and hope: fearing Allāh's punishment for his sins, and hoping for His mercy. Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Messenger (ﷺ) visited a young man who was dying. He asked him, « كيف تحبك؟ » «**How do you feel?**» He replied, “By Allāh, O Messenger of Allāh, I have hope in Allāh, and I fear my sins.” The Messenger (ﷺ) said:

1 Recorded by Muslim and others.

«لا يجتمعان في قلب عبدٍ في مثل هذا الموضع
إلا أعطاه الله ما يرجو وأمنه مما يخاف.»

«These two qualities do not dwell together in a person's heart in this situation (of death) but Allāh (ﷻ) will grant him what he hopes, and save him from what he fears.»¹

LOVING TO MEET ALLĀH

As death approaches, a true believer will have a strong desire to meet his Lord (ﷻ). This desire will overcome any other attachment to life or fear of death.

Shurayḥ Bin Hāni' reported that Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) said that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«من أحب لقاء الله أحب الله لقاءه، ومن كره لقاء الله كره الله لقاءه.»

«Whoever loves meeting Allāh, Allāh loves meeting him. And whoever hates meeting Allāh, Allāh hates meeting him.»

So Shurayḥ went to 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها) and told her, "O Mother of the Believers! Abū Hurayrah is relating a *ḥadīth* from Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) that, if true, means that we are lost!" She said, "A loser is only one who has been declared so by Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ). What is he relating?" He related to her the *ḥadīth*, adding, "None of us does not hate death!" She explained:

"Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) has indeed said this, but did not mean what you think. He It meant that, when the gaze becomes fixed, the chest rattles (as the soul departs), the skin tightens, and the fingers tremble — at that point, **whoever loves meeting Allāh, Allāh loves meeting him. And whoever hates meeting Allāh,**

1 Recorded by at-Tirmithī and Ibn Mājah; Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 11).

Allāh hates meeting him.»¹

Previously, ‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) had a similar misunderstanding that was clarified for her by Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ). ‘Ubādah Bin aṣ-Ṣamit (رضي الله عنه) reported this same *ḥadīth*, adding that on hearing this from Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ), ‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) exclaimed, “Do you mean hating death? We all hate death!” The Prophet (ﷺ) responded:

«ليس كذلك! ولكن المؤمن إذا حضره الموت، بُشِّرَ بِرَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ
وَرِضْوَانِهِ وَكَرَامَتِهِ، فليس شيءٌ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ مِمَّا أَمَامَهُ. فَأَحَبُّ
لِقَاءِ اللَّهِ، وَأَحَبُّ اللَّهِ لِقَاءَهُ. وَإِنِ الْكَافِرَ إِذَا حُضِرَ بُشِّرَ بِعَذَابِ
اللَّهِ وَسَخَطِهِ وَعُقُوبَتِهِ، فليس شيءٌ أَكْرَهَ إِلَيْهِ مِمَّا أَمَامَهُ،
فَكَرِهَ لِقَاءَ اللَّهِ، وَكَرِهَ اللَّهُ لِقَاءَهُ.»

⟨This is not what it means! When death comes to a believer, he is given the tidings of Allāh’s mercy, acceptance and *Jannah*. Nothing is then dearer to him than what lies ahead of him: he loves meeting Allāh, and Allāh loves meeting him. But when death comes to a disbeliever, he is given the tidings of Allāh’s anger, torture and punishment. Nothing is then more hateful to him than what lies ahead of him: he hates meeting Allāh, and Allāh hates meeting him.⟩²

RETURNING THE PEOPLE’S RIGHTS

A dying person should fulfill his obligations toward other people before death overtakes him. If he cannot fulfill that by himself, he should make arrangements and give instructions for doing so. Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

«من كانت عنده مظلمة لأخيه من عرضه أو ماله فليؤدّها إليه،
 قبل أن يأتي يوم القيامة لا يُقبل فيه دينارٌ ولا درهم، إن كان
 له عملٌ صالحٌ أخذَ منه، وأُعطِيَ صاحبه، وإن لم يكن له عملٌ
 صالحٌ أخذَ من سيئاتِ صاحبه فحُمِلت عليه.»

«Whoever had oppressed his brother in his reputation or wealth, let him remedy that before Judgment Day comes. Because no *dirham* or *dīnār* will be accepted then: if he has good deeds, they will be taken from him and given to his brother; and if he does not have good deeds, he will be burdened with his brother's sins.»¹

Also, Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) asked, «أتدرون ما المفلس؟» «Do you know who is truly ruined?» To which the *ṣahābah* (رضي الله عنهم) replied, “A ruined man among us is one who does not possess money or property.” He (ﷺ) then informed:

«إن المفلسَ من أمتي من يأتي يومَ القيامةِ بصلاةٍ وصيامٍ وزكاةٍ،
 ويأتي قد شتمَ هذا، وقذفَ هذا، وأكلَ مالَ هذا، وسفكَ دمَ هذا،
 وضربَ هذا. فيُعطَى هذا من حسناته، وهذا من حسناته. فإن
 فَنِيَتْ حسناته قبلَ أن يُقضى ما عليه، أخذَ من خطاياهم،
 فطُرِحَ عليه، ثمَّ طُرِحَ في النار.»

«Indeed, a ruined person of my *ummah* is one who comes on the Day of Resurrection with prayers, fasting, and *zakāh*. However, he had abused so and so, defamed so and so, unlawfully consumed the wealth of so and so, shed the blood of so and so, and beaten so and so. Thus, this and that will be given from his good deeds. If his good deeds finish before

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and others.

fulfilling what he owes, he will be burdened with their sins, then hurled into the Fire.> ¹

FINAL INSTRUCTIONS AND WILL

A dying person should make sure that his will is current and to his liking. In addition, he should give final instructions to his family and friends and other people around him, reminding them of Allāh, and directing them to take care of fulfilling his obligations after his death.

Jābir Bin ‘Abdillāh (رضي الله عنه) reported that on the eve of the battle of Uḥud, his father summoned him and instructed him:

“I expect to be among the first of the Prophet’s (ﷺ) companions to be killed tomorrow. I am not leaving after me any soul more dear to me than you — except for Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ). I owe some debts, so pay them off. And take good care of your brothers and sisters.” ²

A detailed discussion in this regard is included in Part 2 of “The Inevitable Journey”.

What to Do for a Dying Person

When death approaches a person, those in his presence are required to do certain things, as described in the following paragraphs.

PROMPTING WITH THE *SHAHĀDAH*

He should be gently but firmly prompted to utter the *Shahādah* (*Lā ilāha illa ‘Llāh* — there is no true god except Allāh). This is called *talqīn*. Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī, Abū Hurayrah, and others (رضي الله عنهم) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

¹ Recorded by Muslim.

² Recorded by al-Bukhārī.

«لَقِّنُوا مَوْتَاكُمْ "لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ"، مَنْ كَانَ آخِرَ كَلَامِهِ "لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ" عِنْدَ الْمَوْتِ دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ يَوْمًا مِنَ الدَّهْرِ، وَإِنْ أَصَابَهُ قَبْلَ ذَلِكَ مَا أَصَابَهُ.»

«Prompt your dying ones to say “*Lā ilāha illa ’Llāh.*” Anyone who concludes his speech at the time of death with “*Lā ilāha illa ’Llāh*” will enter *Jannah* one day, regardless of what happens to him prior to that.»¹

Ibn Mas‘ūd (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لَقِّنُوا مَوْتَاكُمْ: لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، فَإِنْ نَفَسَ الْمُؤْمِنُ تَخْرُجُ رَشْحًا، وَنَفْسَ الْكَافِرِ تَخْرُجُ مِنْ شِدْقِهِ كَمَا تَخْرُجُ نَفْسُ الْحِمَارِ.»

«Prompt your dying ones to say “*Lā ilāha illa ’Llāh.*” Indeed, a believer’s soul’s departure is (easy) like sweating (because of this statement), whereas a disbeliever’s soul departs from the side of his mouth (filthy and noisy) like a donkey’s soul.»²

‘Uthmān (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«مَنْ مَاتَ وَهُوَ يَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ "لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ" دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ.»

«Anyone who dies knowing that, “*Lā ilāha illa ’Llāh*” enters *Jannah*.»³

Jābir Bin ‘Abdillāh (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«مَنْ مَاتَ لَا يَشْرِكُ بِاللَّهِ شَيْئًا دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ.»

«Anyone who dies joining none with Allāh enters

1 Recorded by Muslim, Abū Dāwūd, Ibn Ḥibbān, and others.

2 Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr*. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 2151).

3 Recorded by Muslim and Aḥmad.

Jannah.¹

The prompting is not done by merely uttering the *Shahādah* in the presence of the dying person so that he would hear it. Rather, he should be commanded and helped to utter it himself. Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) visited a dying man of the Anṣār and said to him:

« يا خال، قل لا إله إلا الله. »

«O my maternal uncle! Say, “*Lā ilāha illa 'Llāh.*”»

The man asked, “Am I your maternal or paternal uncle?” The Prophet (ﷺ) replied, «خال.» **Maternal.** He asked, “Is it good for me to say, ‘*Lā ilāha illa 'Llāh*’?” He (ﷺ) replied, «نعم.» **Yes!**²

It is apparent from this *ḥadīth* that the man was slightly at loss of reason, as he was more interested in knowing his relationship to the Prophet (ﷺ) than saying the *Shahādah*. Yet, the Prophet (ﷺ) was keen to make him say it, and in the process answered his other question.

SUPPLICATING AND SAYING GOOD THINGS

When visiting a dying person, one should supplicate sincerely for him and say good things that give him glad tidings. This is covered in our discussion of sickness³. Umm Salamah (رضي الله عنها) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

« إذا حضرتم المريض أو الميت فقولوا خيراً، فإن الملائكة يؤمنون
على ما تقولون. »

«When you are present with a sick or dying person, say good things, because the angels endorse what you say (by saying *āmīn*).»

Umm Salamah (رضي الله عنها) added that when Abū Salamah (رضي الله عنه) died, she went

1 Recorded by Muslim and Aḥmad.

2 Recorded by Aḥmad; verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 20).

3 Part I of "The Inevitable Journey" series (Sickness: Regulations & Exhortations).

to the Prophet (ﷺ) and told him, “O Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ)! Abū Salamah has passed away.” He instructed her to say:

«اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِهِ، وَأَعْقِبْنِي مِنْهُ عَقْبِي حَسَنَةً.»

«O Allāh, forgive me and him, and succeed him for me with that which is good.»

She concluded, “Allāh then succeeded him for me with one who is better for me than him: Muḥammad (ﷺ)!”¹

AVOIDING SINNING AND INNOVATIONS

People present with a dying person should avoid acts of disobedience and practices that are not substantiated by the authentic Sunnah.

Examples of such innovations are recitation of *sūrat Yā-Sīn* (36), and turning the dying person to face the direction of *Qiblah*. Even though there are no authentic *ḥadīths* supporting them, these acts are frequently done by the relatives and friends of dying people.

Zur‘ah Bin ‘Abd ir-Raḥmān reported that he was visiting Sa‘īd Bin al-Musayyib (رضي الله عنه) during his fatal illness. Also present was Abū Salamah Bin ‘Abd ir-Raḥmān. Sa‘īd fainted at some point, and Abū Salamah ordered that his mattress be moved to face al-Ka‘bah. When he regained consciousness, Sa‘īd said, “Did you move my mattress?” He was told, “Yes!” He looked at Abū Salamah and said, “Was this done with your knowledge?” He replied, “I instructed them to do it.” Sa‘īd then ordered that his mattress be moved back to its original position.²

PRESENTING ISLĀM TO NON-MUSLIMS

It is permissible for a Muslim to visit a dying non-Muslim. This permission is conditioned by the absence of any signs of *shirk* or acts of disobedience to Allāh (ﷻ). With these conditions, the visit is recommended if it is expected to present a real chance of *da‘wah* for the dying person or those in his presence. Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported that a

1 Recorded by Muslim, al-Bayhaqī, and others.

2 Recorded by Ibn Abī Shaybah (4:76). Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā‘iz* p. 21).

Jewish youth used to serve the Prophet (ﷺ). He (ﷺ) visited him in his fatal illness, sat by his head, and said to him, «أسلم، أسلم.» **«Embrace Islām; embrace Islām!»** The boy looked at his father (as if to take his permission), and he told him, “Obey Abū al-Qāsim!” So he did, and then died. The Prophet (ﷺ) departed saying:

«الحمد لله الذي أنقذه من النار.»

«All praise be to Allāh who has saved him from the Fire.»

He then commanded his companions:

«صلّوا على صاحبكم.»

«Pray *janāzah* for your companion.»¹

What to Do When a Person Dies

After a person’s soul leaves his body and his death becomes certain, those who are present should do a number of things as explained below.

CLOSING THE EYES

Umm Salamah (رضي الله عنها) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) visited Abū Salamah after his gaze became fixed (because of death). He closed his eyes and said:

«إن الروح إذا قبض تبعه البصر.»

«When the soul is taken, the eyesight follows it.»

On hearing this, some of his relatives (realizing that he was truly dead) started weeping. So the Messenger (ﷺ) said:

¹ Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Aḥmad, and others.

« لا تدعوا على أنفسكم إلا بخير، فإن الملائكة يؤمنون على ما تقولون. »

«Do not say but good things, because the angels say
“*āmīn*’ to what you say.»

And he added:

«اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِأَبِي سَلَمَةَ، وَاَرْفَعْ دَرَجَتَهُ فِي الْمَهْدِيِّينَ، وَاخْلُفْهُ
فِي عَقْبِهِ فِي الْغَابِرِينَ، وَاغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِهْ يَا رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ، وَاَفْسَحْ
لَهْ فِي قَبْرِهِ، وَنَوِّرْ لَهُ فِيهِ.»

*Allāhumma aghfir lahu, warfa‘ darajatahu fil-
mahdiyyīn, wa-khlufhu fī ‘aqibihi fil-ghābirīn, wa-
ghfir lanā wa-lahū yā rabb al-‘ālamīn, wafsaḥ lahū fī
qabrih, wa-nawwir lahū fīh —*

O Allāh! Forgive Abū Salamah, elevate his position among the guided ones, and raise good successors for him from among his progeny. Forgive us and him, O Lord of the Peoples! Expand his grave; and illuminate it for him.¹

SUPPLICATION

As is expressed in the previous *ḥadīth*, the angels say *āmīn* to whatever is said at the time of death. This is a time of acceptance of the supplications, and is an important opportunity to make sincere *du‘ā* for the deceased, asking Allāh (ﷻ) to forgive him, have mercy on him, and let him into His *Jannah*, as the Prophet (ﷺ) did for Abū Salamah.

Furthermore, it is not necessary to restrict the supplication to the deceased. Rather, it is also recommended to supplicate for other Muslims, as did Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) in his above *du‘ā*.

¹ Recorded by Muslim, Aḥmad, al-Bayhaqī, and others.

COVERING THE ENTIRE BODY

The entire body should be covered with a sheet of cloth or a garment. ‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported:

“When Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) passed, he was completely covered with a soft embroidered sheet.”¹

However, if one dies in the state of *iḥrām*², his head and face should not be covered. Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) reported that a man was riding his animal on ‘Arafah (during *ḥajj*) when it threw him off, resulting in his death. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«أَغْسِلُوهُ بِمَاءٍ وَسِدْرٍ، وَكَفَّنُوهُ فِي ثَوْبَيْنِ، وَلَا تُحَنِّطُوهُ (وَلَا تَطْيِيبُوهُ)،
وَلَا تَحْمُرُوا رَأْسَهُ وَلَا وَجْهَهُ، فَإِنَّهُ يُبْعَثُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ مَلْبِيًا.»

«Wash him with water and lotus; and shroud him in (his) two garments. Do not embalm or perfume him; and do not cover his head or face. He will be resurrected on Judgment Day giving *talbiyah*»^{3, 4}

HURRYING WITH THE FUNERAL

The Muslims should hasten to prepare the body for burial, and then bury it as quickly as possible. Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«أَسْرِعُوا بِالْجَنَازَةِ، فَإِنْ تَكَ صَالِحَةً فَخَيْرٌ تَقْدُمُونَهَا إِلَيْهِ،
وَإِنْ تَكَ غَيْرَ ذَلِكَ فَشَرٌّ تَضَعُونَهُ عَنْ رِقَابِكُمْ.»

«Hurry with a funeral. If it is for a good person, you bring it forward to its good destination; and if it is

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

2 Sacred state that one is required to maintain during *ḥajj* or *‘umrah*.

3 Uttering the words that the Muslims say during *ḥajj*, “*Labbayk Allāhumma labbayk, ...*” which mean, “I am responding to Your command O my Lord ...”

4 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

other than that, you drop the evil (quickly) off your necks.> ¹

This command to hurry with the funeral should not be restricted to walking fast with the procession, but should be applied to everything that can be done to hasten the burial process.

Concerning this, there are other *ḥadīths* that are more explicit; but we do not adopt them because of their weakness.

The first one is, “When one of you dies, do not delay him, and hasten to bury him. Read at his head the beginning of *al-Baqarah*, and at his feet its end.” ²

The second is, “I see that Ṭalḥah is close to death. So inform me (when he dies) so that I would witness his funeral and pray *janāzah* for him. Hurry to bury him; a Muslim’s corpse may not be delayed among his people.” ³

And the third is very popular among the common people, “Honoring the dead is in burying him.” ⁴

BURIAL IN THE PLACE OF DEATH

In compliance with the Prophet’s (ﷺ) command to hurry with the funeral, all efforts should be made to bury a deceased in the land where he died. The body should not be transferred to another country because that would delay the burial. Jābir Bin ‘Abdillāh (رضي الله عنه) reported:

“On the day of Uḥud, the dead Muslims were carried to be buried in al-Baqī’ ⁵. But then it was announced that, ‘Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) commands you to bury the dead ones in the place where they were killed.’ That

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

2 Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* and al-Khallāl. It is verified by al-Albānī to be extremely weak (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 23-24).

3 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd and al-Bayhaqī. Verified by al-Albānī to be weak due to the presence of two unknown men in its *isnād* (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 24).

4 This *ḥadīth* does not even have an *isnād*, as was indicated by as-Sakhāwī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 24).

5 The main cemetery at al-Madīnah where the Muslims were buried at the time of the Prophet (ﷺ).

was after my mother had loaded my father and uncle (her brother), leveling their weights on the two sides of a camel. So they were all taken back and buried where they were killed.”¹

‘Abd ur-Raḥmān Bin Abū Bakr died in al-Ḥabashī², and was transferred to Makkah for burial. When ‘Ā’ishah’s (ﷺ) went to Makkah, she visited her brother’s grave and said:

“It disturbs me that he was not buried where he died.”³

In this regard, an-Nawawī says:

“If a dead person had requested in his will to be transferred to a different land for burial, this should not be executed for him, because it is prohibited to transfer the dead. This is the correct and chosen opinion, which is held by most of the elite *‘ulamā’*.”⁴

PAYING OFF THE DEBTS

As soon as possible, the deceased’s debts should be paid off from whatever wealth he left behind, even if that would exhaust all of it. If the deceased was known to strive in paying his debts, and yet they could not all be covered by the wealth that he left behind, it is the *Islāmic* state’s obligation to pay off his outstanding debts. If this is not possible, his closest relatives and other Muslims are encouraged to pay on his behalf.

Sa‘d Bin al-Aṭwal (ﷺ) reported that his brother died, leaving only three hundred *dirhams* for his children. Sa‘d wanted to spend the money on his the children, but the Prophet (ﷺ) told him:

1 Recorded by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā‘iz* p. 25).

2 A place twelve miles from Makkah.

3 Recorded by al-Bayhaqī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā‘iz* p. 25).

4 *Al-Aṭḥkār*.

«إن أخاك محبوس بدينه، فأذهب فأقض عنه.»

«Your brother is restrained by his debt. So go pay it off for him.»

Sa'd went and did as he was commanded, then came back and said, "O Allāh's Messenger! I have paid off all of his debts, except for two *dīnārs* claimed by a woman without any evidence." He (ﷺ) told him, «أعطيها، فإنها مُحَقَّةٌ.» **«Give her, because she is truthful.»**¹

Samurah Bin Jundub (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) once prayed the morning prayer and then prayed *janāzah* for a dead man. After he finished he asked, «أهلنا من آل فلان أحد؟» **«Is any of the family of so-and-so (the deceased) present?»** When he heard no answer, the Prophet (ﷺ) repeated his question three times, and a man from the back rows said, "Here I am," and then, dragging his garments, proceeded toward the Prophet (ﷺ). The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«ما منعك في المرتين الأولين أن تكونَ أجبتني؟ أما إني لم أنوّه
باسمك إلا لخير. إن فلاناً مأسوراً بدينه عن الجنة، فإن شئتم
فأفدوه، وإن شئتم فأسلموه إلى عذاب الله.»

«What prevented you from responding to me the first two times? I did not call out your name except for something good. Your man is restrained by his debt from entering *Jannah*. So If you wish, ransom him; otherwise, surrender him to Allāh's punishment!»

Samurah concluded, "You should have seen his family and other relatives hurrying to pay off his debts, until no one was left asking for anything from him."²

Jābir Bin 'Abdillāh (رضي الله عنه) reported that after a man once died, he was washed, shrouded, embalmed, and placed where the funerals are

1 Recorded by Ibn Mājah, Aḥmad, and al-Bayhaqī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 26).

2 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, an-Nasā'ī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 26).

usually placed (for *janāzah* prayer), at the stand of Jibrīl¹. The Prophet (ﷺ) was then invited to pray *janāzah* for him. He came in, took a few steps, then stopped and asked, «لعل على صاحبكم ديناً؟» **<Perhaps your friend owes some debt?>** He was told, “Yes: two *dīnārs*.” So he moved back and said, «صلوا على صاحبكم.» **<You pray for your friend!>** Abū Qatādah (رضي الله عنه) said, “O Allāh’s Messenger! I will take care of the two *dīnārs*.” Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) inquired, «هما عليك وفي مالك، والميتُ منهم بريء؟» **<Do you pledge them from your own wealth and clear the deceased from them?>** He replied, “Yes.” So the Prophet (ﷺ) prayed *janāzah* for him. On the following day, the Prophet (ﷺ) met Abū Qatādah and asked him, «ما فعل الديناران؟» **<What happened with the two *dīnārs*?>** He replied, “O Allāh’s Messenger! He only died yesterday!” On the next day, he asked him the same, and he replied, “I have paid them off, O Allāh’s Messenger.” He told him:

«الآن حين بردت عليه جلده.»

<Only now has his skin cooled down (from punishment)!>²

This *ḥadīth* indicates that paying the deceased’s debts benefits him after death, even if it is done by other than his immediate descendants. This is an exception to the general rule that only the charity from the deceased’s children benefits him.³

Ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«من مات وعليه دين، فليس ثم دينارٌ ولا درهم،

ولكنها الحسنات والسيئات.»

<Whoever dies owing a debt, there is no *dīnār* or *dirham* then (on Judgment Day): it is only the good and bad deeds (that are used to pay).>⁴

1 A location near the Prophet’s (ﷺ) *Masjid*.

2 Recorded by Aḥmad, al-Ḥākim, and others. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Haythamī and al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 27).

3 More details concerning this subject are included in Chapter 11 of Part 4 of this series, *Life in al-Barzakh*.

4 Recorded by al-Ḥākim, Ibn Mājah, and Aḥmad. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī

Jābir Bin ‘Abdillāh (رضي الله عنه) reported that his father was martyred on the day of Uḥud, leaving behind six daughters. He owed debts amounting to thirty *wasqs*¹ (of dates). The creditors were persistent on collecting their debts. So when it was time for harvesting the dates, he went to Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) and told him, “O Allāh’s Messenger! As you know, my father was martyred on the day of Uḥud while owing large debts. So I would like that the creditors see you (as we harvest the dates).”² He told him, « اذهب فيبدر كل تمر على حدة. » **Go sort the different kinds of dates in separate piles (and then call me).** He did that, and called the Prophet (ﷺ), who went to him in the morning. The creditors eyed the date piles greedily (hoping to get their payments). When the Prophet (ﷺ) saw that, he walked around the largest pile three times, invoked Allāh’s blessings, sat on top of it, and told Jābir, « ادع أصحابك. » **Summon your friends.** Jābir continues:

“He then started measuring for them their shares, until Allāh (ﷻ) fulfilled my father’s trust. And I am, by Allāh, happy that Allāh fulfilled my father’s trust, even if I did not go back to my sisters with anything. By Allāh, I gave up all of the date-piles, but was noticing that the pile under Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) did not seem to decrease by even one date! I stayed with Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) until sunset, and mentioned my observation to him. He laughed and said, « ائت أبا بكر وعمر فأخبرهما. » **Go to Abū Bakr and ‘Umar and tell them about this,** which I did, and they responded, ‘After what the Prophet (ﷺ) did (of invoking blessings), we surely expected that result.’³

Toward the end of his message, however, the Prophet (ﷺ) committed to pay off debts of those who try their best but fail to pay them. ‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

(*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 13).

- 1 *Wasq*: A camel’s load of grain or dates. It consists of sixty *ṣā’*s; and each *ṣā’* amounts to four scoops with the hands of an average man cupped together.
- 2 Jābir was probably hoping that the creditors would be shy in front of the Prophet (ﷺ) and would give up some of their debts.
- 3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Abū Dāwūd, and others.

« من حمل من أمتي ديناً، ثم جَهِدَ في قضائه، فمات ولم يقضه، فأنا وليُّه. »

«Whoever of my *ummah* burdens himself with a debt, and tries hard to pay it off, but dies before fulfilling that, I am then his sponsor.»¹

Jābir (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) used to say in his *khuṭbah*:

«من ترك مالاً فلورثته، ومن ترك ضياعاً أو ديناً فعليَّ وإليَّ،
وأنا أولى بكل مؤمن من نفسه.»

«Whoever leaves a wealth, it is for his inheritors. And whoever leaves children or debts, they are my obligation and responsibility. And I have more right to each believer than his own self.»²

In another narration of this *ḥadīth* from Ibn ‘Umar, Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«الدين دينان. فمن مات وهو ينوي قضاءه، فأنا وليُّه.
ومن مات وهو لا ينوي قضاءه، فذلك الذي يؤخذ من
حسناته، ليس يومئذٍ دينارٌ ولا درهم.»

«There are two types of debts: As for a person who dies while intending to pay it off, I am his sponsor. But as for a person who dies while not intending to pay it off, this is the one whose good deeds will be taken away on the Day (of Judgment) when there is no *dīnār* or *dirham* to give.»³

1 Recorded by Aḥmad. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 30).

2 Recorded by Muslim, an-Nasā’ī, and others. A similar *ḥadīth* from Abū Hurayrah is recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

3 Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr*. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 13).

Miscellaneous Innovations

The following are some innovations that are commonly practiced as death approaches a person.

1. Reciting *Yā-Sīn* (36) over the dying person.
2. Turning him to face the *Qiblah*.
3. Putting a copy of the Qurʾān near his head.
4. Believing that the devils come to him in the form of his parents and invite him to disbelief.

CHAPTER 3

GRIEVING & MOURNING OVER THE DEAD

When death strikes, it is natural for the family, relatives, and friends of the dead person to grieve for his departure. This grief is a result of the emotional ties that they held toward him, feelings of dependability and need toward him, feelings of kindness and concern about what will happen to him, and so on.

Islām does not prohibit grieving, but prohibits wrong beliefs and practices that people often associate with it. Therefore, this chapter explains the obligatory, permissible, and prohibited practices associated with grieving, mourning, and offering condolences.

Submission to Allāh's Decree

When struck by an affliction, a believer is required to be patient, trust that Allāh (ﷻ) will reward him for his affliction, and proclaim that he belongs to Allāh and unto Him he will return. These are various aspects of one obligation: full submission to Allāh's decree. Some details of these aspects are discussed in what follows.

PATIENCE

When a person is struck by an affliction, he should display patience and acceptance of the calamity that struck him. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

«وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ
وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ، وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ ﴿١٥٥﴾ البقرة

«We will surely try you with danger, hunger, and a loss of wealth, lives, and fruits — so, give glad

tidings to the patient.»¹

Patience should be manifest from the beginning, not marred or damaged by the magnitude of the loss.

Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) passed by a woman crying next to a grave. He told her, «أتقي الله وأصبري.» **«Have taqwā of Allāh, and be patient.»** Not recognizing him, she responded, "Leave me alone, you have not been struck by an affliction like mine!" She was then told that he was Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ). Extremely distressed and agitated at her blunder, she hastened to him and said, "O Allāh's Messenger, I did not recognize you." The Messenger (ﷺ) replied:

«إن الصبر عند أول الصدمة.»

«Indeed, patience should be displayed at the beginning of the affliction.»²

IHTISĀB

In addition to patience, a person who is struck by a disaster should look forward to Allāh's rewards and forgiveness for that disaster — even if it is minute. This is called *ihtisāb*. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

«مَا أَصَابَ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ يَهْدِ قَلْبَهُ
وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١١﴾ التغابن ١١

«No disaster strikes except by Allāh's permission, and whosoever believes in Allāh, He guides his heart. Allāh is the Knower of all things.»³

Since death is usually a great disaster, one should anticipate more reward for it from Allāh (ﷻ). And Allāh will surely reward those who display sincere *ihtisāb*.

‘Abdullāh Bin ‘Amr (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

1 Al-Baqarah 2:155.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

3 At-Taghābun 64:11.

«إن الله لا يرضى لعبده المؤمن إذا ذهب بصفية من أهل الأرض
فصبر واحتسب بشواب دون الجنة.»

«If one of Allāh's believing servants displays patience and *ihtisāb* when Allāh takes away from him a beloved one, Allāh will approve for him no reward less than *Jannah*.»¹

PATIENCE AND *IHTISĀB* FOR LOSING A CHILD

Patience and *ihtisāb* are most highly rewarded when exercised in the case of losing a child. Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا يموت لأحد من المسلمين ثلاثة من الولد فتمسه النار، إلا تحلَّه القَسَم.»

«When three of a Muslim's children die, the fire will not touch him — except in fulfillment of the oath.»²

In this *ḥadīth*, the Prophet (ﷺ) refers to Allāh's (ﷻ) promise in the following *āyah*:

«وَإِنْ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا، كَانَ عَلَىٰ رَبِّكَ حَتْمًا مَّقْضِيًّا ﴿٧١﴾
ثُمَّ نُنَجِّي الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا وَنَذَرُ الظَّالِمِينَ فِيهَا جِثِيًّا ﴿٧٢﴾ مريم ٧١

«None of you but will pass over it (Hell). This is upon your Lord an inevitable decree. Then We will save those who have *taqwā* and leave the wrongdoers in it, on their knees.»³

And “passing over it” refers to the people's walking over the bridge that will be erected over Hell.

1 Recorded by an-Nasā'ī. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 34).

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

3 *Maryam* 19:71-72.

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) also reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ):

« ما من مسلمين يموت لهما ثلاثة من الولد لم يبلغوا الحنث إلا
أدخلهم الله وأبويهم الجنة بفضل رحمته. ويكونون على باب من
أبواب الجنة، فيقال لهم: ادخلوا الجنة. فيقولون: حتي يجيء أبوانا.
فيقال لهم: أدخلوا الجنة أنتم وأبواكم بفضل رحمة الله. »

«When three of a Muslim couple's children die before reaching puberty, Allāh will let the parents into *Jannah* by virtue of His mercy. They (the children) will be standing by one of the gates of *Jannah*, and will be told, "Enter *Jannah*." They will say, "Not until our parents come." They will then be told, "Enter *Jannah*, together with your parents, by virtue of Allāh's mercy!"»¹

Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«أيما امرأة مات لها ثلاثة من الولد كانوا حجاباً من النار.»

«Whenever three of a woman's children die, they will be a shield for her from the Fire.»

A woman asked him, "How about two (children)?" He (ﷺ) replied, «Two also.»²

ISTIRJĀ'

A Muslim should express the belief in Allāh's sovereignty over everything, and the submission to His decree, by actual words. He should frequently, thoughtfully, and truthfully proclaim *Istirjā'*, which is saying, "*Innā lillāhi wa innā ilayhi rāji'ūn*"³. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

1 Recorded by an-Nasā'ī, al-Bayhaqī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 34).

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

3 This means, "Indeed, to Allāh we belong, and unto Him we will return".

﴿وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ ﴿ الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ ﴿ أُولَئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ ﴾﴾ البقرة ١٥٥-١٥٧

«But give glad tidings to the patient — those who, when afflicted with a calamity, say, “Truly, to Allāh we belong; and truly, to Him will we return.” It is those who will be awarded blessings and mercy from their Lord; and it is those who are guided.»¹

Umm Salamah (رضي الله عنها) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«ما من مسلم تصيبه مصيبة فيقول ما أمره الله: ﴿إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ﴾ اللهم آجرني في مصيبتى وأخلف لي خيراً منها“ إلا أخلف الله له خيراً منها.»

«Whenever an affliction strikes a Muslim and he says, as Allāh commanded him, “*Innā li-’llāhi, wa-innā ilayhi rāji’ūn. Allāhumma ājirni fī muṣibatī, wa-akhlif lī khayran minhā* — «To Allāh we belong, and to Him will we return,» O Allāh, reward me for my affliction and replace it for me with that which is better,» Allāh will then surely replace it for him with that which is better.»

Umm Salamah added, “When Abū Salamah died, I thought, ‘Who among the Muslims is better than Abū Salamah? He is from the first family that migrated to Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ)!’ Yet, I said it, and Allāh replaced him for me with Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ). Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) sent Ḥāṭib Bin Abī Balta‘ah seeking my hand in marriage. I told him, ‘I have a daughter (to take care of), and I am a jealous woman.’ So Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

1 Al-Baqarah 2:155-157.

«أما أبنؤها، فندعو الله أن يغنيها عنها. وأدعو الله أن يُذهبَ بالغيرة.»

«As for her daughter, we ask Allāh to suffice her from her. And I ask Allāh to remove her jealousy.»¹

Permissible Acts of Grieving

UNCOVERING AND KISSING THE DEAD PERSON

Those who were permitted to kiss the deceased during his life are allowed to kiss him after death.

Jābir Bin ‘Abdillāh (رضي الله عنه) reported that his father’s body was covered after he was killed and mutilated. He uncovered his face and wept. Those around him tried to prevent him from that, but the Prophet (ﷺ) did not. When the Prophet (ﷺ) commanded that he be raised (in preparation for burial), his sister Fāṭimah (Jābir’s aunt) started weeping. The Prophet (ﷺ) then assured her of her brother’s great status with Allāh (ﷻ):

«لا تبكي، ما زالت الملائكة تُظله بأجنحتها حتى رفعتموه.»

«Do not weep, because the angels continued shading him with their wings until he was raised.»²

‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported:

“The Prophet (ﷺ) entered to where the body of ‘Uthmān Bin Maẓ‘ūn was, uncovered his face, leaned over him, kissed him, and cried until I saw the tears running down his cheeks.”³

1 Recorded by Muslim, al-Bayhaqī, and Aḥmad.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

3 Recorded by at-Tirmithī, al-Bayhaqī, and others. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 32).

WEeping

It is permissible to weep quietly over the dead, provided that it does not reach the level of wailing, and does not exceed three days. This is expressed in the above *ḥadīth* where the Prophet (ﷺ) permitted Jābir and his aunt to weep. This is further supported by other actions of the Prophet (ﷺ) and his companions (رضي الله عنهم) on the occasion of death, as in the above *ḥadīth* of ‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها), as well as the forthcoming reports.

Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported that he went once with Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) to the house of Abū Sayf, the husband of his son Ibrāhīm’s foster mother. Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) took his son Ibrāhīm, hugged him, and kissed him. At a later date, Anas also accompanied Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) to Abū Sayf’s house when Ibrāhīm’s soul was departing from his body. Allāh’s Messenger’s (ﷺ) eyes started shedding tears, and ‘Abd ur-Raḥmān Bin ‘Awf exclaimed, “Even you (cry), O Allāh’s Messenger?” As his tears continued to fall, Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«يا ابنَ عوف! إنها رحمة. إن العينَ تدمعُ، والقلبَ يحزنُ، ولا
نقول إلا ما يُرضي ربَّنَا، وإنا بفراقِكَ يا إبراهيمُ لمحزونون.»

«O Ibn ‘Awf, it is a mercy! The eyes shed tears, the heart feels sad, but we only say things pleasing to our Lord. We are indeed saddened by your departure, O Ibrāhīm.»¹

‘Abdullāh Bin ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) reported that Sa’d Bin ‘Ubādah once fell sick. Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) went to visit him with ‘Abd ur-Raḥmān Bin ‘Awf, Sa’d Bin Abī Waqqāṣ, and ‘Abdullāh Bin Mas‘ūd (رضي الله عنه). When they went in, they found him unconscious. He asked, «أقد قُضى؟» «Is he dead?» He was told, “No, O Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ)!” So he cried; and when the other people saw that, they cried as well. He then said:

«ألا تسمعون؟ إن الله لا يعذبُ بدمعِ العينِ، ولا بحزنِ القلبِ،

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

ولكن يُعذَّبُ بهذا أو يرحم.»

«Wouldn't you listen to what I tell you? Allāh does not punish for the tears of the eyes, nor for the grief of the heart. But he punishes or gives mercy because of this (he then pointed to his tongue).»¹

‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that when the Prophet (ﷺ) passed away, Abū Bakr (رضي الله عنه) came from his house at as-Sinḥ riding his mare. He dismounted and went toward her house through the *Masjid*. ‘Umar was addressing the people, but Abū Bakr did not speak to anyone until he entered her house. He went to the Prophet (ﷺ) who was covered with an embroidered piece of lined cloth. He uncovered his face, leaned over him, kissed him between the eyes, wept, and said:

“I would sacrifice both my father and mother for you, O Prophet of Allāh! Allāh will surely not combine for you two deaths. You have died a death after which you will never die.”²

Mourning

DEFINITION

Mourning is called *ḥidād* in Arabic, which carries the meaning of abstinence, because it usually applies to a widowed woman whose husband's death forces her to abstain from many things that were previously permissible for her.

In *Sharḥ*, *ḥidād* is a widowed woman's abstinence from all things that would invite others to desire her and seek marrying her, such as wearing perfume, using incense, putting eye lining (*kuhl*) or other forms of makeup, wearing jewelry and attractive clothes, and leaving her house without need.

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, an-Nasā'ī, and others.

Therefore, mourning or *ḥidād* is a woman's physical display of sadness and grief for the death of a beloved one.

MOURNING UP TO THREE DAYS

Except for her husband, it is not permissible for a woman to mourn more than three days over the death of a beloved one, such as her father, mother, brother, son, and so on.

Zaynab Bint Abī Salamah reported that she heard Umm Ḥabībah (رضي الله عنها) say that she heard Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) say:

« لا يحل لامرأة تؤمن بالله واليوم الآخر أن تحدد على ميت فوق
ثلاث، إلا على زوج أربعة أشهر وعشراً. »

«It is not permissible for a woman who believes in Allāh and the Last Day to mourn over a dead person more than three days — except for her husband, where she mourns for four months and ten days.»

Zaynab added that she visited Zaynab Bint Jaḥsh (رضي الله عنها) when her brother died. The latter requested perfume, wore some of it, and said, "I have no desire for perfume, but I heard Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) say <...>" And she quoted the above *ḥadīth*.¹

‘Abdullāh Bin Ja‘far (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) allowed the family of Ja‘far three days (for mourning), then came to them and said:

« لا تبكوا على أخي بعد اليوم. »

«Do not weep over my brother after this day.»²

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī.

2 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, an-Nasā'ī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 32).

A WIDOW'S MOURNING

The above *ḥadīth* of Umm Ḥabībah indicates that a widow should mourn over her husband the full term of her *'iddah*¹, which is four months and ten days. This is confirmed in the Qur'ān (2:234) and is, therefore, a unanimous opinion of the *'ulamā'*. Mourning, however, need not be associated with continual grieving over the deceased.

Some of the wisdom behind *ḥidād* is: allowing the woman some time to express her sadness over the loss of her mate and companion, showing regard toward the deceased's parents and relatives, and ascertaining the absence of pregnancy.

MOURNING FOR LESS THAN THREE DAYS

It is recommended for a married woman to refrain from mourning if that is required for pleasing her husband. A great good may result from this, as in the case of Umm Sulaym² (رضي الله عنها) with her husband Abū Ṭalḥah al-Anṣārī³ (رضي الله عنه).

Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported that his father Mālik Bin an-Naḍr complained to his wife Umm Sulaym (Anas's mother), "This man (the Prophet (ﷺ)) is forbidding *khamr*." So he departed to Shām (seeking freedom) and died there.

Abū Ṭalḥah then approached Umm Sulaym for marriage. She was a small woman with beautiful eyes. She responded, "O Abū Ṭalḥah! A man like you should not be refused. However, you are a disbeliever and I am Muslim. Thus I may not marry you!" He said, "This is not what previously used to attract your." She asked, "And what used to attract me?" He replied, "The yellow and the white (i.e., gold and silver)." She said, "I do not want any yellow or white. All I want from you is Islām. If you embrace Islām, this will be my *mahr* (dowry), and I will ask you for nothing else." He asked, "Who will help me with that?" She replied, "Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) will help you."

Abū Ṭalḥah went to Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) while he was sitting among his companions. When the Prophet (ﷺ) saw him, he said,

-
- 1 The waiting period before she may remarry.
 - 2 Her name is ar-Rumayṣā' Bint Miḥān.
 - 3 His name is Zayd Bin Sahl Bin al-Aswad.

“Here comes Abū Ṭalḥah to you, with the sign of Islām between his eyes.” He told Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) about what Umm Sulaym said, and he (ﷺ) married them for that specified *mahr*.

Thābit (رضي الله عنه) said, “We never heard of any greater *mahr* than the one she requested, which is Islām!”

So Abū Ṭalḥah married her, and she bore him a son to whom he became strongly attached. The child then became severely ill, and Abū Ṭalḥah was strongly overwhelmed by that. Abū Ṭalḥah’s habit was to get up for the morning prayer, perform *wuḍūʿ*, go pray with the Prophet (ﷺ), stay with him close to midday, then come home to eat and rest. He would then pray *zuhr*, prepare himself, and leave again until the night prayer. One evening, Abū Ṭalḥah was in the *Masjid* with the Prophet (ﷺ) when the child passed away.

Umm Sulaym said to those with her, “Let no one announce to Abū Ṭalḥah the death of his son, until I be the first to announce it to him.” She then prepared the body (for burial), put it in a far side of the house, and covered it with a piece of cloth.

Abū Ṭalḥah came back from the Prophet’s (ﷺ) *Masjid* with a group of his companions. He asked her, “How is my son doing?” She replied, “O Abū Ṭalḥah! Since he fell sick, he was never more quiet than he is now, and I hope that he is now resting!” She then brought the dinner and put it in front of them. They ate, and the men departed.

Abū Ṭalḥah went to bed. Umm Sulaym beautified herself, wore perfume, and followed him to bed. As soon as he smelled the perfume, he did what a man would toward his wife.

Toward the end of the night, she said, “O Abū Ṭalḥah! If someone lends something to another and then requests it back, would he have any right to refuse returning it?” He replied, “No!” She said, “Allāh (ﷻ) has then lent you your son for an appointed term, and then took him back. So seek His reward and be patient!” He became angry and said, “You waited until I disgraced myself with what I have done, and then you announced to me my son’s death!” He then said the *istirjāʿ* and praised Allāh.

In the morning, he performed *ghusl*, went to Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ), prayed with him, and told him what happened. Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«بارك الله لكما في غابر ليلتكما.»

«May Allāh bless for you what you have done last night.»

Umm Sulaym became pregnant (from that night), and (when he was informed of it) the Prophet (ﷺ) said, «**When she delivers, bring me the baby.**»

Umm Sulaym used to travel with the Prophet (ﷺ), leaving when he left, and returning when he returned. The Prophet (ﷺ) was preparing for a trip when Umm Sulaym was in advanced pregnancy and was feeling some pain of labor. Abū Ṭalḥah found himself restrained by that, and he said, “O my Lord! You know that I like to go with Your Messenger when he goes, and return with him when He returns, but I have been restrained as You see.” Umm Sulaym told him, “O Abū Ṭalḥah! I do not feel the pain anymore, so let us go.” Thus they went on that trip with Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ).

As they approached al-Madīnah on their way back, she went into full labor and delivered a boy. She told her son Anas, “O Anas, take these dates, and do not let the baby eat anything until you give him first to Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) in the morning.”

The Prophet’s (ﷺ) practice was not to enter suddenly into al-Madīnah, but to camp on its outskirts before entering it. Anas took care of his baby brother all night, leaning over him, trying to soothe him.

In the morning, he took him to Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ). He found him wearing a striped cloak and marking some cattle that he had received. When he saw the baby he asked Anas, «**Did Milḥān’s daughter deliver?**» He replied, “Yes!” He said, «**Wait until I finish what I am doing.**»

He then put away what he had in his hand, held the baby, and asked, «**Did you bring anything with him?**» He replied, “Yes, some dates.”

The Prophet (ﷺ) took some dates, chewed on them, mixing them with his saliva, opened the baby’s mouth, and rubbed the chewed dates inside his mouth. The baby started hungrily sucking the sweetness of the dates as well as Allāh’s Messenger’s (ﷺ) saliva. Thus the first

thing to enter the baby's stomach was the saliva of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ). He then said:

«انظروا إلى حب الأنصار التمر.»

◀Watch how the *Anṣār* love dates!▶

Anas then said, "O Allāh's Messenger, give him a name." The Messenger (ﷺ) rubbed the baby's face and named him 'Abdullāh.

Anas said that no youth among al-Anṣār was better than 'Abdullāh. Many men descended from him, and he was martyred in Persia. ¹

MEN'S MOURNING?

The reports in the Sunnah point to that mourning is not a man's practice. This is clear from the Prophet's (ﷺ) words in the above *ḥadīth* of Umm Ḥabībah (رضي الله عنها).

During the Prophet's (ﷺ) life, his wife Khadījah, his son Ibrāhīm, his three daughters (Ruqayyah, Umm Kulthūm, and Zaynab), his uncle Ḥamzah, his cousin Ja'far, and many of his companions (رضي الله عنهم) died or were killed. Yet, we have no reports of him performing *ḥidād* for any of them. Similarly, when he (ﷺ) passed away, his companions did not perform *ḥidād* for him.

Therefore, mourning, except for women as explained above, is a sinful innovation that should be avoided. It becomes worse if it is associated with other sins or acts of imitation of the disbelievers, such as playing sad music, lowering the flags, declaring silence for a few minutes, wearing black ties or coats, and so on.

Woes of Wailing

Even though it is permissible to grieve for the departure of a beloved one, if the grief exceeds the limits and becomes a form of objection to Allāh's decree, it becomes totally prohibited, and may cause suffering

¹ This is a combined report from al-Bukhārī, Muslim, Aḥmad, and others (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 35-38).

for the deceased in his grave or in the hereafter. This applies to wailing, hitting the face, tearing the clothes, and so on.

Wailing is weeping or crying that exceeds moderateness to the level of screaming, and is often associated with words of excessive praise for the deceased or objection against Allāh's decree.

WAILING IS AN ACT OF JĀHILIYYAH

Wailing is a practice of *Jāhiliyyah* that incurs a severe punishment on Judgment Day. Abū Mālik al-Ash'arī (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«أربع في أمّتي من أمر الجاهلية لا يتركونها: الفخر في الأَحْسَابِ، والطعن في الأَنْسَابِ، والاستسقاء بالنجوم، والنياحة. والنائحة إذا لم تتب قبل موتها تقام يوم القيامة وعليها سُرْبَالٌ من قَطْرانٍ ودرعٌ من جَرَبٍ.»

⟨There are four of the practices of *Jāhiliyyah* that my *ummah* will never drop: boasting about social status, defaming the kinship relations (for some tribes, races, etc.), seeking rain by means of stars (astrology), and wailing. As for the wailing woman, if she does not repent before death, she will be raised on Resurrection Day wearing a garment of liquid pitch and a shirt of scabies.⟩¹

THE PROPHET'S COVENANT AGAINST WAILING

Wailing is such a serious sin that the Prophet (ﷺ) required the women's covenant against it. Umm 'Aṭiyyah (رضي الله عنها) reported:

“At the time of *bay'ah*², Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) took our covenant that we will not wail. None of the women

1 Recorded by Muslim and al-Bayhaqī.

2 Promise of allegiance. This *Bay'ah* was taken for the women of *Anṣār*.

who were present fulfilled their covenant except five: Umm Sulaym, Umm al-‘Alā’, Abū Sabrah’s daughter, and Mu‘āth’s wife.^{1, 2}

WAILING IS AN ACT OF DISBELIEF

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

« اثنتان في الناس هما بهم كفرٌ: الطعن في النسب، والنياحة على الميت. »

⟨Two of the people’s practices are acts of disbelief: dishonoring kinship ties and wailing over the dead.⟩³

NO EXCEPTION

Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) did not allow wailing, even over his own son. Abū Hurayrah reported that when Ibrāhīm died, Usāmah Bin Zayd screamed. Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) intervened saying:

« ليس هذا مني، وليس لصائحٍ حقٌ. القلب يحزن، والعين تدمع،

ولا يُغضبُ الرب. »

⟨This is not of my teachings! A screamer has no right (to do that). The heart gets sad, the eye sheds tears, but the Lord may never be angered. ⟩

PUNISHMENT IN THE GRAVE AND THE HEREAFTER

Anas Bin Mālik (رضي الله عنه) reported that when ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) was stabbed, Ḥafṣah (رضي الله عنها) wailed, and he told her, “O Ḥafṣah, haven’t you heard Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) say:

« الْمُعَوَّلُ عَلَيْهِ يُعَذَّبُ. »

1 The fifth must be Umm ‘Aṭiyyah herself.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim and others.

3 Recorded by Muslim, al-Bayhaqī, and others.

«The one over whom people wail will be punished?»

Also, Ṣuhayb (رضي الله عنه) wailed over ‘Umar saying, “Oh my brother! Oh my companion!” ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) told him:

“O Ṣuhayb, don’t you know that a deceased is punished in his grave for the crying of his family over him?”¹

‘Abdullāh Bin ‘Umar and ‘Imrān Bin Ḥuṣayn (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

« إن الميت يُعذَّب في قبره ببكاء أهله عليه . »

«A dead person is punished in his grave because of his family’s crying over him.»²

The crying in this *ḥadīth* refers specifically to wailing, as is indicated in ‘Umar’s above words, “some of his family’s crying,” and as is expressed in the following report by al-Mughīrah Bin Shu‘bah (رضي الله عنه) that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

« من يُنح عليه يُعذَّب يوم القيامة بما نوح عليه . »

«The one who is wailed over will be punished on the day of Resurrection because of that wailing.»³

An-Nu‘mān Bin Bashīr (رضي الله عنه) reported that once ‘Abdullāh Bin Rawāḥah (رضي الله عنه) fainted, and his sister ‘Amrah (thinking him dead) started wailing and praising him, “O my mountain (in generosity), O my such and such, etc.” When he regained consciousness he told her, “Whatever you mentioned, I was asked (in a dream), ‘Are you truly like that?’ ” So when he was killed, she did not cry over him.⁴

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim and others.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim and others.

3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim and others.

4 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and al-Bayhaqī.

REASON FOR THE PUNISHMENT

The *ḥadīths* in the previous section may appear to conflict with an established rule in the *Sharīʿah*: that a person is only responsible for his own doings, and cannot be punished for someone else's sins. This is expressed in various texts, such as Allāh's (ﷻ) saying:

﴿لَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَى﴾ الأنعام ١٦٤

«No bearer of burdens will bear the burden of another.»¹

The *ʿulamā* have taken different positions for resolving this apparent conflict. The most correct view is that the punishment is applicable to that who requested his family to wail over him after he dies, or who knew that wailing is a common practice among his people but did not warn them against doing it, as if he approved it — contrary to what ʿUmar (رضي الله عنه) did in the above reports.²

In confirmation of this understanding, ʿAbdullāh Bin al-Mubārak (رضي الله عنه) said:

“If he prevented them from doing it during his life, yet they did it after his death, there is no sin upon him.”³

Announcing Death

DEFINING NA'Y

Na'y means “announcing a person's death”. *Na'y* is usually necessary in order to invite the people to pray *janāzah* for the deceased, supplicate for him, and look after his and his family's affairs.

1 *Al-An'ām* 6:164.

2 To be on the safe side, one should assume that the people will surely wail unless forbidden. This assumption is supported by the earlier report of Umm ʿAṭiyyah that even for the *Anṣār* women who gave the covenant, only five refrained from wailing.

3 *Umdat ul-Qārī* 4:79.

However, if the announcement is done in a blunt manner reflecting dissatisfaction with Allāh's decree, excessive praise of the deceased, or an invitation (even implicit or subtle) to the people to wail over him, it then becomes prohibited and counts as a form of *na'y* of *Jāhiliyyah*.

PROHIBITION OF NA'Y

Na'y that leads to any of the above concerns has been prohibited by the Prophet (ﷺ). When someone died, Ḥuṭhayfah Bin al-Yamān (رضي الله عنه) used to say:

“Do not announce his death to anyone. I am afraid that it would count as *na'y*, and I heard Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) prohibit *na'y*.”¹

Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī said:

“The prohibited form of *Na'y* is that of the people of *Jāhiliyyah*: they used to send someone to announce the death at house-doors and in the marketplaces.”²

Similar to this would be announcing the death with loudspeakers in the streets, over the minarets of *masjids*, and in magazines and newspapers (obituaries).

Among the other prohibited actions associated with *na'y* are: taking pay for performing it, and praising the deceased excessively.

PERMISSIBLE FORMS OF NA'Y

It is allowed to announce the death in a manner that does not resemble that of *Jāhiliyyah*, especially if there is a need for some people to perform the necessary rites for the deceased, such as washing, shrouding, and praying *janāzah*. Furthermore, when informing about

1 Recorded by at-Tirmithī, Ibn Mājah, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 44).

2 *Fath ul-Bārī*.

a Muslim's death, it is recommended to ask the Muslims to seek Allāh's forgiveness for him.

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that on the day when an-Najāshī¹ died, Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) announced his death, went out to the prayer place, formed the *ṣahābah* into rows, and performed the *janāzah* prayer with four *takbīrs*, and told them:

«أَسْتَغْفِرُوا لِأَخِيكُمْ.»

«Seek forgiveness for your brother.»²

Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) announced the successive death of his commanders in the battle of Mu'tah³, and ordered the believers to seek Allāh's forgiveness for them:

«أَخَذَ الرَّايَةَ زَيْدٌ فَأُصِيبَ، ثُمَّ أَخَذَهَا جَعْفَرٌ فَأُصِيبَ، ثُمَّ أَخَذَهَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ
بْنُ رَوَاحَةَ فَأُصِيبَ، ثُمَّ أَخَذَهَا خَالِدُ بْنُ الْوَلِيدِ مِنْ غَيْرِ إِمْرَةٍ فَفَتْحَ لَهُ.»

«Zayd took the flag and was hit, then Ja'far took it and was hit, then 'Abdullāh Bin Rawāḥah took it and was hit, then Khālīd Bin al-Walīd took it without being appointed, and he was triumphant.»⁴

And Abū Qatādah (رضي الله عنه) reported that when Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) sent the Army of the Commanders⁵, he said:

«عَلَيْكُمْ زَيْدُ بْنُ حَارِثَةَ، فَإِنْ أُصِيبَ زَيْدٌ فَجَعْفَرُ بْنُ أَبِي طَالِبٍ،
فَإِنْ أُصِيبَ جَعْفَرٌ فَعَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ رَوَاحَةَ.»

1 He was the king of Abyssinia, and embraced Islām secretly from his people.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

3 This battle took place between the Muslims and the Romans in the year 8 H. Mu'tah is a town in northern Arabia (South-East of the Dead Sea in Jordan).

4 Recorded by al-Bukhārī.

5 It is thus named because he appointed three commanders to succeed one another.

«Zayd will be in command. If he is hit, Ja'far Bin Abī Ṭālīb will be. If he is hit, 'Abdullāh Bin Rawāḥah will be.»

On hearing this, Ja'far said, "I sacrifice both my father and mother for your sake, O Allāh's Messenger! But I would have hated that you make Zayd my commander." And Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) replied, «امضه فإنك لا تدري أي ذلك خير.» «Let it be, because you do not know which of that (i.e., matters of command) is better.»

Abū Qatādah reported that the army left after that, and was gone for as long as Allāh willed. Then one day Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) mounted the *minbar*, commanded that the call be made to gather for the prayer, and addressed the people by saying:

«ناب خير. ألا أخبركم عن جيشكم هذا الغازي؟ إنهم انطلقوا فلَقُوا العدو، فأصيب زيدٌ شهيداً، فاستغفروا له. ثم أخذ اللواءَ جعفرُ بنُ أبي طالب، فشدَّ على القوم حتى قُتل شهيداً، أشهد له بالشهادة، فاستغفروا له. ثم أخذ اللواءَ عبدُ الله ابنُ رَواحة، فأثبت قدميه حتى قتل شهيداً، فاستغفروا له. ثم أخذ اللواءَ خالدُ ابنُ الوليد، ولم يكن من الأمراء هو أمر نفسه.»

«Something good (in Allāh's sight) has occurred. Shouldn't I tell you about your assaulting army? They went out until they met the enemy, and Zayd fell as a *shahīd* — seek forgiveness for him. Ja'far Bin Abī Ṭālīb then took the flag and attacked the enemy until he was killed as a *shahīd* — I testify for him that he attained *shahādah* — seek forgiveness for him. 'Abdullāh Bin Rawāḥah then took the flag and kept his feet firm until he was killed as a *shahīd* — seek forgiveness for him. Then Khālīd Bin al-Walīd took the flag, without being one of the appointed commanders, he just took charge.»

Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) then raised both his fingers and said:

«اللَّهُمَّ هُوَ سَيْفٌ مِنْ سَيُوفِكَ، فَانصُرْهُ.»

«O Allāh! He is one of your swords. Give him victory!»

From that day, Khālid was named, “*Sayf Ullāh* — Allāh's sword”. Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) then commanded:

«انفروا فأمِدُّوا إخوانكم، ولا يتخلفنَّ أحدٌ.»

«Hasten to the support of your brothers, and let none of you stay behind.»

So the people marched out in critically hot weather, walking and riding.¹

Other Prohibited Acts of Grieving and Mourning

HITTING THE BODY AND TEARING THE CLOTHES

Some people excessively express their grief through incurring a material harm to themselves, such as hitting their faces and bodies, or tearing their clothes. This is publicly practiced in our time by some deviant sects who compete in displaying various forms of self-torture, to the amazement of many spectators around the world.

Ibn Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«ليس منا من لطم الخدودَ وشق الجيوب ودعى بدعوى الجاهلية.»

«He is not one of us who hits the face, tears the clothes, and makes the calls of *Jāhiliyyah*.»²

1 Recorded by Aḥmad. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 46-47).

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim and others.

SHAVING THE HAIR

One of the old mourning practices that Islām prohibited is shaving the head. Abū Buradah (رضي الله عنه) reported that his father Abū Mūsā ‘Abdullāh Bin Qays al-Ash‘arī (رضي الله عنه) became seriously ill and fainted into his wife’s lap. His wife screamed, but he was not able to say anything to her. When he regained consciousness he said:

“I disown those whom Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) disowned. Indeed, Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) disowned the woman who (when a calamity strikes) wails, shaves her hair, or tears her clothes.”¹

DISHEVELING THE HAIR AND SCRATCHING THE BODY

Among the prohibited old practices of mourning are spreading the hair in a messy manner and scratching the face and body. Usayd Bin Abī Usayd reported that one of the women who gave *bay‘ah* to the Prophet (ﷺ) told him that the Prophet (ﷺ) required from them:

« لا تعصيني في معروف، ولا تخمشن وجهاً، ولا تدعون ويلاً،
ولا تشققن جيياً، ولا تنشرن شعراً. »

<You will not disobey me in any matter of righteousness, nor scratch your faces, nor wail, nor tear your clothes, nor dishevel your hair.>²

GROWING THE BEARD AS A SIGN OF MOURNING

Growing the beard is an obligation for all men³. However, many men use their beards in a controlled manner, shaving it as a sign of joy, and letting it grow for a few days as a sign of grief. This practice is an

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

2 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā‘iz* p. 43).

3 A good discussion of this is available in the Author’s: *The Beard Between the Salf and Khalaf*.

obvious deviation from the Prophet's (ﷺ) Sunnah. Furthermore, if it is done as a form of mourning, this would be classified under disheveling the hair, which is prohibited in the above *ḥadīth*.

Condolence

VIRTUE OF CONSOLING THE MUSLIMS

It is recommended to console the family and close ones of the deceased to reduce their sorrow, raise their hope, and help them be patient and submissive to Allāh. This is best done by saying things from the Sunnah, but may also be accomplished with any good words that serve this purpose without conflicting with the *Sharʿ*.

Anas Bin Mālik (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«من عزى أخاه المؤمنَ في مصيبةٍ كساه اللهُ حُلَّةً خضراءَ
يُحِبُّ بِهَا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ.»

«Whoever consoles his brother in an affliction (that befell him), Allāh will clothe him with a green suit with which he will be delighted on the Day of Resurrection.»¹

A SHOW OF KINDNESS AND CONCERN

Offering condolences to the afflicted Muslims is an important expression of kindness and concern among the Muslim. This was best displayed by our Prophet (ﷺ).

Qurrah al-Muzanī (رضي الله عنه) reported that when Allāh's Prophet (ﷺ) sat (in the *Masjid* for teaching) a group of his companions would sit with him. Among them was a man who had a little son that would come from behind him and sit in front of him. The Prophet (ﷺ) asked him, «تُحِبُّهُ؟» «**Do you love him?**» The father replied, “O Allāh's Messenger! May Allāh love you like I love him!” Later on, the boy passed away.

¹ Recorded by al-Khaṭīb al-Baghādī and others. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 206).

The father, grieved by his loss, stopped coming to the *ḥalqah*. Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) missed him and asked, «ما لي لا أرى فلاناً؟» **«Why don't I see so-and-so?»** He was told, "O Allāh's Messenger! His son that you saw has died." So the Prophet (ﷺ) summoned him, consoled him, and asked him:

«يا فلان، أيما كان أحبَّ إليك؟ أن تُمتَّعَ بهِ عمرُك، أو لا تأتي غداً

إلى بابٍ من أبواب الجنة إلاَّ وجدته قد سبقك إليه يفتحه لك؟»

«O so-and-so! What would you like better — enjoying your child during this life, or that tomorrow (i.e, the hereafter) you would not reach a gate of *Jannah* but find that he has preceded you to open it for you?»

He replied, "Rather, his preceding me to the *Jannah*'s gate to open it is dearer to me." He told him, «فذاك لك.» **«This will be yours!»** A man of *al-Anṣār* asked, "O Allāh's Messenger — may Allāh make me a ransom for you, is that specifically for him, or is it for all of us (who lose children)?" He replied, «بل لكلِّكم.» **«Rather, it is for all of you.»**¹

WHAT TO SAY?

When consoling a Muslim, it is important to remind him of the triviality of this life, that everything belongs to Allāh, and that one should submit patiently to His decree (review the beginning of this chapter). It is also beneficent to make him hopeful of Allāh's mercy toward the beloved one that he lost, and that (*in shā'a 'Llāh*) he will be united with him on a Day after which there is no parting.

Usāmah Bin Zayd (رضي الله عنه) reported that one of the Messenger's (ﷺ) daughters sent someone to summon him because a child of hers was dying². He (ﷺ) told the envoy to say *salām* to her and tell her:

1 Recorded by an-Nasā'ī, Aḥmad, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 205).

2 Some authentic reports indicate that this daughter was Zaynab (رضي الله عنها), and that the child was her daughter Umaymah (or Umāmah). Umaymah recovered from that illness and reached adulthood, and 'Alī (رضي الله عنه) married her after her aunt

« إن لله ما أخذ، ولله ما أعطى، وكل شيء عنده لأجل مسمى،
فلتصبر ولتحتسب. »

«*Inna lillāhi mā akhathā, wa lillāhi mā a'ṭā, wa kullu shay'in 'indahū li 'ajalin musammā —*

To Allāh belongs what He took, and to Him belongs what He gave. Everything is (recorded) with Him for an appointed term. So let her be patient and seek Allāh's reward (for her affliction).»

On hearing this, she sent again to her father (ﷺ) insisting that he must come. The Prophet (ﷺ) went to her with some of his companions, including Sa'd Bin 'Ubādah, Mu'āth Bin Jabal, Ubayy Bin Ka'b, Zayd Bin Thābit, and others. The child was put in the Messenger's (ﷺ) lap, its breathing echoing as if in an empty waterskin. His eyes shed some tears, and Sa'd exclaimed, "How is it that you are weeping, O Allāh's Messenger, when you had prohibited it for us?" He (ﷺ) replied:

«إني أبكي رحمة لها. إنما هذه رحمة يضعها الله في قلوب من
يشاء من عباده، وإنما يرحم الله من عباده الرحماء.»

«I cry out of mercy for her (and not to wail). Allāh only instills this mercy in the heart of whomever He wills of His servants. Indeed, Allāh does not grant mercy except to the merciful among His servants.»¹

Commenting on this, an-Nawawī (رحمته) said:

“The Prophet's (ﷺ) consoling statement here is the best to be said for consolation.”²

Buraydah Bin al-Ḥaṣīb (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) used to look after the *Anṣār*, visit them, and inquire about them. One

Fāṭimah (رضي الله عنها) passed away (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 206).

1 Al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

2 *Al-Aṭḥkār*.

day he was told that an *Anṣārī* woman was extremely grievous over the death of her only child. So Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) went with some of his companions to visit and console her, and he said to her:

«أما إنه بلغني أنك جزعتِ على ابنك، فأتقي الله وأصبري.»

«I have been informed that you are sorrowful for your son. Have *taqwā* of Allāh, and be patient.»

She replied, “How can I not be sorrowful when I am now childless, having no other children?” He said:

«الرقوب الذي يبقى ولدها. ما من امرئٍ أو امرأةٍ مسلمة

يموت لهما ثلاثة أولاد يحتسبانهم إلا أدخلهما الله بهم الجنة.»

«A truly childless women is that whose children remain alive (not offering them for Allāh's cause)! Whenever three children of a Muslim man or woman die and they seek Allāh's reward for this, Allāh will admit them into *Jannah* because of it.»

‘Umar (رضي الله عنه), who was sitting on the Messenger's (ﷺ) right, asked, “May my father and mother be a ransom for you! How about two children dying?” He replied, «وأثنان.»¹

We have also cited earlier what Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said to console Umm Salamah (رضي الله عنها) when Abū Salamah (رضي الله عنه) died (p. 24); and we present in the next section some of what he said in consolation to the family of his cousin Ja'far (رضي الله عنه).

DURATION OF THE CONSOLATION

Contrary to mourning, offering condolences is not limited to three days, but should extend for as long as there is a need for it — until the calamity's effect fades away². Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) consoled

1 Recorded by al-Bazzār and al-Ḥākim. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām al-Janā'iz* p. 208).

2 From: *Sab'ūna Su'ālan fī Aḥkām il-Janā'iz* by Shaykh Muḥammad Bin Ṣāliḥ al-

Ja'far's family after three days had passed, even though he told them to stop weeping over him. The *ḥadīth* in this regard was cited earlier in this chapter (under "announcing the death"), and we cite here another report of it that emphasizes the current discussion.

‘Abdullāh Bin Ja’far (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) sent an army (to Mu’tah) over which he appointed Zayd Bin Ḥārithah and told the army:

«عليكم زيد بن حارثة، فإن قُتل زيدٌ أو استشهد فأميرُكم
جعفرٌ، فإن قُتل أو استشهد فأميرُكم عبد الله بن رواحة.»

⟨Your commander will be Zayd Bin Ḥārithah. If Zayd is killed or martyred, your commander will be Ja’far. If Ja’far is killed or martyred, your commander will be ‘Abdullāh Bin Rawāḥah.⟩

When they met the enemy, Zayd held the flag and fought until he was killed, then Ja’far held the flag and fought until he was killed, then ‘Abdullāh held the flag and fought until he was killed, then Khālīd Bin al-Walīd held the flag and Allāh gave him victory. When the news about this reached the Prophet (ﷺ), he went into the *Masjid* and addressed the people. After praising and glorifying Allāh (ﷻ), he said:

«إن إخوانكم لقوا العدوَّ، وإن زيداً أخذ الرايةَ فقاتل حتى قُتلَ
وأستشهد، ثم أخذ الرايةَ جعفرٌ فقاتل حتى قُتلَ وأستشهد، ثم
أخذ الرايةَ عبد الله فقاتل حتى قُتلَ وأستشهد، ثم أخذ الرايةَ
سيفٌ من سيفِ الله خالدُ بن الوليدِ، ففتح اللهُ عليه، فأْمهَل.»

⟨Verily, your brothers have met the enemies. And verily, Zayd took the flag and fought until he was killed and martyred. Then Ja’far took the flag and fought until he was killed and martyred. Then ‘Abdullāh took the flag and fought until he was killed and martyred. Then a sword of Allāh’s took

‘Uthaymīn, p. 29.

the flag: Khālīd Bin al-Walīd. Allāh gave him victory, and he was spared (from death).>

The Prophet (ﷺ) left Ja'far's family to themselves, and did not visit them, for three days. Then he visited them and said:

« لا تبكوا على أخي بعد اليوم. أدعوا لي أبني أخي. »

<Do not weep over my brother past this day. Bring my brother's two sons before me.>

'Abdullāh says, "We were brought before him (with messy hair) like chicks." So he (ﷺ) ordered, « أدعوا لي الخلاق. » **<Invite the barber here.>** The barber came and shaved the heads of the two boys, and Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

« أما محمدٌ فشبيهُ عمًّا أبي طالب، وأما عبدُ اللهِ فشبيهُ خَلْقِي وخُلُقِي. »

<As for Muḥammad, he resembles our uncle Abū Ṭālib. And as for 'Abdullāh, he resembles me both in looks and character.>

Then he held 'Abdullāh's hand, raised it, and said (three times):

« اللهم آخلف جعفرًا في أهله، وبارك لعبد الله في صفقة يمينه. »

<O Allāh! Take care of Ja'far's family after him, and bless for 'Abdullāh the dealings that he makes with his right hand.>

Their mother then came and started describing her children's orphanage and poverty, trying to move his heart. He said to her:

« العيلة تخافين عليهم وأنا وليهم في الدنيا والآخرة؟ »

<Do you fear the poverty for them when I am their ally in this life and the hereafter?> ¹

¹ Recorded by Aḥmad. Parts of it were recorded by al-Ḥākim, Abū Dāwūd, and an-

MAKING FOOD FOR THE DECEASED'S FAMILY

It is recommended for the relatives and neighbors to make for the deceased's family enough food to suffice them during the peak of their distress. When Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) learnt about the demise of Ja'far, he commanded:

«أَصْنَعُوا لِأَلِ جَعْفَرٍ طَعَامًا، فَقَدْ أَتَاهُمْ مَا يَشْغَلُهُمْ.»

«**Make food for Ja'far's family, because a matter has occurred diverting them (from normal life).**»¹

In particular, 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها) used to order giving *talbīnah*² to the sick and those who are distressed for the loss of a beloved one, and she reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إِنَّ التَّلْبِينَةَ تَجْمُ فُؤَادَ الْمَرِيضِ وَتُذْهِبُ بَعْضَ الْحُزَنِ.»

«**Indeed, *talbīnah* brings comfort to a sick person's heart and alleviates some of his distress.**»³

Ash-Shāfi'ī (رحمته الله) said:

“I urge the deceased's neighbors or relatives to make enough food for the deceased's family as to suffice them during the day and night of death. That is part of the Sunnah and a thoughtful good act, and is a practice of the generous people before and after us.”⁴

This shows the error of many people who have reversed the Sunnah by requiring from the deceased's family to make food for other people during their mourning.

Nasā'ī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 209).

1 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, at-Tirmithī, and others. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 211).

2 A broth made with flour or bran; and some honey may be added to it.

3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslims, and others.

4 *Al-Umm* 1:247.

RUBBING OVER AN ORPHAN'S HEAD

A good act of consolation toward a deceased's orphans is to supplicate for them and rub over their heads. 'Abdullāh Bin Ja'far (رضي الله عنه) reported that when he was a little boy playing with the other boys, Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) passed riding an animal. He pointed to him and commanded, «أرفعوا هذا إليّ.» **«Raise this boy to me.»** He set him in front of him, then he pointed to Qathm¹ and commanded, «أرفعوا هذا إليّ.» **«Raise this boy to me.»** He set him behind him. He knew that his uncle (al-'Abbās) loved his other son, 'Ubayd Ullāh, more than Qathm, but that did not prevent him from holding Qathm instead. Then he (ﷺ) stroked 'Abdullāh's head three times, every time saying:

«اللَّهُمَّ أَخْلَفْ جَعْفَرًا فِي وَلَدِهِ.»

«O Allāh! Take care of Ja'far's children after him.»²

DESIGNATING A PLACE FOR RECEIVING CONDOLENCES?

A common practice is that the deceased's family and relatives would gather to receive condolences in the graveyard, house, or *masjid*. This is a *bid'ah* that becomes worse when the visitors expect from the deceased's family to offer them food, coffee, and other services.

Jarīr Bin 'Abdillāh al-Bajalī (رضي الله عنه) said:

“We (the *ṣahābah*) considered gathering for visiting the deceased's family, and making food after burying him, both acts of wailing.”³

An-Nawawī (رضي الله عنه) said:

“Ash-Shāfi'ī, ash-Shīrāzī, and our other scholars have all expressed that it is disliked for the deceased's family

1 A son of al-'Abbās who later died for Allāh's cause.

2 Recorded by Aḥmad and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 212).

3 Recorded by Aḥmad and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 210).

to sit for receiving condolences ... Rather, they should conduct their normal life, and whoever happens to meet them would console them. And this ruling applying equally to men and women.”¹

Ash-Shāfiʿī (رحمته) said:

“I dislike condolence gatherings, even if the people did not raise their voice with crying. That surely renews the distress, burdens the people with unnecessary expenses, and conflicts with the report (of Jarīr).”²

Question/Answer Summary

The main elements relating to death-arrival are outlined in the following “question/answer” table.

Question	Answer
What acts are required from an afflicted Muslim?	Patience, <i>iḥtisāb</i> , and <i>istirjāʿ</i> .
Is it permissible to be sad and cry for the death of a beloved one?	Sorrow and weeping are permissible, but should never reach the level of dissatisfaction with Allāh’s decree.
Is wailing allowed?	No, wailing is a physical display of rejection of Allāh’s decree.
Is it permissible to announce death?	Yes, but in a low-profile manner, in order to encourage the people to attend the <i>Janāzah</i> and supplicate for the deceased.
What forms of mourning are acceptable?	Abstinence from loud display of pleasure or joy.

1 *Al-Majmūʿ* 5:306.

2 *Al-Umm* 1:248.

Question	Answer
What forms of mourning are prohibited?	Any display of dissatisfaction, such as wailing, striking the face, tearing the clothes, pulling or shaving the hair, etc
What is the duration of mourning?	Four months and ten days for a widow; no more than three days for others.
Is offering condolences permissible?	It is a recommended act of kindness and concern among the Muslims.
What to say?	Things that remind of Allāh, His decree, His rewards to the patient, etc.
What is the duration of offering condolences?	As long as it is needed.
Is it permissible to designate a place or times for receiving condolences?	No, that is an innovation.

Miscellaneous Innovations

The following are common innovations practiced at the time of death.

DEALING WITH THE BODY

1. Believing that the deceased's soul roams about the place of death.
2. Lighting a candle all night close to the deceased.
3. Tying the deceased's jaws to the head.
4. Putting weights on the deceased's belly to prevent its swelling.
5. Tying the deceased's thighs together to prevent any excrements from exiting.

6. Putting a green branch in the room with the deceased's body.
7. Reading Qurʾān continuously over the body until it is washed.
8. Putting dust in the deceased's eyes and saying, "Nothing fills the son of Ādam's eyes except dust."
9. Placing a Qurʾān book on the deceased's chest or near him.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF DEATH

1. Announcing the death from the highest minarets.
2. Announcing the death in newspapers or by pasting a sheet of *naʿy* to the doors of houses and stores.
3. Describing a deceased as *al-marḥūm* (the one who has been granted mercy) or *al-maghfūr lah* (the forgiven) instead of asking Allāh to grant him mercy and forgiveness. ¹

GRIEVING AND MOURNING

1. Abstention of any person who witnesses the occurrence of death from doing any work for seven full days.
2. Abstention from eating until the deceased is buried.
3. The family's weeping with every lunch and dinner.
4. Mourning for a full year, during which the women avoid using *ḥinnāʾ* ² and wearing nice clothes or jewelry.
5. Turning carpets and rugs upside-down, and covering mirrors and chandeliers.

1 This was indicated by Shaykh ʿAbd ul-ʿAzīz Bin Bāz in *al-Buḥāth* Journal, Issue 15, p. 10.

2 A reddish-orange cosmetic gained from leaves and stalks of the *ḥinnāʾ* plant. Botanic: *lawsonia inermis*.

6. Abstinenace from eating certain lavish types of food during the mourning period, such as fish, grilled meat, liver, and so on.
7. Hanging the deceased's picture, putting black ribbons around it, talking to it, and so on.
8. Hiring professional wailers to encourage the people to cry by reciting poetry and other things that raise their emotions.
9. Hiring reciters or running tape recorders with Qur'ānic recitation.
10. Wearing specific clothes or colors (like black) for the mourning.

CONDOLENCES

1. Making it a regular consoling practice to shake the hands of the deceased's family members, hug, or kiss them. ¹
2. The family members forming a line near the grave for receiving condolences.
3. Gathering in a specific place (the house or rented hall) to give or receive condolences.
4. Limiting the days of receiving condolences to three.
5. Commemoration of the deceased on the fortieth day and annually after his death.
6. The deceased's family making and offering food to other people on the first few days.
7. Wearing black or dark-colored suits for offering condolences.

1 *Sab'ūna Su'ālan fī Ahkām il-Janā'iz* by Shaykh Muḥammad Bin Ṣāliḥ al-Uthaymīn, p. 28-29.

VARIOUS ACTS

1. Preventing menstruating women or those in post-natal bleeding from attending the dying person or the dead body.
2. The deceased's close relatives giving alms or praying two *rak'āt* on the first night.
3. Giving to the poor the same types of food that the deceased liked.
4. Reciting *al-Fātiḥah* and prompting others to recite it for the deceased's soul immediately after death or whenever he is mentioned.
5. Giving alms for the souls of the dead on the months of *Rajab*, *Shā'bān*, and *Ramaḍān*.

CHAPTER 4

SIGNS OF GOOD AND EVIL ENDS

Introduction

Allāh, the All-Wise, designates clear signs associated with a person's death, revealing or indicating his status after death.

Some of these signs are clear indications of a good end. Dying with any of them constitutes a very glad tiding for a deceased — may Allāh (ﷻ) grant this to us out of His great benevolence and mercy.

There are also clear signs of an evil end. Dying with any of them constitutes a bad omen for a deceased — may Allāh (ﷻ) protect us from it.

This chapter includes many of the signs mentioned by Allāh (ﷻ) or His Messenger (ﷺ). One should closely ponder over them, taking from them a lesson and a reminder, thereby gathering a strong resolution to do more of what leads to a good conclusion to his life, and avoid all that could lead to an evil conclusion.

Signs of a Good End

The following table presents a list of the good signs, numbered from 1 to 22 (not necessarily in order of importance). The evidence for these signs is presented in the following sections.

#	Signs of a Good End
1	Declaring the <i>Shahādah</i> at the time of death.
2	Dying with a perspiring forehead.
3	Dying on the night or day of <i>Jumu'ah</i> (Friday).
4	Martyrdom on the battlefield.

#	Signs of a Good End
5	Dying while away from home for fighting in Allāh's way.
6	Dying from plague.
7	Dying from abdominal illness.
8	Dying by drowning.
9	Dying from a building collapse.
10	A woman's death because of pregnancy or delivery.
11	Dying from burning.
12	Dying from pleurisy.
13	Dying from tuberculosis.
14	Dying while defending one's property.
15	Dying while defending one's family.
16	Dying while defending one's <i>dīn</i> .
17	Dying during self-defense.
18	Dying while standing as guard in the way of Allāh.
19	Dying while doing a righteous deed.
20	Being killed by an oppressive ruler.
21	Being praised after death by the righteous Muslims.

Evidences for Good Signs

The following texts from the Qur'ān and authentic *ḥadīths* provide evidence for the various signs presented above. Some texts apply to more than one sign, as is indicated in the titles preceding them.

SAYING THE *SHAHĀDAH*

Mu‘āth (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«من كان آخر كلامه ”لا إله إلا الله“ دخل الجنة.»

«He whose last words are “*Lā ilāha illa ‘Llāh*” will enter *Jannah*.»¹

Mu‘āth (رضي الله عنه) similarly reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«ما من نفس تموت وهي تشهد أن لا إله إلا الله وأني رسول الله، يرجع ذلك إلى قلب موقن، إلا غفر الله لها.»

«No soul dies while testifying that there is no (true) god except Allāh and that I am Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ), with that issuing from a believing heart, but Allāh will forgive it.»²

Jābir (رضي الله عنه) reported that after the passing of Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ), ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) observed signs of sadness on Ṭalḥah Bin ‘Ubayd Illāh³. He asked him, “What is wrong with you, O Abū Muḥammad? You appear disheveled and covered with dust since the passing of Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ)! Is it because of the appointment of your cousin (Abū Bakr, as *khalīfah*)?” He replied, “No! May Allāh forbid!” And he praised Abū Bakr (رضي الله عنه). Then he explained, “It is just that I heard from Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) a *ḥadīth*; and nothing stopped me from asking him about it except hesitation — until he passed away! This is the cause of my sadness. I heard him say:

«إني لأعلم كلمة لا يقولها عبدٌ عند موتِه إلا أشرق لها لوته،

1 Recorded by al-Ḥākim and others. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā‘iz* 48).

2 Recorded by Ibn Mājah, Aḥmad, and others. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā‘iz* 48).

3 One of the ten *ṣaḥābah* who were given tidings of *Jannah*. He fought most of the battles with the Prophet (ﷺ). He was assassinated in 36 H at the age of 62.

ونفس الله عنه كُربته، ووجدت رُوحه لها رُوحاً حين تخرجُ من جسده، وكانت له نوراً في صحيفته يوم القيامة.»

«Verily, I know a statement that no person says at the time of his death but his complexion shines by it, Allāh removes his distress, it provides his soul with security as it departs from his body, and it will be a light in his record on the Day of Resurrection.»

‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) said, “I know what it is!” Ṭalḥah asked, “Praised be Allāh! What is it?” He replied, “Do you know a statement greater than that with which he (رضي الله عنه) prompted his uncle at his death, ‘*Lā ilāha illa ‘llāh*’?” Ṭalḥah said, “You spoke the truth! By Allāh, this is it!”¹

SWEAT ON THE FOREHEAD

On visiting a sick man in Khurāsān², Buraydah Bin al-Khaṣīb (رضي الله عنه) found him at the verge of death and noticed his forehead covered with sweat. He said, “*Allāhu akbar!* I heard Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) say:

«موتُ المؤمن بعرق الجبين.»

«A believer dies with a perspiring forehead.»³

DYING ON FRIDAY

‘Abdullāh Bin ‘Amr (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«ما من مسلم يموت يوم الجمعة أو ليلة الجمعة إلا وقاه الله فتنة القبر.»

1 Recorded by Aḥmad, Ibn Ḥibbān, and al-Ḥākim. Verified to be authentic by al-Ḥākim, ath-Thahabī, and al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* 49).

2 An region in central Asia bordered by Amu Dar’ya River north and east, Hindu Kush Mountains south, and Persia west. Nowadays, it is shared between north-eastern Iran (Naysābūr), northern Afghanistan (Herāt and Balkh), and southern Turkmenistan (Marū).

3 Recorded by Aḥmad, an-Nasā’ī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Ḥākim, ath-Thahabī, and al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* 49).

«Any Muslim who dies on the day or night of *Jumu'ah* (Friday) is protected by Allāh from the tribulation of the grave.»¹

MARTYRDOM ON THE BATTLEFIELD

Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا، بَلْ أَحْيَاءٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ ﴿١٦٩﴾ فَرِحِينَ بِمَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ، وَيَسْتَبْشِرُونَ بِالَّذِينَ لَمْ يَلْحَقُوا بِهِمْ مَنْ خَلْفَهُمْ أَلَّا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿١٧٠﴾ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ بِنِعْمَةِ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَفَضْلٍ، وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٧١﴾﴾

«Do not think of those who are killed in Allāh's way as dead. No! They are alive, with their Lord, and are sustained (by Him). They rejoice in what Allāh has granted them of His favors; and they rejoice for the sake of those who have not yet joined them, whom they left behind (not yet martyred), that on them no fear will come, nor will they grieve. They rejoice in Allāh's blessings and favors, and that Allāh does not waste the rewards of the believers.»²

Al-Miqdām Bin Ma'd Yakrib, 'Ubādah Bin aṣ-Ṣāmiṭ, and Qays al-Juthāmī (رضي الله عنه), all narrated that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لشهيدي عند الله سبع خصال: يُغفر له في أول دفعة من دمه، ويرى مقعده من الجنة، ويُجار من عذاب القبر، ويأمن الفزع الأكبر،

1 Recorded by Aḥmad and at-Tirmithī; verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* 50).

2 *Āl 'Imrān* 3:169-171.

وَيُحَلَّى حَلِيَّةَ الْإِيمَانِ، وَيَزُوجُ مِنَ الْحُورِ الْعِينِ، وَيُشَفِّعُ فِي سَبْعِينَ
إِنْسَانًا مِنْ أَقَارِبِهِ.»

«A *shahīd* is awarded seven favors by Allāh: he is forgiven with the first gush of blood, shown his position in *Jannah*, protected from the torment of the grave, saved from the Great Fear (on Judgment Day), adorned with the adornments of *Īmān*, married to *al-Hūr ul-Īn* (fair women of *Jannah*), and allowed to intercede for seventy of his relatives.»¹

One of the Prophet's (ﷺ) companions reported that a man asked, "O Messenger of Allāh, why is it that all of the believers are tried in their graves, except a martyr?" He (ﷺ) replied:

«كفى ببارقة السيوف على رأسه فتنة.»

«The flashing of swords over his head was a sufficient trial for him.»²

It is to be noted that any Muslim who sincerely wishes for martyrdom will be granted it, even if he does not die in the battlefield. Abū Hurayrah and 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«من سأل الله الشهادة بصدق بلغه الله منازل الشهداء،

وإن مات على فراشه.»

«He who sincerely asks Allāh for *shahādah*, Allāh will grant him the levels of martyrs, even if he dies in bed.»³

1 Recorded by at-Tirmithī, Ibn Mājah, and Aḥmad; verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* 50).

2 Recorded by an-Nasā'ī; verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* 50).

3 Recorded by Muslim and others (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* 51).

PLAGUE

Ḥafṣah Bint Sīrīn reported that Mālik Bin Anas (رضي الله عنه) asked her, “How did Yaḥyā Bin ‘Umrah die?” She replied, “From plague.” He said, “Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«الطاعون شهادة لكل مسلم.»

«(Dying from) plague is a *shahādah* for every Muslim.»¹

‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that she asked Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) about plague, and he told her:

«إنه كان عذاباً يبعثه الله على من يشاء، فجعله الله رحمةً للمؤمنين، فليس من عبدٍ يقعُ الطاعونُ فيمكثُ في بلده صابراً يعلمُ أنه لن يصيبه إلا ما كتب الله له، إلا كان له مثلُ أجرِ الشهيد.»

«It is a form of punishment with which Allāh used to afflict whomever He willed. Then Allāh made it a mercy for the believers. Thus, whosoever is (in a land) where the plague strikes, and remains in his town patiently, knowing that nothing will happen to him except as Allāh has decreed, then he will be granted a reward similar to that of a *shahīd*.»²

‘Utbah Bin ‘Abdillāh as-Sulamī and al-‘Irbāḍ Bin Sāriyah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«يأتي الشهداءُ والمتوفون بالطاعون، فيقول أصحابُ الطاعون: “نحن شهداء.” فيقال: “انظروا فإن كانت جراحهم كجراح الشهداء تسيل دماً ریح المسك فهم شهداء.” فيجدونهم كذلك.»

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and others.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and others.

«(On Judgment Day) the martyrs and those who died from plague will come forth. The latter will say, “We are martyrs.” It is then said, “Look at their wounds: if they are similar to those of the martyrs, issuing blood that smells like musk, then they are martyrs.” And they are indeed found to be like that.»¹

ABDOMINAL ILLNESS

‘Abdullāh Bin Yasār reported that he was sitting with Sulaymān Bin Ṣard and Khālid Bin ‘Arfaṭah (رضي الله عنه) when they mentioned a man who died from an abdominal illness. Both of them expressed a wish to attend his funeral; and one of them said to the other, “Did Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) not say:

«من يقتلُه بطنُه فلن يُعذَّبَ في قبره.»

«He who is killed by (disease in) his abdomen will not be tortured in his grave.»²”

The other man replied, “Yes indeed!”²

PLEURISY

‘Uqbah Bin ‘Āmir (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«الميتُ من ذاتِ الجنبِ شهيدٌ.»

«He who dies from pleurisy³ is a *shahīd*.»⁴

1 Recorded by Aḥmad, an-Nasā’ī, and others. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* 52).

2 Recorded by Aḥmad, an-Nasā’ī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* 53).

3 Inflammation of the pleura (the thin serous membrane that covers a lung and lines that half of the chest cavity), characterized by difficult, painful breathing, and often accompanied by the exudation of liquid into the chest cavity.

4 Recorded by Aḥmad. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 2372).

DEFENDING ONE'S PROPERTY

‘Abdullāh Bin ‘Amr (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

« من أريدَ مالهَ بغيرِ حقٍ فقاتلِ فقتلَ فهو شهيدٌ . »

«If one’s property is endangered without right, and one is killed while defending it, he is a *shahīd*.»¹

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that a man asked Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ), “O Allāh’s Messenger! What should I do if a man came to snatch my money?” He replied, « فلا تعطه مالك . » **«Do not give it to him.»** He asked, “What if he fought me?” He replied, « فاتله . » **«Fight him back.»** He asked, “What if he killed me?” He replied, « فأنت شهيد . » **«You will then be a *shahīd*.»** He asked, “What if I killed him?” He (ﷺ) replied, « هو في النار . » **«He will be in the Fire.»²**

Mukhāriq (رضي الله عنه) reported that a man asked the Prophet (ﷺ), “What should I do if a man came to take my money?” He replied, « ذكّره بالله . » **«Remind him of Allāh.»** He asked, “What if he did not remember?” He replied, « فاستعن عليه من حولك من المسلمين . » **«Seek help from the Muslims around you against him.»** He asked, “What if there were no Muslims around me?” He replied, « فاستعن عليه السلطان . » **«Seek help from the authority.»** He asked, “What if the authority was not accessible and he was too close on me?” He (ﷺ) replied:

« قاتل دون مالك حتى تكون من شهداء الآخرة أو تمنع مالك . »

«Fight then for your money; you will either be among the *shahīds* in the hereafter, or safeguard your money.»³

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

2 Recorded by Muslim, Aḥmad, and an-Nasā’ī.

3 Recorded by Aḥmad and an-Nasā’ī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* 57).

GUARDING IN ALLĀH'S WAY

Salmān (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«رباط يوم وليلة خيرٌ من صيام شهر وقيامه. وإن مات جرى عليه عمله الذي كان يعملُهُ، وأُجرِيَّ عليه رزقُهُ، وأَمِنَ الفتان.»

«Standing guard (on the battle ground) for one day and night is better than fasting the days and praying the nights of an entire month. And if he (the guard) dies, his (good) deeds that he used to do continue to accumulate for him (until Judgment Day), he is provided with provisions (from *Jannah*), and he is saved from the interrogator (angels in the grave).»¹

Fuḍālah Bin 'Ubayd (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«كُلُّ مَيِّتٍ يُخْتَمُ عَلَىٰ عَمَلِهِ، إِلَّا الَّذِي مَاتَ مُرَابِطًا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ، فَإِنَّهُ يُنَمَّى لَهُ عَمَلُهُ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ، وَيَأْمَنُ فِتْنَةَ الْقَبْرِ.»

«Every person's deeds are sealed when he dies, except for the one who dies while guarding in Allāh's way: his (good) deeds continue to be augmented for him until Resurrection Day, and he is secured from the grave's trial.»²

DYING WHILE DOING A GOOD DEED

Jābir (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«يُبعث كل عبد على ما مات عليه.»

1 Recorded by Muslim and others.

2 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Ḥākim (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* 58).

«Every ‘abd will be resurrected upon the same thing upon which he died.»¹

Ḥuthayfah (رضي الله عنه) reported that he braced Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) to his chest; and he (ﷺ) told him:

«من قال ”لا إله إلا الله“ أبتغاء وجهِ الله خُتم له بها دخل الجنة،
ومن صام يوماً أبتغاء وجهِ الله خُتم له بها دخل الجنة، ومن
تصدق بصدقةٍ أبتغاء وجهِ الله خُتم له بها دخل الجنة.»

«He who says, “Lā ilāha illa ‘llāh,” seeking by that Allāh’s Face, and his deeds are sealed with it (as his last deed), enters *Jannah*; he who fasts one day, seeking by that Allāh’s Face, and his deeds are sealed with it, enters *Jannah*; and he who gives charity, seeking by that Allāh’s Face, and his deeds are sealed with it, enters *Jannah*.»²

Anas, Abū Umāmah, Abū ‘Inabah, and ‘Amr Bin al-Ḥamq (رضي الله عنه) all reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إذا أراد الله بعبدٍ خيراً استعمله (أو طهره أو غسله)، فتح له
(أو وفقه أو ألهمه) عملاً صالحاً قبل موته، حتى يرضى عليه من
حوله، ثم يقبضه عليه.»

«When Allāh wills good for a servant of His, He purifies him: He directs him to doing a good deed before death, so that those around him are pleased with him. He (ﷺ) then takes away his life while he is doing it.»³

1 Recorded by Muslim and others.

2 Recorded by Aḥmad. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* 58-59).

3 Recorded by Aḥmad, at-Tirmithī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmi’* no. 304-307).

EXECUTION BY AN OPPRESSIVE RULER

Jābir Bin ‘Abdillāh (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«سيد الشهداء عند الله حمزة بن عبد المطلب، ورجل قام
إلى إمام جائر فأمره ونهاه، فقتله.»

«The chief of martyrs is Ḥamzah, as well as a man who stands before an unjust ruler, commanding and forbidding him, and he (the ruler) kills him.»¹

PRAISE BY RIGHTEOUS MUSLIMS

When a minimum of two righteous, knowledgeable, and truthful Muslims praise a dead person with good things, based on their acquaintance with him, this guarantees *Jannah* for him.

Anas and Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) passed by a funeral and praised the dead person for good things (that he did). Others followed and praised him saying, “As far as we know, he loved Allāh and His Messenger.” Allāh’s Prophet (ﷺ) said, «وَجَبَّتْ، وَجَبَّتْ، وَجَبَّتْ.» **«Granted, granted, granted!»** (On another occasion,) he (ﷺ) passed by a funeral, and someone condemned the dead person for bad things (that he did). Others followed and condemned him saying, “What a bad person he was indeed in adhering to Allāh’s *dīn*.” Allāh’s Prophet (ﷺ) said, «وَجَبَّتْ، وَجَبَّتْ، وَجَبَّتْ.» **«Granted, granted, granted!»** ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) then said:

“I would sacrifice my father and mother for you! When we passed by a funeral of a person who was praised for good deeds you said, **«Granted, granted, granted;»** and when we passed by a funeral of a person who was blamed for bad deeds you said, **«Granted, granted, granted!»?**”

Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) replied:

1 Recorded by al-Ḥākim and al-Khaṭīb. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 374).

«من أثنتم عليه خيراً ووجب له الجنة، ومن أثنتم عليه شراً ووجب له النار. الملائكة شُهَدَاءُ اللَّهِ فِي السَّمَاءِ، وَأَنْتُمْ شُهَدَاءُ اللَّهِ فِي الْأَرْضِ، أَنْتُمْ شُهَدَاءُ اللَّهِ فِي الْأَرْضِ، أَنْتُمْ شُهَدَاءُ اللَّهِ فِي الْأَرْضِ. إِنْ لِلَّهِ مَلَائِكَةٌ تَنْطِقُ عَلَى أَلْسِنَةِ بَنِي آدَمَ بِمَا فِي الْمَرْءِ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ وَالشَّرِّ.»

«(A deceased) whom you praise will be granted *Jannah*. And he whom you condemn will be granted the Fire. The angels are Allāh's witnesses in the heavens; and you (the believers) are Allāh's witnesses on earth; you are Allāh's witnesses on earth; you are Allāh's witnesses on earth! Verily, Allāh has angels who speak upon the tongues of the human beings, telling of any good or evil that is in a person.»¹

Abū al-Aswad ad-Dīlī (رضي الله عنه) reported that he went to al-Madīnah (during the rule of 'Umar). At that time, there was an outbreak of disease in al-Madīnah, causing people to die in large numbers. He visited 'Umar (رضي الله عنه), and was sitting with him when a funeral procession passed by. The deceased was praised by some people; and 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) said, "Granted!" He asked him, "What do you mean by, 'granted', O Commander of the Believers?" He replied, "I just said what the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«أَيُّمَا مُسْلِمٍ شَهِدَ لَهُ أَرْبَعَةٌ بِخَيْرٍ أَدْخَلَهُ اللَّهُ الْجَنَّةَ.»

«Whenever four (Muslims) testify on behalf of a (dead) Muslim, Allāh will let him into *Jannah*.»

We asked him, 'How about three (Muslims)?' He (رضي الله عنه) replied, «وثلاثة.» «**And three.**» We asked him, 'How about two (Muslims)?' He replied, «وأثنان.» «**And two.**» But we did not ask him about one (Muslim's testimony).»²

1 A combined report recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, Aḥmad, and others.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, an-Nasā'ī, and others.

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«ما من مسلم يموت فيشهد له أربعة من أهل أبيات جيرانه الأديين
أنهم لا يعلمون عنه إلا خيراً إلا قال الله تعالى وتبارك: "قد قبلتُ
بشهادتِكُم وغفرتُ له ما لا تعلمون.»

«Any Muslim who dies and four of his closest neighbors testify that they only know good about him, Allāh (ﷻ) says, "I accept your testimony, and forgive that which you do not know (about him).»¹

It should be noted that:

- a) The testimony indicated in the above *ḥadīths* is not limited to the *ṣahābah*, but applies as well to the believers who come after them, following their way in faith, knowledge, and truthfulness.²
- b) Even though the last *ḥadīth* requires four Muslim witnesses, the previous *ḥadīth* of 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) reduces this requirement to two.
- c) Some people are prompted during funerals to testify about the good deeds of a deceased person, even though they do not have knowledge or acquaintance with him. They ignorantly think that this would benefit him! This is indeed an ugly innovation in the *dīn*, because the only useful testimony is that which is conducted based on a witness's true knowledge of the situation, as is clearly indicated in the first *ḥadīth* (of Anas) above.

MISCELLANEOUS SIGNS

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) asked, «ما تعدّون الشهيد فيكم؟» **Whom do you consider to be a *shahīd* among**

1 Recorded by Aḥmad, Ibn Ḥibbān, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* 61-62).

2 Al-Ḥāfiẓ has a good discussion of this in *Fath ul-Bārī*.

you?> The *ṣahābah* (ﷺ) answered, “Whoever is killed (fighting) in the way of Allāh is a *shahīd*.” He said, «إن شهداء أمتي إذاً لقليل!» **<The *shahīds* of my *ummah* would then be few!>** They said, “Who are they then, O Allāh’s Messenger?” He (ﷺ) said:

«من قتل في سبيل الله فهو شهيد، ومن مات في سبيل الله
فهو شهيد، ومن مات في الطاعون فهو شهيد، ومن مات في
البطن فهو شهيد، والغريق شهيد.»

<He who is killed in the way of Allāh is a *shahīd*, he who dies (naturally) in the way of Allāh is a *shahīd*, he who dies from plague is a *shahīd*, he who dies from abdominal illness is a *shahīd*, and he who dies by drowning is a *shahīd*.>¹

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«الشهداء خمسة: المطعون، والمبطون، والغرق، وصاحب الهدم،
والشهيد في سبيل الله.»

<*Shahīds* are five types: he who dies from plague, he who dies from an abdominal illness, he who dies by drowning, he who dies under a collapsed building, and he who is killed (fighting) in the way of Allāh.>²

‘Ubādah Bin Aṣ-Ṣāmit (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) visited ‘Abdullāh Bin Rawāḥah while he was sick. He could not move (because of his illness) to make space for the Prophet (ﷺ) him to sit beside him on his mattress. The Prophet (ﷺ) asked him, «أتدرون الشهداء من أمتي؟» **<Do you know who are the *shahīds* of my *ummah*?>** He replied, “The Muslims who are killed in battle.” The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

1 Recorded by Muslim and Aḥmad. A similar *ḥadīth* is recorded by al-Ḥākim and al-Bayhaqī from ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه).

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

«إن شهداء أمتي إذاً لقليل! قتل المسلم شهادة، والطاعون شهادة،
والمرأة يقتلها ولدُها جمعاءً شهادة، يجربها ولدُها بسرِّره إلى الجنة.»

«The *shahīds* of my *ummah* would then be few indeed! A Muslim being killed (in battle) is a *shahādah*, dying from plague is a *shahādah*, and a women's death because of the baby in her womb is a *shahādah* — her baby will pull her with its umbilical cord to *Jannah*.»¹

Jābir Bin 'Atīk (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«الشهداء سبعة سوى القتل في سبيل الله: المطعون شهيداً، والغرق شهيداً، وصاحبُ ذاتِ الجنبِ شهيداً، والمبطونُ شهيداً، والحرقُ شهيداً، والذي يموت تحت الهدمِ شهيداً، والمرأةُ تموتُ بجمعِ شهيدة.»

«In addition to being killed in the way of Allāh, *shahīds* are seven types: he who dies from plague is a *shahīd*, he who dies from drowning is a *shahīd*, he who dies from pleurisy is a *shahīd*, he who dies from abdominal illness is a *shahīd*, he who dies from burning is a *shahīd*, he who dies under a collapsed building is a *shahīd*, and a woman who dies with a child in her womb is a *shahādah*.»²

Salmān (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) asked (the *ṣaḥābah*), «ما تعدّون الشهيدَ فيكم؟» «**Whom do you consider a *shahīd* among you?**» They (رضي الله عنهم) answered, “Whoever is killed (fighting) in the way of Allāh.” He said, «إن شهداء أمتي إذاً لقليل!» «**The *shahīds* of my *ummah* would then be very few!**» He added:

- 1 Recorded by Aḥmad, ad-Dārimī, and others. It has other narrations from Ṣafwān Bin Umayyah, 'Uqbah Bin 'Āmir, and Rāshid Bin Ḥubaysh (رضي الله عنه), recorded by Aḥmad, an-Nasā'ī, and others. It is verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* 53-54).
- 2 Recorded by Mālik, Abū Dāwūd, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Ḥākim, ath-Thahabī, and al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* 55).

«القتل في سبيل الله شهادة، والتفساء شهادة، والحرق شهادة،
والغرق شهادة، والسلُّ شهادة، والبطنُ شهادة.»

«Being killed for Allāh's cause is a *shahādah*, a woman's death during delivery is a *shahādah*, death from burning is a *shahādah*, death from drowning is a *shahādah*, death from tuberculosis is a *shahādah*, and death from abdominal illness is a *shahādah*»¹

Saīd Bin Zayd (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«من قُتل دون ماله فهو شهيد، ومن قتل دون أهله فهو شهيد،
ومن قتل دون دينه فهو شهيد، ومن قتل دون دمه فهو شهيد.»

«He who is killed while defending his property is a *shahīd*, he who is killed while defending his family is a *shahīd*, he who is killed while defending his *dīn* is a *shahīd*, and he who is killed while defending his blood (person) is a *shahīd*»²

Suwayd Bin Muqarrin and Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«من قتل دون مظلّمته فهو شهيد.»

«He who is killed while fending an oppression against him is a *shahīd*»³

1 Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ*. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* 55-56).

2 Recorded by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, an-Nasā'ī, and at-Tirmithī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* 57).

3 Recorded by Aḥmad and an-Nasā'ī. Verified to be *ḥasan* (collectively, despite weakness in each of the two reports) by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* 57).

Untrue Signs

Some people consider the occurrence of certain natural phenomena, such as eclipses, earthquakes, etc., when someone dies, an indication of the greatness and worth of that person before Allāh (ﷻ). This is a superstitious belief that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) rejected when his son Ibrāhīm died and the sun was eclipsed on the same day. He (ﷺ) hastened to give a speech to the people in which he said:

«أما بعدُ، أيها الناسُ، إن أهل الجاهلية كانوا يقولون: "إنَّ الشمسَ والقمرَ لا يَخْسِفان إلاَّ لموتٍ عظيمٍ." وإنهما آيتان من آيات الله، لا يَنخسفان لموت أحدٍ ولا لحياته. ولكن يَخوِّف الله به عباده، فإذا رأيتُم شيئاً من ذلك فأفزعوا إلى ذكره ودعائه وأستغفاره، وإلى الصدقةِ والعتاقةِ والصلاةِ في المساجد حتى تنكشف.»

«Indeed, the people of *Jāhiliyyah* used to think that the sun and moon would not eclipse except when a great person dies! Indeed, they (the sun and moon) are among Allāh's signs. They do not eclipse for any person's death or life. Allāh only frightens His servants with that; so when you observe it (an eclipse) hasten to remembering Him, supplicating to Him, seeking His forgiveness, giving charity, freeing slaves, and praying in the *masjids* until it ends.»¹

Signs of an Evil End

The following table presents a list of the evil signs, numbered from 1 to 8 (not necessarily in order of importance). The evidence for these signs is presented in the following sections.

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

#	Signs of an Evil End
1	Dying while in a state of disbelief.
2	Committing Suicide.
3	Dying while performing an act of disobedience.
4	Refusing to say the <i>shahādah</i> at the time of death.
5	Being condemned after death by the righteous Muslims.
6	Addiction to alcohol.
7	Ill-treating the parents.
8	Having no <i>ghayrah</i> for the family.
9	Sudden death.
10	Dying before repenting from a major sin.

Evidences for Bad Signs

DYING WHILE IN A STATE OF DISBELIEF

This is the major reason for punishment after death. There are numerous texts from the Qurʾān and Sunnah confirming it. It applies to any person who is invited to Islām and rejects it until his soul departs from his body. Such a person abides in Hell forever.

Jābir Bin ʿAbdillāh (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«من مات لا يشرك بالله شيئاً دخل الجنة.»

«ومن مات يشرك بالله شيئاً دخل النار.»

«He who dies joining none with Allāh (in worship) enters *Jannah*. And he who dies joining anything with Allāh will enter the Fire.»¹

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

DYING WHILE PERFORMING AN ACT OF DISOBEDIENCE

Allāh (ﷻ) says:

«إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَوَفَّاهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ ظَالِمِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ، قَالُوا فِيْمَ كُنْتُمْ، قَالُوا كُنَّا مُسْتَضْعَفِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ، قَالُوا أَلَمْ تَكُنْ أَرْضُ اللَّهِ وَاسِعَةً فَتُهَاجِرُوا فِيهَا؟ فَأُولَئِكَ مَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا ﴿٩٧﴾ النساء ٩٧»

«Verily! As for those whom the angels take (in death) while they are wronging themselves, they (the angels) ask them, “In what (condition) were you?” They reply, “We were weak and oppressed on earth.” They ask them, “Was not the earth of Allāh spacious enough for you to emigrate in it?” Such people will find their abode in Hell — What an evil destination!»¹

Jābir (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«من مات على شيء بعثه الله عليه.»

«Whoever dies while doing something, Allāh resurrects him while he is still doing it.»²

COMMITTING SUICIDE

Sahl Bin Sa’d as-Sā’idī (رضي الله عنه) reported that in one of Allāh’s Messenger’s (ﷺ) battles against the pagans, a particular member of the Muslim army was fighting well, attacking and killing every foe that he could reach. When the fighting adjourned in the evening, some of the *ṣaḥābah* commented, “O Allāh’s Messenger! None of us has accomplished as much as did so-and-so today!” The Messenger (ﷺ)

1 *An-Nisā* 4:97.

2 Recorded by Aḥmad and al-Hākim. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 283). Another report from Jābir, recorded by Muslim and others, has preceded under the heading, “Dying While Doing a Good Deed”.

responded, «أما إنه من أهل النار.» **<Verily, he is one of the people of the Fire.>** On hearing this, the *ṣaḥābah* became very disturbed and said, “Which one among us will go to *Jannah* if this man went to the Fire?” One of them decided to watch that man closely on the following day. The *ṣaḥābī* followed the man and saw him get wounded, after which the man killed himself by putting the point of his sword between his breasts and dragging himself until he was on top of it, causing it to come out from between his shoulders. The *ṣaḥābī* went back to the Prophet (ﷺ) and told him of what he saw. The *ṣaḥābah* were amazed to hear that, and the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إن الرجل ليعمل الزمن الطويل بعمل أهل الجنة، فيما يبدو للناس، وهو من أهل النار، وإن الرجل ليعمل الزمن الطويل بعمل أهل النار، فيما يبدو للناس، وهو من أهل الجنة. وإنما الأعمال بالخواتيم.»

<Verily! For a long time, a man would do the deeds of the people of *Jannah* —as it appear to the people— but he is from the people of the Fire. And for a long time, a man would do the deeds of the people of the Fire —as it appear to the people— but he is from the people of *Jannah*. Verily! The deeds are only by their conclusion.>¹

A similar incident was reported by Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه). He said that during the battle of Khaybar, Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said about a man who claimed to be a Muslim, «هذا من أهل النار.» **<He is from the people of the Fire.>** During the battle, that man fought so well that some of the Muslims almost doubted (the Prophet’s declaration). But when the man was subsequently wounded badly, he pulled an arrow from his quiver and stabbed his throat with it. Some men ran to Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) saying, “O Allāh’s Messenger! Allāh has confirmed your promise. That man has committed suicide and killed himself.” Upon hearing this, Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

«قم يا بلال فأذّن أنه لا يدخل الجنة إلا مؤمن،
إن الله يُؤيّدُ الدينَ بالرجلِ الفاجر.»

«Rise, O Bilāl, and announce to the people that no one will enter *Jannah* but a believer, and that Allāh reinforces the religion even with a wicked man.»¹

Based on these and other similar reports, one may not call a Muslim who dies fighting for the cause of Allāh a *shahīd*. *Shahādah* is a judgment regarding a matter of *ghayb* only known to Allāh. Although we hope that one who died like this is a *shahīd*, we cannot claim this for him with certitude.²

REFUSING TO SAY THE *SHAHĀDAH* AT THE TIME OF DEATH

Sa‘īd Bin al-Musayyib (رضي الله عنه) reported from his father (رضي الله عنه) that when the Prophet’s (ﷺ) uncle Abū Ṭālib approached death, he said to him:

«يا عم! قل ”لا إله إلا الله“، كلمة أشهد لك بها عند الله.»

«My uncle! Say, “*Lā ilāha illa ‘Llāh*,” a statement with which I will testify for you before Allāh.»

But he would not say it, fearing to displease the disbelievers who were present. Thus the last thing he said before death was, “I am upon the faith of ‘Abd ul-Maṭṭalib.”³

Thus, his benevolence and help to the Muslims did not avail him — except to reduce the amount of torture that he receives in the Fire. Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«أهون اهل النار عذاباً أبو طالب. وهو منتعل
بنعلين من نار يغلي منهما دماغه.»

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī.

2 This was expressed by al-Bukhārī (رضي الله عنه) when he cited the above *ḥadīth*, and was further supported by Ibn Ḥajar in *fath ul-Bārī*.

3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

«The lightest in punishment among the people is Abū Ṭālib: He wears two shoes from fire which cause his brain to boil.»¹

Furthermore, there are numerous reports from the *salaf* about individuals who opposed the Sunnah and established *bid'ahs*, and who, despite prompting, could not say the *Shahādah* at the time of death.

ACCUSATIONS FROM THE RIGHTEOUS MUSLIMS

Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«من أثنيتم عليه شراً وجبت له النار... إن لله

ملائكة تنطقُ على السنةِ بني آدم بما في المرء من الخير والشر.»

«(A deceased) whom you condemn will be granted the Fire. Verily, Allāh has angels who speak upon the tongues of the human beings, telling of any good or evil that is in a person.»²

ADDICTION TO ALCOHOL

Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«مدمنُ الخمرِ إن مات لقيَ الله كعابدٍ وثنٍ.»

«He who dies addicted to *khamr* will meet Allāh (on Judgment Day) as an idol worshiper.»³

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others. The full text of this *ḥadīth* has been presented under "Praise by the Righteous Muslims" of the good signs.

3 Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* and Abū Nu'aym in *al-Ḥulyah*. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 677).

ILL-TREATING THE PARENTS AND LACKING *GHAYRAH*

Ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«ثلاثة قد حرّم الله عليهم الجنة: مدمن الخمر، والعاق،
والديوث الذي يُقرُّ في أهله الخُبث.»

«Three persons are prohibited from entering *Jannah*: one who is addicted to *khamr*, one who ill-treats his parents, and one who has no *ghayrah* ¹ and permits filth in his family.» ²

SUDDEN DEATH

Death that strikes a person suddenly, giving him no chance to repent, do good, or even say the *Shahādah*, is a sign of Allāh’s wrath. ‘Ubayd Ullāh Bin Khālid (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«موتُ الفجأة أخذة غضب.»

«A sudden death is a wrathful take.» ³

DYING BEFORE REPENTING FROM A MAJOR SIN

There are many texts describing major sins and indicating that those who commit them will not enter *Jannah* — except after severe punishment in some cases. Three of those have been included in Ibn ‘Umar’s *ḥadīth* above. Examples of other such sins are:

- * One who commits a murder.
- * One who commits *zinā*, especially with one’s neighbor.

1 *Ghayrah*: Earnest concern and sense of honor. One who lacks *ghayrah* for his family is called *dayyūth*. He does not care if other men illegitimately approach his wife, mother, sister, or daughter. Rather, he sometimes encourages such actions.

2 Recorded by Aḥmad and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmi’* no. 3052).

3 Recorded by Aḥmad and Abū Dāwūd. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmi’* no. 6631).

- * One who deliberately lies against the Prophet (ﷺ).
- * An arrogant person, especially if he is poor.
- * One who backbites a Muslim.
- * A woman who imitates men.
- * One who lies (sometimes with oaths) to make his business prosper.
- * One who performs an act of worship for a worldly benefit.
- * A stingy person who announces anything he gives (for Allāh) and expects to be paid back for it.
- * A sinful old man.
- * One who likes promoting sins among the Muslims, etc.

A person committing one of these sins, or others that have been indicated in the Book and *Sunnah*, should desist and repent immediately, lest death comes to him in a state of disobedience, and the threats for committing them apply to him.

CHAPTER 5

WASHING THE BODY

Ruling

Washing the dead body is a communal obligation (*farḍ kifāyah*), because the Prophet (ﷺ) commanded the Muslims to perform it in various *ḥadīths*, such as that of his daughter's death, and that of the death of the man in *iḥrām* — both cited below.

The washing process dates back to our father Ādam (عليه السلام). Ubayy Bin Ka'b reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لَمَّا تُوفِّيَ آدَمُ غَسَلَتْهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ بِالْمَاءِ وَتَرًا، وَأَحَدُوا لَهُ،
وَقَالُوا: هَذِهِ سُنَّةُ آدَمَ فِي وَلَدِهِ.»

«When Ādam died, the angels washed him with water an odd number of times, dug his *lahd*¹, and said, “This will be a guidance from Ādam to his descendants.”»²

Therefore, a number of Muslims must hasten to wash the body of a dead Muslim and prepare it for burial.

Reports from the Sunnah

The most important reports in the Sunnah regarding washing the body are those of washing the Prophet's (ﷺ) daughter Zaynab, and washing him (ﷺ).

1 See the description in the chapter on burial.

2 Recorded by al-Ḥākim and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmi'* no. 5207).

WASHING ZAYNAB, THE PROPHET'S DAUGHTER

Umm 'Aṭīyah (رضي الله عنها) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) came in while they (she and other women) were washing his daughter Zaynab (رضي الله عنها). He instructed them:

«أغسلنها ثلاثاً أو خمساً أو سبعاً، أو أكثر من ذلك إن رأيتن ذلك،
بماء وسدر.»

«Wash her three, five, seven, or more times if you find it necessary — using water and (ground leaves of) lotus.»

He further instructed them:

«أبدأن بيمينها ومواضع الوضوء منها.»

«Start with her right side and the places of *wuḍū'* of her body.»

She asked him, “Odd number?” He replied:

«نعم، واجعلن في الآخرة كافوراً أو شيئاً من كافور. فإذا فرغتن فاذنني.»

«Yes; and include on the last time some camphor. When you finish, inform me.»

They washed her as he instructed, untied her hair, washed it, divided it into three plaits (the two sides and the center), and arranged it behind her head. When they finished, they informed him; he (ﷺ) gave them his *izār*¹ and said, «أشعرئها إياه.»² **Wrap her with it.**

This *ḥadīth* is very important in providing directions for washing the dead, among which are the following:

1 *Izār*: Lower garment, tied by men around the waist like a skirt.

2 This is a collective report from al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

- The number of times to wash the body.
- The material to be mixed with water for cleaning the body.
- The sequence of washing.
- The perfume or embalmment to use with the final wash.
- How to arrange the hair after washing.
- Shrouding the body.

There is no text in the Sunnah specifying the proportions of mixing water with lotus and camphor. Figure 5.1 provides approximate measures commonly used by Muslims.

WASHING ALLĀH'S MESSENGER

It is important to have a person of knowledge of the Sunnah direct the washing process, in order to guide the others and correctly interpret what is observed. Ash-Sha'bī reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) was washed by 'Alī, al-Faḍl Bin al-'Abbās, and Usāmah Bin Zayd (رضي الله عنه).¹

'Alī (رضي الله عنه) reported:

“When I washed Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ), I expected to observe on him what is normally observed in dead people, but saw none of that. He (ﷺ) was good (in looks and smell) alive and dead.”²

'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that when the *ṣaḥābah* wanted to wash the Prophet (ﷺ), they said:

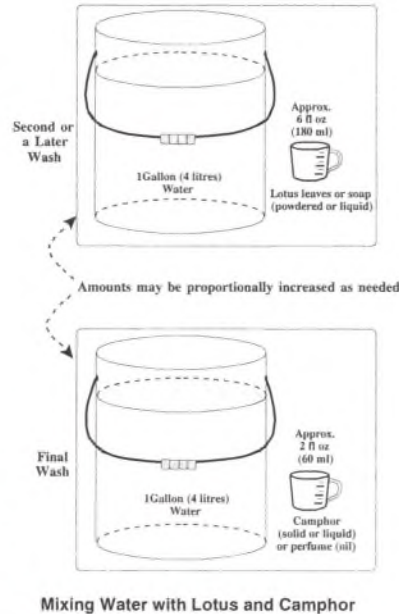


Figure 5.1

1 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd. Al-Albānī verified it to be *mursal* with an authentic *isnād* (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* 66).
 2 Recorded by Ibn Mājah, al-Ḥākim, and al-Bayhaqī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* 68).

“By Allāh, we do not know whether to undress Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) like we do for our deceased, or wash him in his clothes.”

When they differed, Allāh made them fall asleep, until each one’s chin hit his chest. A person whom they did not know then addressed them from a corner of the house saying:

“Wash the Prophet (ﷺ) in his clothes.”

So they washed him with his (long) shirt on, pouring the water over the shirt, and rubbing his body through the shirt. ‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) commented on this:

“Had I known then what I knew later, none should have washed the Prophet (ﷺ) but his wives.”^{1, 2}

Covering the ‘*awrah*

As is indicated above, the Prophet’s (ﷺ) body was kept covered throughout the washing process. The purpose of that was to insure that his ‘*awrah* did not accidentally become exposed.

Covering the ‘*awrah* is an obligation that the Muslims must fulfill — not only for themselves, but also for the dead that they may happen to wash, shroud, etc.

Mu‘āwiyah Bin Ḥayadah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the *ṣaḥābah* asked, “O Allāh’s Messenger! In regard to our ‘*awrah*, when are we required to cover it, and when are we permitted to uncover?” He (ﷺ) replied:

«احفظ عورتك، إلا من زوجتك أو ما ملكت يمينك.»

<Guard your ‘*awrah*, except from your wife or female slave.>

-
- 1 She is probably referring to the accusations that were made later toward the companions, including her father, who did not participate in the washing.
 - 2 Recorded by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* 66).

They asked him, “What if men are with other men?” He replied:

« إن استطعت ألا يرينها أحدٌ فلا يرينها . »

<If you can manage to let no one see it, then no one may see it.>

They asked him, “What if one is alone by oneself?” He (ﷺ) replied:

« الله أحقُّ أن يُستحيا منه من الناس . »

<Allāh deserves that you be shy of Him more than the people do.>¹

For a man, the *‘awrah* extends from the navel to the knee. ‘Alī (ﷺ) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ):

« لا تكشفُ فخذك، ولا تنظرُ إلى فخذِ حي ولا ميتٍ . »

<Do not expose your thigh, nor look at the thigh of a living or dead person.>²

‘Abdullāh Bin Ja‘far (ﷺ) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

« ما بين السُرَّةِ والرُّكبةِ عورةٌ . »

<The area between the navel and knee is a ‘awrah.>³

‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Abbās (ﷺ) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

« الفخذُ عورةٌ . »

<The thigh is a ‘awrah.>⁴

1 Recorded by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, Ibn Mājah, and others. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmi‘* no. 203).

2 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmi‘* no. 7440).

3 Recorded by al-Ḥākim. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmi‘* no. 5583).

4 Recorded by at-Tirmithī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmi‘*

With non-*maḥram* males, the *‘awrah* for a woman is all of her body (except for the face and two hands). With Muslim women and *maḥrams*, her *‘awrah* extends from her lower neck to her mid-shin. This excludes the head, neck, arms, and feet, which are the locations of ornaments and jewelry referred to in the *āyah*:

«... وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا، وَلْيَضْرِبْنَ بِخُمُرِهِنَّ عَلَى جُيُوبِهِنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا لِبُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ آبَائِهِنَّ أَوْ آبَاءِ بُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ أَبْنَائِهِنَّ أَوْ أَبْنَاؤِ بُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ إِخْوَانِهِنَّ أَوْ بَنِي إِخْوَانِهِنَّ أَوْ بَنِي أَخَوَاتِهِنَّ أَوْ نِسَائِهِنَّ...» النور ٣١

«... And (let the believing women) not expose their adornment except that which is ordinarily apparent, and (let them) draw their head-covers over their chests, and not display their (locations of) adornment except to their husbands, fathers, husbands' fathers, sons, husbands' sons, brothers, brothers' sons, sisters' sons, Muslim women, ...»¹

The rule of covering the *‘awrah* should be applied to every Muslim during the washing (Figure 5.2). This is done by covering the *‘awrah* throughout the washing process with a towel or thick sheet that does not become transparent when wet. As much as possible, the body

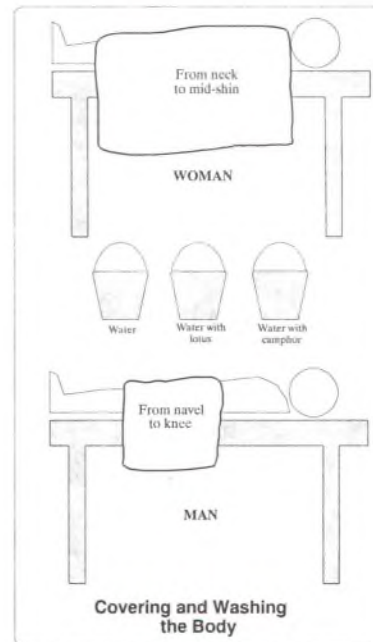


Figure 5.2

no. 4280).

1 An-Nūr 24:31.

should be washed through the covering sheet, making sure not to expose or touch the *'awrah*.

Special Cases

WASHING A SPOUSE

It is permissible for a woman to wash her dead husband, as expressed by 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها) earlier (p. 98). Al-Bayhaqī commented on 'Ā'ishah's statement by saying:

“This shows that she was eager to do that; and one may not be eager for something unless it is permissible.”¹

Similarly, it is permissible for a husband to wash his dead wife. 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) returned from a funeral at al-Baqī' to find her suffering from a headache and saying, “Oh my head!” He (ﷺ) said:

«بل أنا وأرأساه! ما ضرك لو مت قبلي، فغسلتُكِ، وكفنتُكِ،
ثم صليتُ عليكِ ودفنتُكِ؟»

«Rather, it is my head that is aching! What would hurt you if you die before me, and I wash you, shroud you, and then pray *janāzah* for you and bury you?»²

WASHING A MAN IN A STATE OF *IHRĀM*

In Ibn 'Abbās's (رضي الله عنه) earlier *hadīth* (p. 25) regarding the man who died in a state of *ihrām*, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«أغسلوه بماءٍ وسِدْرٍ، ولا تُحنطوه (ولا تطيبوه) ...»

1 *As-Sunan ul-Kubrā* 3:387.

2 Recorded by Aḥmad, Ibn Mājah, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* 67).

«Wash him with water and (ground leaves of) lotus;
and do not embalm or perfume him ...»¹

WASHING MARTYRS?

The Muslims who are killed (by their enemies) on the battlefield are given the treatment of martyrs in terms of washing, shrouding, *janāzah* prayer, and burial. As explained earlier (p. 90), this does not impose that they truly died as martyrs, because martyrdom is known to no one except Allāh (ﷻ).

On the other hand, the Muslims who are promised the rewards of martyrs due to specific manners in which they died (see p. 82 and thereafter) are not given the treatment of martyrs in terms of washing, shrouding, *janāzah* prayer, and burial.

Those who die on the battlefield should not be washed, even if they were *junub*². Jābir (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) did not wash the martyrs on the day of Uḥud and said:

«أنا شهيد على هؤلاء، أَدْفِنُوهُمْ (أَوْ لُقُّوهُمْ) فِي دِمَائِهِمْ، فَإِنَّهُ
لَيْسَ جَرِيحٌ يُجْرَحُ فِي اللَّهِ إِلَّا جَاءَ وَجُرْحُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَدْمِي،
لَوْنُهُ لَوْنُ الدَّمِ، وَرِيحُهُ رِيحُ الْمِسْكِ.»

«I am their witness: Wrap and bury them in their blood! No person is wounded for Allāh's cause but will come on the Day of Resurrection with his wound fresh, having the color of blood and the smell of musk.»³

In another report, Jābir (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) did not pray *janāzah* for them and said:

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

2 A person who is in a state of *janābah*, which is the state of impurity following a sexual intercourse or ejaculation. It is only removed through a ritual bath or *ghusl*.

3 This is a collective report recorded by al-Bukhārī, Abū Dāwūd, and others (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* 72).

« لا تغسلوهم، فإن كلَّ جرحٍ يفوحُ مسكاً يومَ القيامة. »

«Do not wash them, because every wound will be smelling of musk on the Day of Resurrection.»¹

Abū Barzah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) was in a battle, and Allāh granted him victory. He said to his companions, «هل تفقدون من أحد؟» «Do you miss anyone?» They replied, “Yes, such-and-such, and such-and-such, and such-and-such.” He asked again, «هل تفقدون من أحد؟» «Do you miss anyone else?» They replied, “No.” He said, «لكنني أفقد جُلَيْبِيباً، فأطلبوه.» «But I miss Julaybīb, so look for him.» They looked for him among the dead, and found him beside seven that he had killed of the enemy before they killed him. The Prophet (ﷺ) stood over him and said:

«قتل سبعة ثم قتلوه! هذا مني وأنا منه، هذا مني وأنا منه.»

«He killed seven before they killed him! He is from me, and I am from him. He is from me, and I am from him.»

He said this twice or three times, then extended his arms and held him, so that his bed was none less than the arms of the Prophet (ﷺ). A grave was dug for him, and he was buried. In this *ḥadīth*, Abū Barzah did not mention that he was washed.²

In regard to the martyrdom of Ḥanẓalah Bin Abī ‘Āmir in the battle of Uḥūd, ‘Abdullāh Bin az-Zubayr (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إن صاحبكم تغسله الملائكة، فأسألوا صاحبته.»

«Your friend is being washed by the angels, so ask his wife (about the reason).»

1 Recorded by Aḥmad and al-Bayhaqī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* 73).

2 Recorded by Muslim and others.

They asked her and she told them that he went to the battle while he was *junub*, as soon as he heard the call for war. The Prophet (ﷺ) then said, «لذلك غسلته الملائكة.» **«This is why the angels washed him.»**¹

Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) reported,

“Ḥamzah Bin ‘Abd ul-Muṭṭalib and Ḥanzalah Bin ar-Rāhib were both killed while they were *junub*, so Allāh’s Messenger said, «رأيت الملائكة تغسلهما.» **«I saw the angels washing them.»**²

Reward for Washing a Muslim

Abū Rāfi‘ (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«من غَسَلَ مسلماً فكتَمَ عليه غفرَ له اللهُ أربعين مرةً (أو كبيرة). ومن حفر حُفرةً له فأجَنَّهُ أُجْرِيَّ عليه كأجرِ مسكنٍ أسكنه إياه إلى يومِ القيامة. ومن كَفَّنَه كساه اللهُ يومَ القيامة من سندسٍ وإستبرقِ الجنة.»

«He who washes a Muslim and conceals what he sees (bad smell, appearance, etc.), Allāh grants him forgiveness forty times (or for forty major sins). And he who digs for him (a grave) and buries him would be granted a reward similar to providing for him a dwelling until the Day of Resurrection. And he who shrouds him, Allāh will clothe him on the Day of Resurrection from the silk garments of *Jannah*.»³

Abū Umāmah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

1 Recorded by Ibn Ḥibbān, al-Ḥākim, and al-Bayhaqī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* 66).

2 Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* and Ibn Sa’d. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* 75).

3 Recorded by al-Ḥākim, al-Bayhaqī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* 69).

«من غَسَّلَ مَيِّتاً فَسْتَرَهُ سْتَرَهُ اللهُ مِنَ الذُّنُوبِ،
وَمَنْ كَفَّنَهُ كَسَاهُ اللهُ مِنَ السُّنْدُسِ.»

«Whoever washes a deceased (Muslim) and covers him, Allāh will cover his sins. And whoever shrouds him, Allāh will give him silk garments (in *Jannah*).»¹

In washing a Muslim, one should only seek Allāh's pleasure, and not thanks, pay, or any of the worldly rewards.²

One should further conceal from other people anything loathsome that he observes while washing a deceased person.

Taking a Bath after Washing a Body

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«من غَسَلَ مَيِّتاً فَلْيَغْتَسِلْ، وَمَنْ حَمَلَهُ فَلْيَتَوَضَّأْ.»

«Let whoever washes a dead person take a bath; and let whoever carries him perform *wuḍū'*.»³

The command in this *ḥadīth* would normally mean that taking a bath after washing a dead body is *wājib*. However, the correct ruling is that it is only recommended, because Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي غَسْلِ مَيِّتِكُمْ غُسْلٌ إِذَا غَسَلْتُمُوهُ،
فَإِنَّ مَيِّتَكُمْ لَيْسَ بِنَجِسٍ، فَحَسْبُكُمْ أَنْ تَغْسِلُوا أَيْدِيَكُمْ.»

1 Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr*. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 2353).

2 Review Chapter 1 for a discussion in this regard.

3 Recorded by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* 71).

«You are not required to take a bath after washing your deceased, because he is not *najis* (filthy). It is sufficient that you wash your hands.»¹

Also, Ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) said:

“After washing a deceased (at the time of the Prophet (ﷺ)), some of us would take a bath and some would not.”²

Taking a bath after washing the body is an important hygienic measure that was first introduced by Islām. With the spread of germs and viruses, one is encouraged to practice this and other suggested hygienic measures (Figure 5.3).

Question/Answer Summary

The process of washing the body should be performed according to the teachings and practice of the Prophet (ﷺ) and his companions (رضي الله عنه). The main elements of the washing process are outlined in the following “question/answer” table.

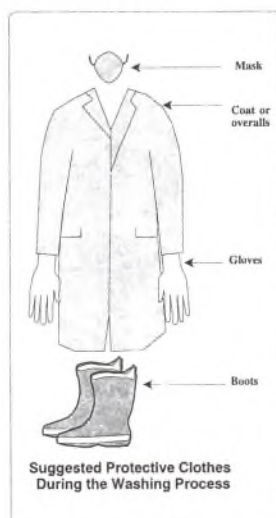


Figure 5.3

Question	Answer
Who performs the washing?	Man: Muslim men, or his wives. Woman: Muslim women, or her husband.

1 Recorded by al-Ḥākim and al-Bayhaqī. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* 72).

2 Recorded by ad-Dāraquṭnī and al-Khatīb in *at-Tārīkh*. Verified to be authentic by al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar and al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* 72).

Question	Answer
Who leads the washing process?	The washing should be supervised by a person of knowledge of the Sunnah.
Who may not be washed?	One who is killed on the battle-field, even if he was in a state of <i>janābah</i> prior to death.
What to wash?	The entire body.
What is the washing sequence?	One should start with the head, then the right side: hands then feet, then the left side: hands then feet, then the rest of the body.
Should the clothes be removed?	All clothing must be removed, but the body should remain covered with a sheet or towel.
Why is the body covered during washing?	So that the deceased's <i>'awrah</i> may not be exposed or touched.
What is the number of washes?	The entire body should be washed an odd number of times: three or more, as needed.
What cleansing materials should be used?	On one or more of the washes, lotus leaves or soap should be added to the water.
Should the body be scrubbed?	With the body under the cover, it should be scrubbed with a piece of cloth, a sponge, etc.
How is the hair washed?	All braids should be undone. The entire hair should then be washed well and combed.
How to arrange long hair after washing?	It should be divided into three plaits and arranged behind the head.
When to put perfume or embalmment?	On the final wash, a scented perfume, preferably camphor, should be added to the water.

Question	Answer
Who may not be perfumed?	Those who die in a state of <i>iḥrām</i> may not be perfumed.
What is the reward for washing the body?	Forgiveness of forty sins and covering of sins.
What are the conditions for deserving the rewards?	Sincerity, and hiding what is observed on the dead person.
Should one take a bath after washing the body?	It is recommended to take a bath.

Practical Procedure

In this section, we present a practical procedure for washing a dead body. We base this on the proofs provided in the previous sections, as well as common practices of Muslims that do not conflict with the Sunnah. The procedure applies to a person (male or female) who dies normally, and whose body is preserved in a state permitting washing it. We also include some information relevant to the Muslims in the West.

FUNERAL HOMES, LEGAL DOCUMENTS, AND FEES

In many Western countries, the washing is performed in a funeral home, which places some restrictions on the range of available supplies and practices. The Muslim communities in those countries should strive to have the funeral procedures performed according to Islām. At the same time, they should make the best out of whatever options are available for them.

In particular, autopsy, embalment (except externally with camphor), or any other postmortem procedures should be avoided (unless enforced by the law).

The funeral homes usually require execution of some legal papers before releasing the body for washing and burial. Thus, an authorized family member should sign the legal documents, which include the burial permit, and pay the necessary fees.

The legal forms require information about the decedent (places of birth and death, dates of birth and death, and social security or identification number), and the next-of-kin survivors.

Note that the funeral provider usually helps with securing death certificates, which are required for the transfer of the decedent's possessions to the survivors.

The fees (approximately starting at \$2000 for adults in the United States) are divided into two categories: services (provided by the funeral director and funeral home staff), and merchandise (casket, graveliner, etc). The fees include the following costs:

- a) Transport from home or hospital to the funeral home.
- b) Use of the funeral home facilities.
- c) Use of the funeral coach or hearse from the funeral home to the cemetery (with a stop at the *masjid* for the *janāzah* prayer).
- d) Casket use or purchase.
- e) Opening and closing the grave.
- f) Graveliner or burial vault.
- g) Grave marker and headstone.
- h) Document fee.
- i) Cemetery perpetual care fee.

WASHING SUPPLIES

It is important to have all of the needed supplies ready prior to starting the washing process. These supplies include water (in

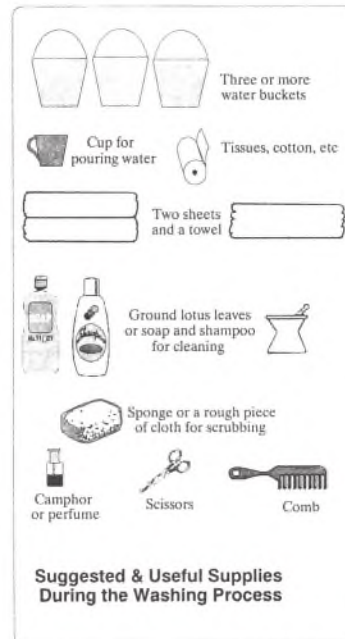


Figure 5.4

buckets or hose), towels, lotus (or equivalent cleaners), and camphor (or equivalent perfume). Figure 5.4 provides a suggested list of supplies. Figure 5.1 shows approximate proportions for mixing water with lotus and camphor.

Additionally, it is very useful (but not required) to have some protective clothing handy (Figure 5.3).

WASHING SEQUENCE

#	Step
1	Carefully lay the deceased on his back on a washing table, in a place covered from any inquisitive eyes.
2	Cover the deceased's 'awrah with a large towel or sheet.
3	Undress the deceased, cutting whatever is not easy to slide off. In this and all subsequent steps, the deceased's 'awrah must remain covered with the sheet.
4	Slightly move the deceased's limbs to loosen the joints — if that is found necessary for the washing or shrouding. Only a slight pressure may be applied to the abdomen to expel any excrements that are close to exiting.
5	Wash the deceased's private parts very well, removing all dirt and excrements. If that does not stop after several washes, cotton or cloth may be used to stop it.
6	Untie any tied or braided hair.
7	Turning the deceased on his left side, use pure water to wash the right side, starting with the head, then arm, then foot, then the rest of the right side. As much as possible, the water should reach all parts of the body.
8	Turning the deceased on his right side, wash his left side as you did for his right side in step 7.
9	Repeat steps 7 and 8 one or more times if needed.

#	Step
10	Using the water-lotus or water-soap mixture, wash the body as in steps 7 and 8.
11	If needed, wash the body with pure water as in steps 7 and 8 to remove the soap.
12	Conclude with a final wash using the water-camphor mixture and following the order of steps 7 and 8. The total number of complete washes should be odd.
13	Comb the hair. If it is long, divide it to three plaits: the sides and the center. Place the hair behind the head.
14	Use a towel to dry the body.
15	Replace the wet sheet covering the <i>'awrah</i> with a dry one.
16	The body is now ready for shrouding.

Miscellaneous Innovations

The following are some of the common innovations relating to washing the body.

1. Clipping the deceased's nails and shaving his armpit or pubic hair.
2. Moving the deceased's hands and feet repeatedly and pressing hard on his stomach to expel all excrements.
3. Stuffing cotton into the deceased's anus, throat, and nose. ¹
4. Those conducting the washing saying a specific *thikr* for every part of the body that is being washed.

1 This is only permissible if the body has a continuous and unusual leaking.

-
5. The present people making a loud *thikr* (often collectively) while the body is being washed.
 6. Loudly reciting *Yā-Sīn* or other portions of the Qur'ān during the washing (and shrouding).
 7. Arranging a woman's hair between her breasts.

CHAPTER 6

SHROUDING THE BODY

Ruling

Shrouding the dead body is a communal obligation (*farḍ kifāyah*) because of the Prophet's (ﷺ) repeated commands.

In Umm 'Aṭiyyah's (رضي الله عنها) *ḥadīth*¹, after the women finished washing Zaynab (رضي الله عنها), the Prophet (ﷺ) gave them his *izār* and commanded, «أشعرتها إياه.» **<Wrap her with it.>**²

Also, in Ibn 'Abbās's (رضي الله عنه) earlier *ḥadīth* (p. 25) regarding the man who died in a state of *iḥrām*, the Prophet (ﷺ) commanded:

«... وكفّنه في ثوبيه اللذين أحرم فيهما، ولا تُحَنِّطوه

(ولا تطيبوه)، ولا تخمروا رأسه ولا وجهه...»

<... And shroud him in the two garments in which he performed *iḥrām*. Do not embalm or perfume him; and do not cover his head or face ...>³

Therefore, after washing the body of a dead Muslim, a number of Muslims must hasten to shroud it in preparation for burial.

Recommended Shrouds

A GOOD SHROUD

Jābir Bin 'Abdillāh (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) gave a speech one day in which he mentioned one of his companions who died and

1 The full report was cited in the previous chapter.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

was shrouded in a short shroud and buried during the night. He (ﷺ) prohibited that a man be buried during the night before the *janāzah* prayer could be performed for him — unless one is forced to do that. And he added:

« إِذَا كَفَّنَ أَحَدُكُمْ أَخَاهُ فَلْيُحَسِّنْ كَفَنَهُ إِنْ أَسْتَطَاعَ . »

«When one of you shrouds his brother, let him do it well — if he can.»¹

Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

« إِذَا وَلِيَ أَحَدُكُمْ أَخَاهُ فَلْيُحَسِّنْ كَفَنَهُ ، فَإِنَّهُمْ يُبْعَثُونَ فِي أَكْفَانِهِمْ . »

«When one of you is responsible for his (deceased) brother, let him shroud him well, because they will be resurrected in their shrouds.»²

“Shrouding well” means that the shroud should be clean, thick (not transparent), long enough to cover the entire body, and of a moderate cost and appearance. It does not mean providing an extravagant, expensive, or lavish shroud.

An-Nawawī (رحمته الله) requires the shroud to be comparable to the type of clothing that the deceased used to wear during his life³. However, this opinion has no evidence. Furthermore, in some situations, it would lead to violation of the Prophet’s (ﷺ) above command.

Anas’s *ḥadīth* indicates that the people will be resurrected in their shrouds. However, when Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī was close to death, he asked for some new clothes, wore them, and said that he heard Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) say:

1 Recorded by Muslim, Aḥmad, and others. The Prophet’s (ﷺ) statement was recorded also by at-Tirmithī from Abū Qatādah with an authentic *isnād* (*Aḥkām ul-Janāʿiz* 77).

2 Recorded by al-Khaṭīb and al-ʿUqaylī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 1425).

3 *Al-Majmūʿ* 5:195, 197.

«إن الميت يُبعث في ثيابه التي يموت فيها.»

«A deceased will be resurrected in the clothes in which he died.»¹

It should be noted that the *ḥadīths* regarding *shahīds* indicate that they will be resurrected in the clothes in which they were killed (see the previous chapter). It is possible that Abū Saʿīd applied this to other dead people, not realizing that there is an explicit *ḥadīth* indicating that they will be resurrected in their shrouds.

It is to be noted further that this does not conflict with the *ḥadīths* indicating that the people will be gathered naked on Judgment Day². It may be understood that they will first be resurrected in their shrouds or clothes, which will then be removed from them when they are all gathered in preparation for the judgment.

NUMBER OF SHEETS

It is best to shroud the body in three plain sheets of cloth. ʿĀʾishah (رضي الله عنها) reported:

“Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) was shrouded in three white cotton Yemeni sheets from Saḥūl³. None of them was a shirt or a turban. He was simply put over (and wrapped in) them.”⁴

This clearly indicates that the sheets did not have any buttons, nor was any of them a shirt — as was mentioned in a weak report.

It is permissible to shroud the body in less than three sheets, as in the case of the man in *iḥrām* (see above), who was shrouded in two.

On the other hand, it is not recommended to use more than three sheets, because that would exceed the number of sheets used to shroud

1 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, Ibn Ḥibbān, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 1671).

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

3 Area in Yemen.

4 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, an-Nasāʾī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janāʾiz* 83).

Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ). Furthermore, that would be an act of extravagance and waste of money, as will be explained below.

The above applies to both men and women. As for the reports saying that the Prophet (ﷺ) was shrouded in seven sheets, or that his daughter was shrouded in five sheets, they are all weak.¹

THE SHROUD'S COLOR

Even though there is no restriction in regard to a shroud's color, it is best to use white shrouds. It is also recommended to use striped shrouds. These two qualities can be simultaneously fulfilled by either using a striped shroud which is predominantly white, or by wrapping the body with two white and one striped shroud.

Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«أَلْبَسُوا مِنْ ثِيَابِكُمُ الْبَيَاضَ، فَإِنَّهَا خَيْرُ ثِيَابِكُمْ. وَكَفَّنُوا فِيهَا مَوْتَاكُمْ.»

«Of the clothing available to you, wear the white, for verily it is your best form of clothing. Shroud your dead with it as well.»²

Samurah Bin Jundub (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«أَلْبَسُوا الثِّيَابَ الْبَيَضَ، فَإِنَّهَا أَطْهَرُ وَأَطْيَبُ، وَكَفَّنُوا فِيهَا مَوْتَاكُمْ.»

«Wear white clothes, because they are cleaner and better. Also, shroud your dead in them.»³

Jābir Bin 'Abdillāh (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

1 *Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* 85.

2 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, at-Tirmithī, and others, and verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* 82). A similar report is recorded by ad-Dāraquṭnī from Anas, and verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmi'* no. 3304).

3 Recorded by an-Nasā'ī, al-Bayhaqī, and others, and verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* 82).

« إِذَا تُوفِّيَ أَحَدُكُمْ فَوَجِدْ شَيْئًا، فليُكْفَنَ فِي ثَوْبِ حَبْرَةٍ. »

«When one of you dies, let him be shrouded in a striped cloth — if it is possible to find that for him.»¹

In another report from Jābir, Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

« من وجد سعةً، فليُكْفَنَ فِي ثَوْبِ حَبْرَةٍ. »

«Whoever can afford it, let him be shrouded in a striped cloth.»²

PERFUMING THE SHROUD

It is recommended to perfume the shroud with incense an odd number of times, three or more, before wrapping the body in it. Jābir (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

« إِذَا جَمَرْتُمُ الْمَيِّتَ، فَأَجْمِرُوهُ ثَلَاثًا. »

«When you burn incense to perfume your dead, do it three times.»³

In another report by Jābir, he (ﷺ) said:

« إِذَا جَمَرْتُمُ الْمَيِّتَ فَأَوْتَرُوا. »

«When you burn incense to perfume your dead, do it an odd number of times.»⁴

1 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd and al-Bayhaqī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* 83).

2 Recorded by Aḥmad. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* 83).

3 Recorded by Aḥmad, Ibn Ḥibbān, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* 84).

4 Recorded by Ibn Ḥibbān and al-Ḥākim. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmi'* no. 481).

A person who dies in a state of *iḥrām*, however, may not be perfumed because of the Prophet's (ﷺ) command in regard to the man who was thrown off by his camel ¹.

MODERATENESS IN THE SHROUD

It is not permissible to be extravagant or excessive in shrouding the dead. That would be a waste of money that should rather be used for the living people. Al-Mughīrah Bin Shu'bah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إن الله كره لكم ثلاثاً: قيل وقال، وإضاعة المال، وكثرة السؤال.»

«Indeed, Allāh hates three acts for you: gossip, wasting money, and frequent asking ^{2, 3}»

In this regard, the great scholar Şiddīq Ḥasan Khan says:

“It is not praiseworthy to use too many sheets for shrouding, nor be extravagant in their cost. Had it not been enjoined in the *Sharʿ* (to shroud the dead), it would have been a total waste of money, because the dead does not benefit from it, nor would it have a returned benefit to the living. May Allāh have mercy on Abū Bakr aṣ-Şiddīq who, when he asked for an old piece of cloth to be used for shrouding him, he was told, ‘It is old,’ and he replied, ‘The living deserve the new (clothes) more than the dead.’” ⁴

1 The *ḥadīth* was cited earlier in this chapter, as well as p. 25.

2 “Asking” means asking people for money (begging), and could also mean asking questions about things that are not of one's concern (*Fatḥ ul-Bārī*).

3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

4 *Ar-Rawḍat un-Nadiyyah* 1:165.

Special Cases

SHROUDING A MAN IN A STATE OF *IHRĀM*

A man who dies in a state of *ihrām* should be shrouded in the two *ihrām* pieces in which he died.

In Ibn ‘Abbās’s (رضي الله عنه) earlier *ḥadīth* (p. 25) regarding the man who died in a state of *ihrām*, the Prophet (ﷺ) commanded:

«... وكفّنوه في ثوبيه اللذين أحرم فيهما، ولا تُحنّطوه
 (ولا تطيبوه)، ولا تخمّروا رأسه ولا وجهه...»

«... And shroud him in the two garments in which he performed *ihrām*. Do not embalm or perfume him; and do not cover his head or face ...»¹

LACK OF A GOOD SHROUD

In situations where it is not possible to find a good shroud, the people should make the best use of what is available. Khabbāb Bin al-Aratt (رضي الله عنه) reported:

“We migrated with Allāh’s Messenger seeking Allāh’s Face², which ensured our rewards from Allāh. Some of us passed away before earning any of their rewards (in this life); among those was Muṣ‘ab Bin ‘Umayr, who was killed on the day of Uḥud. We could not find anything to cover him except a lined piece of cloth (his cloak) that he left behind. When we covered his head with it, his feet were exposed, and when we covered his feet, his head was exposed. So Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) instructed us:

«غَطُّوا بِهَا رَأْسَهُ، وَاجْعَلُوا عَلَى رِجْلَيْهِ الْإِذْخِرَ.»

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

2 This means that they migrated purely for the sake of Allāh, seeking His pleasure.

«Cover his head with it, and put *ithkhir* (sweet smelling grass) over his feet.»

Khabbāb (رضي الله عنه) continued:

“And among us were those whose fruits flourished in this life, so they are now cropping them.”¹

Ḥārithah Bin Muḍarrib reported that he visited Khabbāb (during his fatal illness) and found that he had applied a heated iron to his abdomen seven times². Khabbāb told him:

“Had I not heard Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) say, «لا يَتَمَنَّيْنَ أَحَدُكُمْ الْمَوْتَ.» «**Let none of you wish for death,**» I would have wished for it. I remember being with Allāh’s Messenger without possessing even one *dirham*. But now, I have in a corner of my house forty-thousand *dirhams*.”

His shroud was then brought to him, and upon seeing it he cried saying:

“But as for Ḥamzah, they could not find anything to shroud him but a striped cloak. Covering his head with it exposed his feet, and covering his feet with it exposed his head. So *ithkhir* was put over his feet.”³

Thus, if the shroud is not long enough to cover the whole body, it should be used to cover the head, and as much of the body as possible. Whatever is left exposed should then be covered with *ithkhir* or another kind of grass.

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

2 This is an old form of medicine that was practiced before and during the time of the Prophet (ﷺ), but he prohibited it before his death (review our book on Sickness). It appears that Khabbāb (رضي الله عنه) did not know about this prohibition, and applied it so many times, indicating the seriousness of his illness.

3 Recorded by Aḥmad and at-Tirmithī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* 78).

SHROUDING MARTYRS

When one is killed on the battlefield, it is not permissible to remove his clothes, but he should be buried in them. ‘Abdullāh Bin Tha‘labah Bin Ṣu‘ayr (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said after the battle of Uḥud:

«زملوهم في ثيابهم (بدمائهم).»

«Wrap them in their clothes (or in their blood).»¹

Similarly, in the *hadīths* cited last chapter, Jābir (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«أنا شهيد على هؤلاء، أدفنوهم (أو لقوهم) في دمائهم...»

«I am their witness: Wrap and bury them in their blood ...»²

And Abū Barzah and Anas (رضي الله عنه) related a similar meaning.

ADDITIONAL SHROUDING FOR MARTYRS

It is recommended to shroud those who are killed on the battlefield with one or more sheets over their clothes, as the Prophet (ﷺ) did for Ḥamzah and Muṣ‘ab Bin ‘Umayr (see above). Ḥamzah’s (رضي الله عنه) shrouding is further described by az-Zubayr Bin al-‘Awwām (رضي الله عنه)³. He reported that after the battle of Uḥud, a woman came running until she was about to reach the killed Muslims. The Prophet (ﷺ) hated for her to see them, and said, «المرأة، المرأة!» «(Stop) the woman, (stop) the woman!» Az-Zubayr continued:

1 Recorded by Aḥmad and an-Nasā’ī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* 80).

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Abū Dāwūd, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī.

3 He is the Prophet’s (ﷺ) cousin from his maternal aunt Ṣafīyyah, and one of the ten who were given the glad tidings of *Jannah* by the Prophet (ﷺ).

“I had the feeling that was my mother Ṣāfiyyah. I went running after her, and reached her just before she came upon the bodies. She pushed me in the chest — having been a strong woman, and said, ‘Move away, get lost!’ I told her, ‘Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) requested you (not to look at them).’ She stopped, took out two pieces of cloth that she had, and said, ‘I brought these two sheets for my brother Ḥamzah, because I heard of his death, so shroud him in them.’

We brought the two sheets to shroud Ḥamzah with them, but found next to him a man of the *Anṣar* dead and mutilated like he was mutilated. We felt reluctant and shy to shroud Ḥamzah in two sheets and leave that man without a shroud. So we decided to give one sheet to Hamzah and the other to the man. We measured them and found that one of them was longer than the other. We drew lots between them and shrouded each man with the sheet that was drawn for him.”¹

Shaddād Bin al-Hād reported that a bedouin came to the Prophet (ﷺ), believed in him, followed him, and said, “I want to migrate with you.” The Prophet (ﷺ) asked some of his companions to take care of him (to teach him Islām). During the battle of Khaybar, the Prophet (ﷺ) won some spoils, and divided them among his followers, allotting some to that man. He gave his share to the companions, because he was out grazing their animals. When he returned they gave him his share, and he asked, “What is this?” They told him, “This is your share from the Prophet (ﷺ).” So he took that and went to the Prophet (ﷺ) asking, “What is this?” He replied, « قَسَمْتُهُ لَكَ. » **I allotted this share to you.** He said, “But this is not the reason that I followed you. I followed you so that I would be hit right here (pointing to his neck) with an arrow, die, and enter *Jannah*.” He (ﷺ) told him, « إِنْ تُصَدِّقَ اللَّهَ يَصْدُقْكَ » **If you are true to Allāh, Allāh will be true to you (by granting your wish).**

1 Recorded by Aḥmad and al-Bayhaqī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* 81).

After a short while, the fighting resumed, and that man was later brought before the Prophet (ﷺ), dead with an arrow where he had pointed. The Prophet (ﷺ) asked, «أهو هو؟» **«Is this the same man?»** And was told, “Yes.” He said, «صدق الله فصدقته.» **«He was true to Allāh, so Allāh was true to him.»**

The Prophet (ﷺ) then shrouded him in his own cloak, brought him forth, and prayed *janāzah* for him. Some of what was possible to hear of his prayer was the following:

«اللهم هذا عبدك، خرج مهاجراً في سبيلك، فقتل شهيداً،
وأنا شهيدٌ على ذلك.»

«O Allāh! This is your ‘abd. He left his home migrating for Your cause, and died as a *shahīd*. I am a witness to this.»¹

SHORTAGE OF SHROUDS

If there is a large number of dead people but few shrouds, it is permissible to shroud a number of them in one shroud. When they are buried, the one who memorized more Qur’ān should be put ahead in the direction of *Qiblah*.

Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported that on the day of Uḥud, Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) passed by Ḥamzah Bin ‘Abd il-Muṭ ṭalib with his nose cut and his body mutilated. He (ﷺ) said:

«لولا أن تجدَ صفيهُ في نفسها، تركته حتى تأكله العافيه،
حتى يحشره الله من بطون الطير والسباع.»

«If it were not that Ṣafīyyah² would be extremely upset, I would have left him for the wild animals and

1 Recorded by an-Nasā’ī, al-Bayhaqī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* 80-81).

2 Ḥamzah’s sister and the Prophet’s aunt.

birds to devour him, so that Allāh would resurrect him out of their bellies¹.

So he shrouded him in a lined piece of cloth, if it covered his head, it would show his feet and if it covered his feet, it would show his head. So he covered his head, and did not pray *janāzah* for any of the martyrs except him. And he said (addressing the martyrs), «أنا شاهدٌ عليكم اليوم.» «**I am your witness today.**» The dead were many, and the shrouds were few. So he (ﷺ) would put together three or two persons in one grave and ask «أيهُم أكثرُ قرأنا؟» «**Who knows more of the Qurʾān among them?**» He would then have him put first in the *lahd*². Thus he shrouded two or three men in one piece of cloth.³

Ibn Taymiyyah (رحمته الله) explained:

“The meaning of this *ḥadīth* is that the Prophet (ﷺ) would divide one piece of cloth among a group of people, covering each one of them with some of it because of necessity, even if it did not cover except part of his body. This is confirmed in the last part of the *ḥadīth*: that he would inquire about those who knew Qurʾān the most and put them in the grave first. If they were wrapped completely in one shroud, he would have inquired about that prior to shrouding them, lest they would have to be unwrapped and wrapped back.”⁴

This is the correct interpretation, contrary to those who claimed that one shroud meant one grave, because that is already mentioned in the *ḥadīth*, and there is no need for it to be repeated.

1 As a clear proof of his martyrdom and suffering for Allāh’s cause.

2 See the chapter on Burial for a description of *lahd*.

3 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, at-Tirmithī, and others. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janāʿiz* 79-80).

4 Reported in *ʿAwn ul-Maʿbūd* 3:165.

Reward for Shrouding a Muslim

In the *ḥadīth* of Abū Rāfi‘ (رضي الله عنه) cited last chapter, Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«...ومن كَفَّنَ مسلماً كساه اللهُ يومَ القيامةِ من سندسٍ وإستبرقِ الجنةِ.»

«... And he who shrouds a Muslim, Allāh will clothe him on the Day of Resurrection from the silk garments of *Jannah*.»¹

In doing that, one should only seek Allāh’s pleasure, and should not seek thanks, pay, or any of the worldly rewards.²

Question/Answer Summary

The process of shrouding a body should be performed according to the teachings and practice of the Prophet (ﷺ) and his companions (رضي الله عنهم), which have been discussed above. The main elements of this process are outlined in the following question/answer summary.

Question	Answer
What is the ruling of shrouding?	It is a communal obligation.
Who provides the shroud?	It should be taken from the wealth of the deceased, even if this is all that he left behind.
How long should the shroud be?	It should be long enough to cover the entire body, except for a person in <i>iḥrām</i> , whose head should be exposed.

1 Recorded by al-Ḥākim, al-Bayhaqī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* 69).

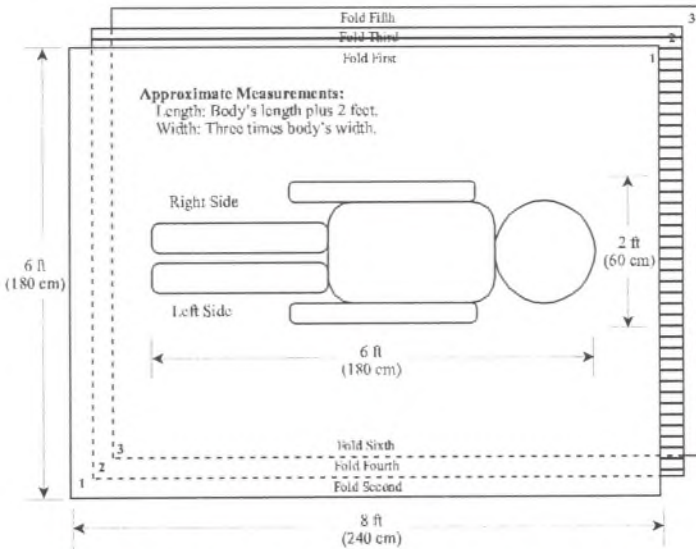
2 Review Chapter 1 for a discussion in this regard.

Question	Answer
Of how many sheets should a shroud consist?	Three or less. As for a man in <i>iḥrām</i> , his shroud should consist of his two garments of <i>iḥrām</i> .
What is the best color for a shroud?	White or striped.
May a shroud be perfumed?	Yes, except for a person in a state of <i>iḥrām</i> .
How to perfume a shroud?	An odd number of times with incense.
Is it recommended to use expensive material or many sheets for a shroud?	No, it is disliked as being a form of extravagance and waste of money.
What to do if it is not possible to find a long-enough shroud?	Cover the head with it, and use <i>ithkhir</i> , grass, twigs, etc to cover the feet.
Should the clothes be removed off those who are killed on the battlefield?	No, they should be buried in their clothes, but it is recommended to shroud them with one or more additional sheets.
What to do in the case of many deaths and few shrouds?	Cut the shrouds among them so that each gets a share.
What is the reward for one who shrouds a Muslim?	Allāh will give him from the silk garments of <i>Jannah</i> .

Miscellaneous Innovations

The following are some common innovations relating to shrouding:

1. Using expensive shrouds, and believing that the dead people boast about their shrouds.
2. Writing the deceased's name, that he believes in the *Shahādah*, or other things on a paper, and putting it inside the shroud.
3. Writing a supplication on the shroud.
4. Using more than three sheets.
5. Using an additional (small) sheet to wrap the deceased's private area.



Sheet Dimensions for a 6-Foot Man

Figure 6.1

CHAPTER 7

CARRYING AND FOLLOWING THE *JANĀZAH*

Ruling

Carrying and following a *janāzah* has two segments:

- 1) from the deceased's house or washing-place to the prayer-place.
- 2) from the prayer-place to the grave.

Carrying the *janāzah* is a communal obligation (*farḍ kifāyah*) that must be performed by some Muslims as part of the burial procedures.

Following the *janāzah* is a highly recommended act of worship. It is one of the rights of a dead Muslim upon his fellow Muslims. It is thus an obligation upon the close friends and family of the deceased.

Al-Barā' Bin 'Āzib (رضي الله عنه) reported:

“Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) commanded us to visit the sick, follow the funeral, say *tashmūt*¹ for the one who sneezes, help one fulfill his oath, support the oppressed, answer the invitations, and spread the *salām*.”²

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«حق المسلم على المسلم خمس: ردُّ السلام، وعبادة المريض،
وأتباع الجنائز، وإجابة الدعوة، وتشميتُ العاطس.»

«A Muslim has five rights upon other Muslims:
responding to his *salām*, answering his invitation (to

1 *Tashmūt* is to say, “*Yarḥamuk Allāh* — May Allāh have mercy on you,” to the one who sneezes and says, “*Al-ḥamdu lillāh*”.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

food), making *tashmūt* when he sneezes, visiting him when he is sick, and following his *janāzah* when he dies.> ¹

Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) often performed both segments of this obligation during his blessed life. Abū Sa’īd al-Khudrī (رضي الله عنه) reported:

“When the Prophet (ﷺ) first came to al-Madīnah, we used to inform him when one of us approached death. He would attend and ask forgiveness for him. After he (the dying person) died, he would go with the *janāzah* until he is buried. This often detained the Prophet (ﷺ) for a long time. Fearing that this is being troubling for him, we decided not to inform him about anyone until he died, which would reduce his detainment and trouble. That way, he attended, prayed *janāzah*, and either left or stayed until the burial. After some time, we thought that it would be kinder toward the Prophet (ﷺ) that, instead of his coming to us, we carry the *janāzah* to him to pray over it near his home (at the *muṣallā*). We did that, and this continued to be done until today.” ²

Carrying the *Janāzah*

THE BIER

The most frequent practice in our time is to transport the *janāzah* from the home to the graveyard in a closed coffin or casket. In some areas, it is further required to bury the body in the casket.

The caskets used by the non-Muslims are unnecessarily expensive and wasteful. They are made of bronze, steel, mahogany wood, pine wood, etc. And their interior is made of crepe, velvet, etc. The

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- 1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others. Some of the reports add one more right: “Providing advice to him”.
 - 2 Recorded by Aḥmad, al-Bayhaqī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janāz* p. 87-88).

Muslims should avoid using any such caskets because of their clear imitation of the *kuffār*.

It is simpler and closer to the Sunnah to transport the shrouded body on an open bier or platform (Figure 7.1). The Muslims should attempt doing this, unless there is a legal requirement to the contrary.

THE BEARERS

The *janāzah* should be carried by a number of strong Muslim men (bearers) who have the ability to maintain a swift pace with the procession.

We do not find in the Sunnah an additional reward for bearing a *janāzah* over following it — except for the fact that a bearer would fulfill a needed communal obligation. Thus there is no need for the people to crowd around the bier, each one trying to touch it for even a few seconds.

Furthermore, there is no basis for the common practice of a person's bearing the *janāzah* for ten steps, starting from a right corner, then successively rotating to each corner.

HOW TO CARRY THE BODY

During the procession, the body is carried lengthwise, on or above the shoulders. There is no provision in the Sunnah calling for having the deceased's feet or head in the forward direction, even though the latter is the most common practice.

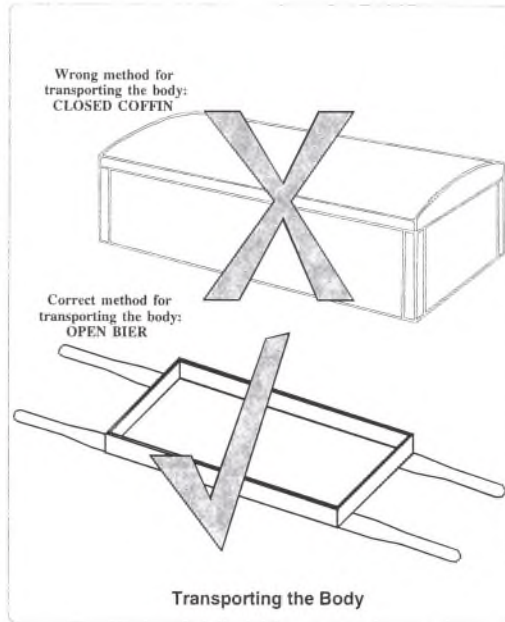


Figure 7.1

WUḌŪ' FOR THE BEARERS

We cite again Abū Hurayrah's (رضي الله عنه) *ḥadīth* that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«من غسل ميتاً فليغتسل، ومن حمّله فليتوضأ.»

«Let whoever washes a dead person take a bath; and let whoever bears him perform *wuḍū'*.»¹

As explained in our earlier discussion of this *ḥadīth*, this command of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) should be taken as a mere recommendation, because of the *ṣaḥābah*'s understanding.

Virtue and Rewards in Following a *Janāzah*

Following the *janāzah* is a greatly rewardable act of worship — provided that it is done with sincerity and without violations to the Sunnah (review Chapter 1). Some of its rewards and virtues are mentioned in what follows.

REMINING OF THE HEREAFTER

Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) commanded:

«عودوا المريض، وأتبعوا الجنائز، تُذكركمُ الآخرة.»

«Visit the sick and follow funerals; that reminds you of the hereafter.»²

TWO GREAT CHUNKS

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

1 Recorded by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* 71).

2 Recorded by Aḥmad, Ibn Ḥibbān, and others. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 86-87).

«من شهدَ الجِنَازَةَ مِن بَيتِها (أو: مِن اتَّبَعَ جِنَازَةَ مُسَلِمٍ
إيماناً واحْتِساباً) حَتَّى يُصَلَّى عَلَيْها فَله قَيراطٌ، وَمَن شَهِدَها
حَتَّى تُدْفِنَ (أو: حَتَّى يُفَرَّغَ مِنها) فَله قَيراطانِ مِنَ الأجرِ.»

«He who follows a Muslim's *janāzah*, with *īmān* and *ihtisāb*, from its house until the prayer is performed for it, gets a chunk (of rewards). And he who (also) follows it until its burial is completed, gets two chunks of rewards.»

He was asked, “What are these two chunks?” And he replied, «**They are like two great mountains.**» In another report he said, «**Each chunk is like the mountain of Uḥud.**» And in another report he said, «**Each chunk is greater than the mountain of Uḥud.**» And in still another report he said, «**Each chunk is heavier in his scale than the mountain of Uḥud.**»¹

A Muslim who is anxious to acquire as much rewards as possible would have a great concern to know what each good act entails. Ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) used to pray over a *janāzah* and then leave. When he heard of Abū Hurayrah’s (رضي الله عنه) above *ḥadīth*, he thought that he was exaggerating. He sent Khabbāb (رضي الله عنه) to ‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) to inquire from her about it. In the mean time, he took a handful of pebbles from the ground of the *Masjid*, and was turning them about in his hand, until his messenger came back saying, “She says, ‘Abū Hurayrah has spoken the truth!’” On hearing this, Ibn ‘Umar hit the ground with the pebbles and said (regretfully):

“Indeed, we have lost many chunks (of rewards).”

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) heard of this incident and commented, “Indeed, neither market dealings nor palm planting digressed me from Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ). I used to stay close to him (hoping) for a word that

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and many others. There are similar reports from various companions such as Ubayy Bin Ka’b, Thawbān, al-Barā’ Bin ‘Āzib, Abū Sa’īd al-Khudrī, and others (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 88-90).

he would teach me and (being satisfied with) a bite of food that he would feed me.” Ibn ‘Umar later confessed to this by telling him, “O Abū Hurayrah! Among us, you spent the most time with Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ), and are most knowledgeable of his *ḥadīth*.”¹

AMONG THE QUALITIES LEADING TO *JANNAH*

Abū Hurayrah reported that one day, Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) asked, «من أصبح اليوم صائماً؟» **Who is fasting today?** Abū Bakr (رضي الله عنه) responded, “I am!” He (ﷺ) asked, «من عاد منكم اليوم مريضاً؟» **Who among you has visited a sick person today?** Abū Bakr (رضي الله عنه) responded, “I did!” He (ﷺ) asked, «من شهد منكم اليوم جنازة؟» **Who among you has witnessed a *janāzah* today?** Abū Bakr (رضي الله عنه) responded, “I did!” He (ﷺ) asked, «من أطعم اليوم مسكيناً؟» **Who among you has fed a poor person today?** Abū Bakr (رضي الله عنه) responded, “I did!” He (ﷺ) then said:

«ما آتت هذه الخصالُ في رجلٍ في يومٍ إلا دخل الجنة.»

«Never would these acts be performed by one man in one day but he will enter *Jannah*»²

Recommended Acts

HURRYING WITH THE *JANĀZAH*

The people should walk with a *janāzah* at a quick pace short of running. Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«أسرعوا بالجنازة، فإن تك سالحةً فخيرٌ تقدمونها إليه،

وإن تك غيرَ ذلك فشرٌ تضعونه عن رقابكم.»

«Hurry with a funeral. If it is for a good person, you bring it forward to its good destination; and if it is

1 This is a combined report recorded by Muslim, Aḥmad, and others (*Aḥkām ul-Janāz* p. 89-90).

2 Recorded by Muslim and al-Bukhārī (in *al-Adab ul-Mufrad*).

other than that, you drop the evil (quickly) off your necks.>¹

Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إذا وُضعتِ الجنازةُ وأحتملها الرجال على أعناقهم، فإن كانت
صالحةً قالت: "قدموني، قدموني." وإن كانت غير صالحة قالت:
"يا ويلها أين يذهبون بها!" يسمع صوتها كل شيءٍ إلا الإنسانُ،
ولو سمعه لصعق.»

«When a *janāzah* is prepared, and the men bear it over their necks, if it is good it says, "Move me forth, move me forth!" And if it is not good it says, "Woe be to it, where are they taking it?" Everything hears this except the human beings; and had they heard it they would be petrified.>²

When he was close to death, Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) said:

"When I die, do not erect a tent over me, nor follow me with a burner (of incense). And hurry with my *janāzah*. Indeed, I heard Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) say:

«إذا وضع الرجل الصالحُ على سريرهِ قال: "قدموني، قدموني."
وإن كان غير صالح قال: "يا ويلها أين يذهبون بها!"»

«When a good man is laid down on his bier, he says, 'Move me forth, move me forth!' And an evil man says, 'Woe be to it, where are they taking it?>³

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, an-Nasāʿī, and others.

3 Recorded by Aḥmad, an-Nasāʿī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janāʿiz* p. 93).

‘Abd ur-Raḥmān Bin Jawshan reported that he was walking in the *janāzah* of ‘Abd ur-Raḥmān Bin Samurah. Ziyād ¹ and some of his servants were walking on their heels in front of the coffin and saying, “Slow down, slow down, may Allāh bless you!” Riding a mule, Abū Bakrah (ﷺ) charged at them with a whip saying:

“Let go! By Him Who has honored the face of Abū al-Qāsim ² (ﷺ), you would see us at the time of Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) almost running with the *janāzah*.” ³

An-Nawawī (رحمته) said:

“The ‘*ulamā*’ agree that it is recommended to hurry with a *janāzah* — unless it is feared that hurrying may cause the body to fall apart ...” ⁴

However, the Prophet’s (ﷺ) command means more than that: It is obligatory to hurry with a *janāzah*. Ibn ul-Qayyim (رحمته) said:

“As for the people’s ant-walking with a *janāzah*, step by step, nowadays, it is a hateful *bid‘ah* conflicting with the Sunnah and imitating the People of the Book — the Jews.” ⁵

WHERE TO WALK?

A rider should always follow the *janāzah*, and a walker may walk wherever he wishes, provided that he is close to it. Al-Mughīrah Bin Shu‘bah (رحمته) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«الراكب يمشي خلف الجنازة، والماشي حيث شاء منها، خلفها»

1 Ziyād Bin Abīh, one of the major commanders at the time of ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiyah.

2 A *kunya* (title) for the Prophet (ﷺ).

3 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, an-Nasā’ī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janāz* p. 94).

4 *Al-Majmū‘* 5:271.

5 *Zād ul-Ma‘ād*.

وأمامها وعن يمينها وعن يسارها، قريباً منها، والطفل
 (أو السقط) يُصلى عليه، ويُدعى لوالديه بالمغفرة والرحمة.»

«A rider rides behind a *janāzah*, a walker walks wherever he wishes: behind it, in front of it, to its right, or to its left — close to it. As for a fetus, the (*janāzah*) prayer may be performed for it, and *du‘ā* would be made that its parents be granted forgiveness and mercy (from Allāh).»¹

Anas Bin Mālik (رضي الله عنه) reported:

“Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ), Abū Bakr, and ‘Umar used to walk in front of a *janāzah* and behind it.”²

However, it is preferable to walk behind the *janāzah*. This follows from the Prophet’s (ﷺ) command (cited earlier), «... وأتبعوا الجنائز...»
 «... And follow funerals ...» Furthermore, ‘Alī (رضي الله عنه) said:

“The virtue of walking behind a *janāzah* as compared to walking in front of it is similar to the virtue of a man’s praying in *jamā‘ah* as compared to praying individually.”³

Even though this is *mawqūf* (a statement by a *ṣaḥābī*, ‘Alī in this case), it has the status of being reported from the Prophet (ﷺ), because one cannot say such things based on personal opinion.

1 Recorded by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, and others. Verified to be authentic by at-Tirmithī, aṭh-Thaḥabī, and al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā‘iz* 95).

2 Recorded by Ibn Mājah and aṭ-Ṭaḥāwī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā‘iz* p. 95).

3 Recorded by Aḥmad, al-Bayhaqī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā‘iz* p. 96).

WALK OR RIDE?

Even though it is permissible to ride, it is preferable to walk behind a *janāzah*. There are no reports of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) riding with a *janāzah*. Rather, Thawbān (رضي الله عنه) reported that once while the Prophet (ﷺ) was walking behind a *janāzah*, he was offered an animal to ride, but he declined it. After the burial, an animal was offered to him and he rode it. He was asked about that and he explained:

«إن الملائكة كانت تمشي، فلم أكن لأركبَ وهم يمشون،
فلما ذهبوا ركبتُ.»

«Verily, the angels were walking. So I were not to ride while they walked. When they departed, I rode.»¹

We conclude from this that it is permissible to ride after the burial. Also, Jābir Bin Samurah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) walked in the *janāzah* of Ibn ad-Daḥdāḥ and prayed *janāzah* for him. When he departed (after the burial), a naked (unbridled) horse was brought for him, and a man held it for him to ride it. The horse started galloping, and the *ṣaḥābah* walked fast trying to catch up with him. One of them told the others that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«كم من عِذْقِ دَوَّاحٍ مَدْلَى فِي الْجَنَّةِ لَابْنِ الدَّحْدَاحِ.»

«How many great and fruitful palm tree is leaning down (heavy with fruits) in Jannah for Ibn al-Daḥdāḥ!»²

The original occasion on which the Prophet (ﷺ) said this was that a man told him, “O Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ)! Such and such³ has a

1 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, al-Bayhaqī, and al-Ḥākim. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 97).

2 Recorded by Muslim, Abū Dāwūd, and others.

3 Some reports say that his name was Abū Lubābah, and that the other man was a needy orphan.

palm tree (between our lands) that I need for pollinating my palms. Would you ask him to give it to me to maintain my palm garden with it?" He (ﷺ) told him to give it to him in exchange for a palm in *Jannah*, but he refused. Abū (or Ibn) ad-Daḥdāh went to him and said, "Sell me your palm tree for my garden." Which he agreed to do. So he went to the Prophet (ﷺ) and told him, "O Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ)! I have bought that palm in exchange for my garden, so give it to him (the first man)." And the Prophet (ﷺ) said the above several times.

STANDING FOR THE *JANĀZAH*?

Standing for a *janāzah* is of two forms:

- a) The standing of a sitting person when it passes by him.
- b) The standing of those who are following it when they reach the grave until it is laid on the ground next to it.

Both forms were obligatory at first, but were later abrogated by Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ). The evidence for the abrogation is that ʿAlī (رضي الله عنه) reported:

"Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) stood for the *janāzahs*, so we stood. Then (later) he sat, so we sat." ¹

And he (رضي الله عنه) reported:

"At first, Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) would stand for a *janāzah*. Later on, he sat." ²

And Sa'd Bin Mu'āth reported that he stood for a *janāzah* for the tribe of Salamah. Nāfi' Bin Jubayr told him, "Sit down, I will surely give you some manifest information in this regard." Then he told him

1 Recorded by Muslim, Aḥmad, and others.

2 Recorded by Mālik and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 100).

that Mas'ūd Bin al-Ḥakam az-Zuraqī heard 'Alī Bin Abī Ṭālib (عليه السلام) in the middle of al-Kūfah saying:

“At first, Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) commanded us to stand for a *janāzah* (until it is set down). Later on, he sat and commanded us to sit.”¹

Al-Bayhaqī cited the same report, with a different wording for 'Alī's (عليه السلام) statement:

“Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) stood for the *janāzahs* until they were set down, so the people stood with him. Later on, he sat and commanded them to sit.”²

Prohibited and Disapproved Acts

Along the *janāzah*'s trip to its final destination, people must avoid all actions or practices conflicting with the *Shar'*. As much as possible, they should also try to avoid acts that are disapproved in the *Shar'*.

WAILING AND FIRE

It is prohibited to accompany a *janāzah* with loud voices, sounds, or music. It is also prohibited to accompany it with burning torches or incense. Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

« لا تُتَّبَعُ الجَنَازَةُ بِصَوْتٍ وَلَا نَارٍ . »

«A *janāzah* may not be followed with (wailing) sounds or fire.»³

1 Recorded by Aḥmad, Ibn Ḥibbān, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 101).

2 Recorded by al-Bayhaqī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 101).

3 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd and Aḥmad. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 91).

Ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) reported:

“Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) prohibited following a *janāzah* that is accompanied by a wailer.”¹

Abū Burdah (رضي الله عنه) reported that when Abū Mūsā (رضي الله عنه) was at the verge of death he said:

“When you take my *janāzah*, walk fast, do not follow me with an incense burner, do not put in my grave anything that would separate me from the earth, and do not build anything over my grave. Also, be my witnesses that I disown anyone who shaves, wails, or tears up her clothes.”

He was asked, “Did you hear anything in this regard?” He replied, “Yes, I heard it from Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ).”²

‘Amr Bin al-‘Āṣ commanded:

“When I die, let no lamenter or fire accompany me.”³

And Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) commanded:

“When I die, do not erect a tent over me, nor follow me with a burner (of incense).”⁴

OTHER SOUNDS

All other sounds are prohibited with the *janāzah* procession. This includes:

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- 1 Recorded by Ibn Mājah and Aḥmad. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 91).
 - 2 Recorded by Aḥmad and al-Bayhaqī. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 17-18).
 - 3 Recorded by Muslim and Aḥmad.
 - 4 Recorded by Aḥmad and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 92).

- a) Playing funeral music, especially for the death of state or army figures — as is done in some Muslim countries in imitation of the *kuffār*. This is indeed a great act of disobedience to Allāh (ﷻ), and disrespect to both the dead and the living.
- b) Raising the voice with *thikr* while following the *janāzah*. This is a *bid'ah*, as reported by Qays Bin 'Ubād:

“The Prophet’s (ﷺ) companions hated raising the voices while following the funeral.”¹

This action also is an imitation to the Christians who accompany their funerals with long and sad recitation of verses from their gospels.

- c) Raising the voice with recitation of the Qur'ān, often using loudspeakers in the streets and over minarets.

An-Nawawī (رحمته) said:

“Know well that the correct and acceptable approach is that which was followed by the *salaf* (رضيهم): to walk silently with a *janāzah*. The voices may not be raised even with reciting Qur'ān or making *thikr*. The wisdom behind that is obvious: it allows one’s thoughts to be composed, and enables him to ponder over matters related to the *janāzah*, which is required in that situation. This is the truth, so do not be misled by the numerous people who deviate from it, as Abū 'Alī al-Fuḍayl Bin 'Iyād (رحمته) said:

‘Adhere to the ways of guidance, and do not be beguiled by the small number of people on them; and beware of the ways of misguidance, and do not be

1 Recorded by Al-Bayhaqī and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 92).

beguiled by the large number of people falling to destruction.’

Some reports in this meaning have been related to us in *Sunan ul-Bayhaqī*. As for the ignorant peoples’ actions in Damascus and elsewhere: reciting Qur’ān over a *janāzah*, extending the voice, and changing the way it should be recited, it is all unanimously prohibited. I have explained its ugliness and grave prohibition, as well as the great crime of those who do not prevent it despite their ability to do so, in my book, ‘The Etiquettes of Recitation.’ Verily, from Allāh we seek help.”¹

WOMEN WALKING WITH THE *JANĀZAH*?

It is not recommended for a woman to follow a *janāzah*. Umm ‘Aṭiyyah (رضي الله عنها) reported:

“Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) prohibited us (women) from following the *janāzahs*, but did not enforce that on us.”²

TRANSPORTING THE *JANĀZAH* IN A CAR?

As much as possible, the Muslims should avoid transporting a *janāzah* to the graveyard in a hearse or casket coach, as well as following it in cars. The reasons for this are the following:

- a) It is a practice of the disbelievers, and it is not permissible to imitate them in their practices of worship, customs, or appearance.
- b) It is a *bid‘ah* in an act of worship, and conflicts with the practical Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ).

1 *Al-Aṭhikār* p. 203.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

- c) It loses the purpose behind carrying and following a *janāzah*, which is to remind of the hereafter, as was clearly stated by Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ).

There is no doubt that carrying a *janāzah* over the shoulders, and letting other people see it, serves the purpose of reminding much better than the other way. What led the disbelievers to introducing those artificial methods is their fear of death and everything that reminds of it, because of their disbelief in the hereafter.

- d) It is an important means of reducing the numbers of people who follow a *janāzah*.
- e) It conflicts with the Islāmic approach of simplicity and avoidance of artificial matters and formalities, especially in such a serious matter as death.

Sometimes, a *janāzah* is carried in a car for practical reasons — because of the distance to the graveyard, especially in the West where the Muslim graveyards are few — often tens or hundreds of miles away from the location of death. In such cases, it is permissible to transport it and follow it in motor vehicles, but this should not be exceeded beyond what is necessary.

TRANSPORTING THE *JANĀZAH* IN A CLOSED COFFIN

Much of the discussion of the previous section applies to carrying a *janāzah* in a closed coffin, which is often made of expensive, polished, and decorated wood. As explained earlier in this chapter, the Muslims should be able to see a shrouded body and realize that one day they will be in a similar state.

However, the coffin may be necessary in some cases where the body is in an advanced decay state, where it could transmit fatal diseases to the surroundings, or where a coffin is enforced by law.

Question/Answer Summary

The main elements relating to carrying and following a *janāzah* are outlined in the following question/answer summary.

Question	Answer
What is the ruling of walking with a <i>janāzah</i> ?	It is a communal obligation, and is recommended for every man.
What does one who walks with a <i>janāzah</i> get?	Two chunks (<i>qīrāṭs</i>) of rewards, each one larger than a mountain.
What is women's ruling for walking with a <i>janāzah</i> ?	It is disapproved (but not prohibited).
Is it better to walk slow or fast with a <i>janāzah</i> .	It is recommended to walk at a quick pace.
Where should one walk relative to the <i>janāzah</i> ?	At any side, not too far. Walking behind is better than ahead.
Is it better to ride or walk?	Walking is better. A rider should be behind the <i>janāzah</i> .
What is the ruling of standing for a <i>janāzah</i> ?	At first, it was required. But that ruling was later abrogated.
Should one who carried a <i>janāzah</i> perform <i>wuḍū'</i> ?	This is recommended but not obligatory.
What things may not accompany a <i>janāzah</i> ?	Incense burners and wailing.

Miscellaneous Innovations

The following are some of the common innovations relating to walking with a *janāzah*.

1. Adorning the *janāzah*.

2. Walking slowly to the graveyard.
3. Raising the voices with *thikr*, *Qur'ānic* recitation, or poetry, and prompting the people to seek forgiveness or recite *al-Fātiḥah* for the deceased.
4. Putting a turban, Turkish hat, crown, or other form of head-covers over the coffin to indicate the deceased's gender.
5. Preceding the *janāzah* with flags, flowers, wreaths, or the deceased's picture.
6. Slaughtering sheep at the doorstep after the *janāzah* leaves the house, believing that it protects from more deaths.
7. Preceding the funeral with food to be distributed after the burial.
8. Believing that a good person's body feels light and moves fast.
9. Giving alms and offering juice to those walking with the *janāzah*.
10. Carrying the *janāzah* for ten steps from each of the four corners.
13. Crowding over the bier.
14. Talking about worldly affairs while following the *janāzah*.
16. Praising the deceased and lamenting over him.
17. Carrying the *janāzah* in a car.

CHAPTER 8

THE *JANĀZAH* PRAYER

Ruling

Praying *janāzah* for a dead Muslim is an obligation upon the Muslim community (*farḍ kifāyah*). The Prophet (ﷺ) performed it consistently, and commanded his companions to perform it on various occasions.

The *janāzah* prayer must be performed for every deceased Muslim, even if he was sinful or had committed innovations — provided that his deviation did not unequivocally take him out of the realm of Islām.

Zayd Bin Khālīd al-Juhanī (رضي الله عنه) reported that one of the Prophet's (ﷺ) companions died on the day of Khaybar¹. When the Prophet (ﷺ) was informed of his death, he said, «صَلُّوا عَلَيَّ صَاحِبِكُمْ.» **«Pray (*janāzah*) for your companion.»** Upon hearing this, the people's faces changed². In explanation, he (ﷺ) said:

«إِنَّ صَاحِبَكُمْ غَلَّ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ.»

«Your companion has illegally taken some of the booty (from Khaybar).»

They searched his belongings and found some beads of the Jews' that were not worth even two *dirhams*!³

1 A town to the north of al-Madīnah that was agriculturally rich, and was under control of the Jews before *Islām*. It fell to the hands of Muslims on 8 H.

2 Since the Prophet (ﷺ) did not want to pray for him, the people understood that he must have committed a serious sin.

3 Recorded by Mālik, Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* 103).

Exceptions to the Ruling

There are cases where performing the *janāzah* prayer is voluntary (children and martyrs) or totally impermissible (disbelievers).

A CHILD DYING BEFORE PUBERTY

It is not obligatory to pray *janāzah* for the children who die before attaining puberty. The Prophet (ﷺ) did not pray *janāzah* for his son Ibrāhīm. ‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported:

“Ibrāhīm, the son of the Prophet (ﷺ), died when he was eighteen months old; and Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) did not pray (*janāzah*) for him.”¹

In regard to other reports mentioning that the Prophet (ﷺ) prayed for his son, al-Albānī says:

“None of that is confirmed from him (ﷺ). Even though those reports have independent *isnāds*, they are all extremely weak, as is discussed in detail in *Naṣb ur-Rāyah* (2:279-280). Aḥmad (رضي الله عنه) reported from Anas (رضي الله عنه), with an authentic chain, that he was asked if Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) prayed *janāzah* for his son Ibrāhīm, and he replied, ‘I do not know.’ Had he prayed, it would not have been unknown to Anas who served him for ten years.”²

But even though it is not obligatory, it is permissible to pray *janāzah* for a child, including a miscarried fetus, as in the *ḥadīth* fully cited in the previous chapter from al-Mughīrah Bin Shu’bah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«... والسقط يُصلى عليه، ويُدعى لوالديه بالمغفرة والرحمة.»

1 Recorded by Aḥmad and Abū Dāwūd. Verified to be *ḥasan* by Ibn Ḥajar and al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* 104).

2 *Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* 104.

«... As for a fetus, the (*janāzah*) prayer may be performed for it, and *du‘ā* would be made that its parents be granted forgiveness and mercy.»¹

‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that a (dead) boy from al-Anṣār was brought before Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ), and he prayed *janāzah* for him. She said, “Glad tidings for this boy: (he will be) one of the birds of *Jannah*! He never did wrong, nor did he reach the age of doing it!” The Messenger (ﷺ) replied:

«أَوْغَيْرَ ذَلِكَ يَا عَائِشَةُ؟ خَلَقَ اللَّهُ عِزَّ وَجَلَّ الْجَنَّةَ، وَخَلَقَ لَهَا أَهْلًا،
وَخَلَقَهُمْ فِي أَصْلَابِ آبَائِهِمْ. وَخَلَقَ النَّارَ، وَخَلَقَ لَهَا أَهْلًا، وَخَلَقَهُمْ
فِي أَصْلَابِ آبَائِهِمْ.»

«Shouldn’t you say something else ‘Ā’ishah? Allāh (ﷻ) created *Jannah*, created its dwellers, and formed them in the back-bones of their fathers. He also created the Fire, created its dwellers, and formed them in the back-bones of their fathers.»²

As for the reason that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) admonished ‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها), an-Nawawī (رحمته الله) said:

“There is a consensus among all of the worthy scholars of Islām that the Muslims’ children who die will be in *Jannah*. The interpretation of this *ḥadīth* is that he prevented her from making a hasty judgment without an evidence, or that he possibly said that before he knew that the Muslims’ children will be in *Jannah*.”³

And as-Sindī commented on this *ḥadīth*:

1 Recorded by Aḥmad and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* 73).

2 Recorded by Muslim and others.

3 *Sharḥu Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*.

“He admonished her for affirming that a specific child will enter *Jannah*, because the truth of its parent’s *īmān* is a matter of *ghayb* known only to Allāh (ﷻ).”

AN EARLY FETUS

Janāzah prayer may be performed for a miscarried fetus only if the soul had been blown into it, which occurs after completing four months. The prayer should not be performed prior to that, because it does not count as a dead person.

Ibn Mas‘ūd (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إن خلقَ أحدكم يُجمَعُ في بطنِ أمِّه أربعينَ يوماً نطفَةً، ثم يكونُ علقَةً مثلَ ذلك، ثم يكونُ مضغَةً مثلَ ذلك، ثم يبعثُ إليه ملكاً، فينفخُ فيه الروحَ، ويؤمِّرُ بأربعِ كلماتٍ: بكتبَ رزقَهُ وأجلَهُ وعملَهُ وشقيُّ أم سعيدٍ.»

«The creation of each one of you is brought together in his mother’s womb for forty days as a seed, then as a clot of blood for a similar period, then as a morsel of flesh for a similar period. Allāh then sends an angel who blows the soul into it, and he is commanded to write down four things: its (future) sustenance, life-span, deeds, and whether it will be miserable or happy.»¹

Some scholars hold the opinion that the *janāzah* prayer may only be performed for a miscarried fetus that was dropped alive. They base their opinion on a *ḥadīth*, “When a fetus is dropped alive, prayer may be performed for it, and it inherits.” However, this *ḥadīth* is weak.²

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

2 *Aḥkām ul-Janāz* 106. Al-Albānī indicates that this *ḥadīth* is authentic without the statement about the prayer (*Irwā’ ul-Ghalīl* no. 1704).

MARTYRS

It is not required to pray *janāzah* for *shahīds*. The Prophet (ﷺ) did not pray *janāzah* for most of the *shahīds* of Uḥud (i.e., immediately after the battle — see below). Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported:

“The *shahīds* of Uḥud were not washed, were buried in their blood, and *janāzah* prayer was not performed for them — except for Ḥamzah.”¹

But it is permissible to pray *janāzah* for them, as in the above *ḥadīth*, and the *ḥadīth* of Shaddād Bin al-Hād (رضي الله عنه), fully cited earlier (p. 122), regarding the bedouin who died as a *shahīd*:

“...The Prophet (ﷺ) then shrouded him in his own cloak, brought him forth, and prayed *janāzah* for him.”²

Also, Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) did pray for some of the *shahīds* of Uḥud while he prayed for Ḥamzah. ‘Abdullāh Bin az-Zubayr (رضي الله عنه) reported that on the day of Uḥud, Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) commanded that Ḥamzah be covered with a cloak, then he prayed *janāzah* for him, making nine *takbīrs*. Then other Muslim *shahīds* were brought and lined up, and he (ﷺ) prayed for them and for him (again) with them.³

Furthermore, ‘Uqbah Bin ‘Āmir al-Juhanī (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) went out one day and prayed a normal *janāzah* prayer for the *shahīds* of Uḥud. That was eight years after the battle — as if he was saying his farewells to the dead and the living. When he came back (to the *Masjid*), he mounted the *minbar*, praised and glorified Allāh, then said:

«إني فرط لكم، وأنا شهيد عليكم، وإن موعدكم الحوض، وإني

1 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, at-Tirmithī, and others. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* 73-74).

2 Recorded by an-Nasā'ī, al-Bayhaqī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* 80-81).

3 Recorded by aṭ-Ṭaḥāwī (*ma'ānī al-Āthār* 1:290), and it has many supporting reports. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 106).

والله لأنظرُ إلى حوضي الآن، وإن عرضه كما بين أيلةً إلى الجحفة،
 وإني أعطيتُ خزائنَ (أو مفاتيح) الأرض، وإني والله ما أخاف
 عليكم أن تُشركوا بعدي، ولكن أخاف عليكم الدنيا أن تتنافسوا
 فيها وتقتتلوا، فَتَهْلِكُوا كماهلك من كان قبلكم.»

«I am preceding you (to death) and am a witness over you. Our meeting will be at the *Hawd*¹. By Allāh, I can see my *Hawd* right now. Verily, its width is like the distance from Aylah² to al-Juhfah³. Indeed, I have been offered the keys to the earth's treasures (but have declined taking them).

By Allāh, I am not afraid that you may commit *shirk* after me, but I fear for you the worldly life — that you compete and fight over it, thereby getting destroyed like those before you were destroyed.»

‘Uqbah said, “This was the last time I saw Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ).”⁴

With these reports indicating that the Prophet (ﷺ) prayed *janāzah* for some of the *shahīds*, we conclude that it is a recommended act of worship whenever possible. However, we cannot deduce that it is obligatory, because large numbers of the *ṣahābah* were martyred in Badr and other battles, and there are no reports that he (ﷺ) prayed for them — Had he done it, it would have been reported. Ibn ul-Qayyim (رحمته) says:

“The correct opinion in regard to this issue is that one has the option of praying *janāzah* for them or not, because there are reports supporting both actions.”⁵

1 The Prophet’s (ﷺ) spring from which the believers will quench their thirst on Judgment Day.

2 A seaport on the red sea in northern Arabia and southern Jordan.

3 A town about 100 miles to the north of Makkah.

4 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, Aḥmad, and others.

5 *Taḥṭīb us-Sunan* 4:295.

Praying *Janāzah* for the Sinful

SINFUL MUSLIMS

As stated earlier, the *janāzah* prayer must be offered even for a *fājir* ¹, such as one who did not pray, did not pay *zakāh*, was an alcohol addict, used to commit *zinā*, and so on. However, those who are respected for their knowledge and piety in the community should attempt not to attend, as a form of punishment and reprimand for people like him. This was the practice of the Prophet (ﷺ), as in the *ḥadīth* of Zayd Bin Khālid (in the beginning of this chapter) regarding the man who stole from the booty.

Also, Abū Qatādah (رضي الله عنه) reported that when Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) was invited to pray *janāzah* he would inquire about the deceased. If he is praised as having been good, he would stand and pray for him. But if he is described as having been otherwise, he would tell his family, «شأنكم بها.» **<You take care of him.>** And he would not pray for him. ²

And Jābir Bin Samurah (رضي الله عنه) reported that a man fell ill, and his family wailed over him. His neighbor came to Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) and told him that he died. The Prophet (ﷺ) asked him, «وما يدريك؟» **<How did you know?>** The man replied, "I saw him." He (ﷺ) said, «إنه لم يميت.» **<He did not die.>** So he went back and heard the wailing again. His wife said, "Go to Allāh's Messenger and tell him (about the wailing)." The man said, "May Allāh curse him." ³ Then he went to his neighbor's house and found that he had cut his throat with a knife. He went to the Prophet (ﷺ) and told him that he died. He again asked him, «ما يدريك؟» **<How did you know?>** He replied, "I saw him cutting his throat with a blade that he had with him." He (ﷺ) asked, «أنت رأيته؟» **<You saw him do that?>** He said, "Yes." The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إذا لا أصلي عليه.»

<Then I will not pray *janāzah* for him.> ⁴

-
- 1 A corrupt person or sinner who had been indulged in disobedience and transgression.
 - 2 Recorded by Aḥmad and al-Ḥākim. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 109).
 - 3 Because he encouraged his household to wail over him, even before he died.
 - 4 Recorded by Muslim, Abū Dāwūd, and others.

At-Tirmithī said:

“This is a good *ḥadīth*. The people of knowledge have differed about this; some of them say that the Muslims should pray for everyone who faces the *Qiblah* in prayer, and for the one who commits suicide. This is the opinion of Sufyān at-Thawrī and Ishāq. Aḥmad said, ‘The *imām* should not pray for the one who commits suicide, but other people than the *imām* should.’”¹

Ibn Taymiyyah said:

“If someone refuses to pray *janāzah* for one of those (a killer, robber, and one deep in debt), as a warning for those like him from doing similar acts — this is good. And if one refuses to do that in public, but makes supplication for him in secret, thereby fulfilling both interests — this is even better.”²

THOSE WHO HAVE REPENTED

The *janāzah* prayer must be performed for an adulterer who dies because of establishing the *ḥadd*³ upon him.

‘Imrān Bin Ḥuṣayn (رضي الله عنه) reported that a woman from the tribe of Juhaynah came to the Prophet (ﷺ) while pregnant from *zinā*. She said, “O Prophet of Allāh, I deserve punishment, so give it to me.” The Prophet (ﷺ) summoned her *walī* (guardian) and instructed him, «أَحْسِنِ إِلَيْهَا، فَإِذَا وَضَعْتَ فَأَتِنِي بِهَا.» **Be good to her. When she delivers, bring her to me.** The *walī* did that, and the Prophet (ﷺ) commanded her to tie her clothes around herself. She was then stoned (to death), and then he prayed *janāzah* for her. ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) said to him, “Do you pray for her, O Allāh’s Prophet, after she committed *zinā*?” He (ﷺ) replied:

1 *Sunan ut-Tirmithī*.

2 *Al-Ikhtiyārāt* p. 52.

3 Prescribed physical punishment executed by the Islāmic state. In the case of adultery, the *ḥadd* is to stone a willing married participant to death.

«لقد تابت توبة لو قُسمت بين سبعين من أهل المدينة لو سَعَتَهُمْ!
وهل وجدت توبةً أفضلَ من أن جادت بنفسها لله تعالى؟»

«She has repented; and her repentance is such that, were it to be divided among seventy of the people of al-Madīnah, it would encompass them. Do you know of any better repentance than that she gave herself to Allāh?»¹

THOSE WHO DIE WHILE IN DEBT

The *janāzah* prayer must be performed for those who die in debt, not leaving enough money to pay off their debts.

At first, the Prophet (ﷺ) did not pray *janāzah* for such people (but commanded others to do), as is indicated in the reports that were cited earlier².

Similarly, Salamah Bin al-Akwa' (رضي الله عنه) reported that he and other companions were sitting with the Prophet (ﷺ) when a *janāzah* was brought before him, and he was requested to pray for it. He asked, «هل عليه دين؟» **Does he have a debt?** He was told, “No.” He asked, «فهل ترك شيئاً؟» **Did he leave anything?** He was told, “No.” So he prayed for him. Another *janāzah* was brought before him, and he was requested to pray for it. He asked, «هل عليه دين؟» **Does he have a debt?** He was told, “Yes.” He asked, «فهل ترك شيئاً؟» **Did he leave anything?** He was told, “Three *dīnārs*.” He pointed with his fingers, indicating three burns in the fire, and then prayed for him. A third *janāzah* was brought before him, and he was requested to pray for it. He asked, «هل عليه دين؟» **Does he have a debt?** He was told, “Yes, three *dīnārs*.” He asked, «فهل ترك شيئاً؟» **Did he leave anything?** He was told, “No.” He (refused praying for him and) said, «صلوا على صاحبكم.» **Pray for your companion.** A man of the *Anṣār* called Abū Qatādah said, “Pray for him Allāh’s Messenger, and I will pay off his debt.” So he prayed for him.³

1 Recorded by Muslim and others.

2 See the section on “Paying off the Debts”, p. 27.

3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Aḥmad. The last part of this *ḥadīth* concerning the third *janāzah* was also recorded by an-Nasā'ī, and was also recorded by Aḥmad and

Later on, however, the Prophet (ﷺ) prayed for those who could not fulfill their debts. Jābir (رضي الله عنه) reported a similar incident to the above, adding that after Allāh (ﷻ) granted wealth and power to His Messenger (ﷺ), he said:

«أنا أولى بكل مؤمن من نفسه، فمن ترك ديناً فعليّ قضاؤه،
ومن ترك مالاً فلورثته.»

«I have more claim over each believer than he has on himself. Whoever leaves behind a debt, I will fulfill it. And whoever leaves behind a wealth, it is for his inheritors.»¹

Similarly, Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that when an indebted deceased was brought before Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ), he would ask, «هل ترك لدينه من قضاء؟» **«Did he leave money to cover his debt?»** If the answer was , “Yes,” he would pray for him, otherwise he would not, and would say, «صلوا على صاحبكم.» **«Pray for your companion.»** But after Allāh granted him the victories, he said:

«أنا أولى بالمؤمنين من أنفسهم في الدنيا والآخرة، أقرؤوا إن شئتم:

﴿النَّبِيُّ أَوْلَىٰ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ﴾ الأحزاب ٦

«فمن تُوفِّيَ وعليه دينٌ ولم يتركْ وفاءً فعليّ قضاؤه، ومن ترك مالاً فلورثته.»

«I have more right to the believers than their own selves. Recite if you wish, «The Prophet has more claim over the believers than themselves.»² Thus, whoever dies leaving behind a debt, without enough money to fulfill it, I will fulfill it. And whoever leaves behind a wealth, it is for his inheritors.»³

others from Abū Qatādah himself.

1 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd and an-Nasā'ī. A similar report from Jābir was cited earlier (See the section on “Paying off the Debts”, p. 27.).

2 *Al-Aḥzāb* 33:6.

3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

Aṭ-Ṭayālīsī (رضي الله عنه) commented on this *ḥadīth*:

“This abrogated other *ḥadīths* regarding the indebted.”¹

Similarly, anyone after the Prophet (ﷺ) who is in charge of the Islāmic state should pay off the debts of the deceased Muslims who did not leave enough money to cover them. Note, however, that this does not relieve the deceased from punishment in the grave or on Judgment Day unless he had a genuine intention and had made serious attempts to pay off his debts (see our earlier discussion p. 27).

Non-Muslims

As is indicated in the following *ḥadīths*, it is prohibited to pray and seek forgiveness for the disbelievers and hypocrites². An-Nawawī said:

“Praying for a *kāfir* and asking forgiveness for him is prohibited by the explicit text of the Qur’ān and the consensus (of the ‘*ulamā*’).”³

HYPOCRITES

‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) reported that when ‘Abdullāh Bin Ubayy Bin Salūl⁴ died, Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) was requested to pray for him. When he stood to pray, he (‘Umar) jumped to him, stood against his chest, held his clothes, and said, “O Allāh’s Messenger! Why do you want to pray over Allāh’s enemy Ibn Ubayy Bin Salūl? Did he not say such and

1 *Musnad uṭ-Ṭayālīsī*.

2 When the revelation was coming to Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ), he was able to distinguish between true believers and hypocrites. Yet, he did not openly label most of the hypocrites, but kept that a secret from most of his companions. The reason for this is that hypocrisy is an issue of the heart only known to Allāh — unless a hypocrite elects to expose himself. Because of this, the ruling discussed in this section may only be applied to those labeled as “hypocrites” by the knowledgeable and trusted ‘*ulamā*’ of the Muslim *ummah*.

3 *Al-Majmū* 5:144,258.

4 He was the head of the hypocrites, and his actions against Islām are well documented in Allāh’s Book and the Sunnah.

such on such and such a day? ¹ He is a hypocrite. Did Allāh not forbid you from praying for the hypocrites by saying:

«أَسْتَغْفِرُ لَهُمْ أَوْ لَا تَسْتَغْفِرُ لَهُمْ، إِنْ تَسْتَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ سَبْعِينَ
مَرَّةً فَلَنْ يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ.» التوبة ٨٠

«Ask forgiveness for them, or do not ask forgiveness for them! If you should ask forgiveness for them seventy times — never will Allāh forgive them.» ² ?”

Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) smiled and said, «أُحْرَ عَنِّي يَا عُمَرُ!» «Let me go, O ‘Umar!» And when he insisted, he told him:

«إِنِّي قَدْ خُيِّرْتُ فَأَخْتَرْتُ، وَلَوْ أَعْلَمُ أَنِّي إِنْ زِدْتُ عَلَى
السَّبْعِينَ غُفِرَ لَهُ لَزِدْتُ عَلَيْهَا.»

«I have been given a choice, and I chose. Should I know that if I increase over seventy he would be forgiven, I would surely increase.»

So Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) prayed for him with the *ṣaḥābah*, and remained with the *janāzah* until the burial was completed. Shortly after that, Allāh (ﷻ) revealed:

«وَلَا تُصَلِّ عَلَى أَحَدٍ مِّنْهُمْ مَّتَّ أَبَدًا وَلَا تَقُمْ عَلَى قَبْرِهِ،
إِنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَمَاتُوا وَهُمْ فَسِقُونَ» التوبة ٨٤

«And do not ever pray over any of them who has died, nor stand at his grave. Indeed, they disbelieved in Allāh and His Messenger and died as defiantly disobedient people.» ³

1 Like saying, “Do not spend money on anyone who is with Allāh’s Messenger,” or, “The one of honor in al-Madīnah (meaning himself) will drive out the degraded one (meaning Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ)).”

2 At-Tawbah 9:80.

3 At-Tawbah 9:84.

‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) concluded:

“After that, Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) never prayed over a hypocrite, nor stood at his grave — until Allāh took his life. Afterwards, I continued to be amazed at my boldness in front of Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) on that day. Indeed, Allāh and His Messenger know better.”¹

Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar commented on this:

“‘Umar only declared him (Ibn Salūl) a hypocrite because of what he had known of his situation. Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) did not go by ‘Umar’s words because he wanted to deal with him (Ibn Salūl) according to his outwardly declaration of Islām, with whatever rulings following from that. He also wanted to honor his son, who was clearly righteous; and he wanted to bring close the hearts of his people and prevent any harm that may result (had he dealt with him differently).

At first, the Prophet (ﷺ) used to endure the harm of the pagans and forgive and pardon them, but was later commanded to fight against them. At that time, he continued to forgive and pardon anyone who declared Islām, even if his reality contradicted that — for the purpose of bringing the hearts toward him, and in order not to scare away some people who might say, ‘Muḥammad is killing his companions.’

After conquering Makkah, the pagans embraced Islām, and the disbelievers became scarce and degraded. At that time, he (ﷺ) commanded (his followers) to be open in attacking the hypocrites and forcing them to abide by the bitter truth (to them).”²

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others from ‘Umar and his son ‘Abdullāh.

2 *Fatḥ ul-Bārī* 8:270.

DISBELIEVERS

Al-Musayyib Bin Ḥazn (رضي الله عنه) reported that when Abū Ṭalib approached death, Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) visited him. He found in his presence Abū Jahl and 'Abdullāh Bin Abī Umayyah Bin al-Mughīrah. Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said to him:

«يا عمّ! إنك أعظم الناس عليّ حقاً، وأحسنهم عندي يداً،
ولأنت أعظم عليّ حقاً من والديّ، فقل "لا إله إلا الله"،
كلمة أشهد لك بها عند الله.»

«My uncle! Of all people, you have the most right upon me, and the greatest favors. Verily, you have more right upon me than my parents. Say "*Lā ilāha illa 'Llāh*," a statement for which I will testify on your behalf before Allāh.»

Abū Jahl and 'Abdullāh Bin Abī Umayyah interjected, "O Abū Ṭalib! Would you give up the creed of 'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib?" So Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) continued to propose the *Shahādah* to him, and they continued to say that to him, until his last words were that he is upon the creed of 'Abd ul-Muṭṭalib, and he refused to say it. He also said to Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ), "If it were not that the Quraysh would condemn me, saying that I only said it because of my fear (of death), I would have satisfied your eyes with it (by saying it)." So Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«أما والله لأستغفرنّ لك ما لم أنه عنك.»

«Verily, by Allāh, I will ask Allāh to forgive you if I am not forbidden from that.»

So the Muslims started seeking forgiveness for their relatives who died as pagans. Then Allāh (ﷻ) revealed:

﴿مَا كَانَ لِلنَّبِيِّ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَنْ يَسْتَغْفِرُوا لِلْمُشْرِكِينَ، وَلَوْ كَانُوا أَوْلِيَا
قُرْبَىٰ، مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُمْ أَصْحَابُ الْجَحِيمِ﴾ التوبة ١١٣

«It is not (permissible) for the Prophet and those who have believed to ask forgiveness for the pagans, even if they were relatives, after it has become clear to them that they are dwellers of the Hellfire.»¹

Also, Allāh revealed to His Messenger in regard to Abū Ṭālib:

﴿إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ، وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ،
وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ﴾ القصص ٥٦

«Verily, you cannot guide whom you like, but Allāh guides whom He wills — He knows best those who are guided.»^{2, 3}

‘Alī (ؓ) reported that he heard a man asking Allāh’s forgiveness for his pagan parents. He asked him, “You seek forgiveness for your parents who were pagans?” He replied, “Didn’t Ibrāhīm seek forgiveness for his father who was a pagan?” So Allāh revealed:

﴿مَا كَانَ لِلنَّبِيِّ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَنْ يَسْتَغْفِرُوا لِلْمُشْرِكِينَ، وَلَوْ كَانُوا أَوْلِيَا
قُرْبَىٰ، مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُمْ أَصْحَابُ الْجَحِيمِ﴾ وَمَا كَانَ أَسْتِغْفَارُ
إِبْرَاهِيمَ لِأَبِيهِ إِلَّا عَنْ مَوْعِدَةٍ وَعَدَّهَا إِيَّاهُ، فَلَمَّا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ أَنَّهُ عَدُوٌّ لِلَّهِ
تَبَرَّأَ مِنْهُ، إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لَأَوَّاهٌ حَلِيمٌ﴾ التوبة ١١٣-١١٤

«It is not (permissible) for the Prophet and those who have believed to ask forgiveness for the pagans, even if they were relatives, after it has become clear to them that they are dwellers of the Hellfire. And

1 *At-Tawbah* 9:113.

2 *Al-Qaṣaṣ* 28:56.

3 This *ḥadīth*, recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others, is a combined narration from al-Musayyib, Abū Hurayrah and Jābir (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 122-123).

Ibrāhīm's asking for his father's forgiveness was only because of a promise that he had made to him. But when it became apparent to him that he was an enemy of Allāh, he disowned him. Indeed, Ibrāhīm was compassionate (toward Allāh) and patient.»^{1, 2}

Ibrāhīm's supplications in which he asked Allāh to forgive his father is mentioned near the end of *sūrat Ibrāhīm* (14:41), which appears to have taken place when he was in Makkah, after his father's death. Thus, it seems that he only knew (through the revelation) that his father was an enemy of Allāh after his death. This is confirmed by Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه):

“Ibrāhīm continued to seek forgiveness for his father until he died. When he (the father) died, it became apparent to him that he was an enemy of Allāh, and he stopped seeking forgiveness for him.”³

This shows the great error of many Muslims in our time who seek Allāh's forgiveness and mercy for some of the disbelievers, such as political figures, singers, dancers, and various art and literature figures!

Janāzah Prayer in Absentia

If someone dies in a land where there are no Muslims to pray *janāzah* over him, some Muslims may perform it for him in another land as *ṣalāt ul-ghā'ib* (prayer for an absent person).

Abū Hurayrah, Jābir Bin 'Abdillāh, and other companions (رضي الله عنهم) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) announced to the people at al-Madīnah the death of Aṣḥumah an-Najāshī, the ruler of al-Ḥabashah⁴, on the same day that he died. He said:

1 *At-Tawbah* 9:113-114.

2 Recorded by an-Nasā'ī, at-Tirmidhī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 123-124).

3 Recorded by Ibn Abī Ḥātim. Verified to be authentic by as-Suyūṭī (*al-Fatāwā* 2:419).

4 Abyssinia.

«مات اليوم عبدٌ لله صالحٌ (أخٌ لكم بغير أرضكم)، فقوموا
فصلوا عليه، (واستغفروا لأخيكم).»

«A brother of yours in another land — a righteous servant of Allāh, has died today. So rise to pray for him, and seek Allāh’s forgiveness for your brother.»

They asked him, “Who is he?” He replied, «النجاشي.» **«An-Najāshī.»** He led them to the *muṣallā* where he formed them into two rows behind him. They stood and prayed as though the *janāzah* was right in front of them. Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) led the prayer, making four *takbīrs*.¹

This clearly indicates that an-Najāshī was a Muslim, and is further confirmed by his own words as reported by Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī (رضي الله عنه):

“Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) commanded us to go to the land of an-Najāshī ... An-Najāshī said, ‘I testify that he (Muḥammad) is Allāh’s Messenger, and he is the one of whom ʿĪsā Bin Maryam had prophesied. Had it not been for my commitment as king, I would go to him until I carry his shoes.’ ”²

Commenting on this, Ibn ul-Qayyim (رحمته الله) said:

“It was not part of the Prophet’s (ﷺ) guidance and Sunnah to pray (*janāzah*) for everyone who died afar. Large numbers of Muslims died afar, but he (ﷺ) did not pray *janāzah* for them. On the other hand, it is authentically reported that he prayed *janāzah* for an-Najāshī. Three opinions resulted from this:

1. This urges and permits the Muslim *ummah* to pray *janāzah* for everyone who dies afar. This is the opinion of ash-Shāfiʿī and Aḥmad.

1 This a collective narration recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and many others (*Aḥkām ul-Janāʿiz* p. 116-117).

2 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd and al-Bayhaqī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janāʿiz* p. 118).

2. This is a special case only applicable to him (ﷺ), and to no one else. This is the opinion of Abū Ḥanīfah and Mālik.
3. The correct opinion: If the *janāzah* prayer is not performed for a deceased in the land where he died, it is permissible to pray *ṣalāt ul-ghā'ib* for him, as the Prophet (ﷺ) prayed for an-Najāshī because the prayer was not performed for him since he died among disbelievers. But if the prayer is performed for a deceased in the land where he died, *ṣalāt ul-ghā'ib* may not be performed elsewhere, because the obligation has been met by that. The Prophet (ﷺ) prayed for the absent (an-Najāshī) and left it off (for all others). Both his acting and his refraining are part of his Sunnahs (and must be followed).¹

This is also the opinion of some of the *Shāfi'ī* scholars. Al-Khaṭṭābī said:

“An-Najāshī was a Muslim man. He believed in Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) and the truthfulness of his prophethood, but concealed his faith. When a Muslim dies, it is an obligation upon the Muslims to pray over him — unless he was in the lands of the disbelievers and none in his presence was able to fulfill that right for him. Thus, it was the Prophet’s (ﷺ) obligation to perform that for an-Najāshī because he was his prophet, he was responsible for him, and he had more right toward him than other people. This, Allāh knows best, is the reason that made him pray for him in absentia.

Thus, when a Muslim dies in a land, and his right is fulfilled by praying over him (in that land), the people should not pray over him in a distant land. But if it was known that the prayer was not performed for him, because of some obstacle or obstructive reason, the

1 *Zād ul-Ma'ād* 1:205-206.

sunnah would then be to pray for him despite the distance.

When they perform the *janāzah* prayer for him, the people must face the *Qiblah* — not the land of the deceased if its direction is different from that of the *Qiblah*.

Some scholars took the position that it is not recommended to pray for a distant deceased, claiming that that action was specific for the Prophet (ﷺ) ... This is a wrong understanding, because when Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) takes an action regarding one of the affairs of the *Sharī'ah*, our obligation is to follow his example. Any claim for specification requires an evidence.”¹

What further confirms that it is not recommended to pray *janāzah* for every Muslim who dies afar is that when the Rightly Guided Successors and other righteous Muslims died, none of the Muslims in distant lands prayed *ṣalāt-ul-ghā'ib* for them — had any of that happened, it would have been successively reported to us.

In our time, many Muslims often pray *ṣalāt ul-ghā'ib* for some beloved, respected, admired, or famous persons, even if multitudes of Muslims had already prayed *janāzah* for them in their place of death. From the above discussion, we conclude that all of that is surely a *bid'ah* that conflicts with the Prophet's (ﷺ) Sunnah and guidance of the righteous *salaf*.

Where to Perform the *Janāzah* Prayer

AT THE MUŞALLĀ

It is preferable to pray the *janāzah* prayer outside of the *masjid*, in a place designated for that and called the *muşallā*. This was the most common practice of the Prophet (ﷺ). Al-Hāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar said:

1 *Ma'ālim us-Sunan*.

“The *muṣallā* was adjacent to the Prophet’s (ﷺ) *Masjid* on the east side (in the direction of al-Baqīʿ). They used to pray there *ʿīd* and *janāzah* prayers.”¹

Ibn ʿUmar (رضي الله عنه) reported:

“The Jews brought to the Prophet (ﷺ) a man and woman of them who had committed *zinā*. He had them stoned (to death) close to the place of funerals near the *Masjid*.”²

In Jābir’s *ḥadīth* (cited in full p. 28), he said:

“A man from among us died. We washed him ... and placed him where the funerals are usually placed at the stand of Jibrīl. Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) was then invited to pray *janāzah* for him ...”³

Muḥammad Bin ʿAbdillāh Bin Jaḥsh (رضي الله عنه) reported that they (the *ṣaḥābah*) were sitting with Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) outside the *Masjid* where the *janāzahs* are placed (for prayer). Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) raised his eyes and looked toward the sky, then lowered his look, put his hand on his forehead, and said:

«سبحان الله، سبحان الله، ماذا نزل من التشديد!»

«Exalted is Allāh! Exalted is Allāh! What a tight decree has (just) been revealed! »

No one dared to ask him anything that day and night. In the morning, Muḥammad asked Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ), “What tight decree has been revealed?” He replied:

«في الدين. والذي نفس محمد بيده، لو أن رجلاً قُتل في سبيل

1 *Fatḥ ul-Bārī*.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī.

3 Recorded by al-Ḥākim and others. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī.

اللَّهُ، ثم عاش، ثم قتل في سبيل الله، ثم عاش، وعليه دين،
 ما دخل الجنة حتى يُقضى دينه. »

«It is tightness in regard to debts: By Him in whose hand is Muḥammad’s soul, if a man is killed for Allāh’s cause then made to live, then killed for Allāh’s cause then made to live, and he has a debt, he will not enter *Jannah* until it is paid off.»¹

As was cited earlier (p. 163), even *ṣalāt ul-ghā’ib* for an-Najāshī was performed in the *muṣallā*.

Some people may assume that, like the five daily prayers, it is preferable to pray over a *janāzah* in the *masjid*. Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) corrected this understanding by indicating that there is no special virtue for praying it in the *masjid*. Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«من صلى على جنازة في المسجد فليس له شيء.»

«He who prays over a *janāzah* in the *masjid* does not get anything (extra).»²

Abū al-Ḥasan as-Sindī (رحمته الله) commented on this *ḥadīth*:

“This indicates that there is no additional reward for praying *janāzah* in the *masjid*, as is the case for the five obligatory prayers. This *ḥadīth* merely indicates that it is permissible to pray *janāzah* in a *masjid*, but does not give it a higher status over praying it outside ... Yes it is preferable to perform it outside the *masjid*, because this was the Prophet’s (ﷺ) frequent practice, having prayed it in the *masjid* only once or twice.”³

1 Recorded by Aḥmad and al-Ḥākim. Verified to be authentic by al-Ḥākim, ath-Thahabī, al-Munthirī, and al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 136).

2 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, Aḥmad, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* no. 2351).

3 ‘*Awn ul-Ma’būd*.

IN THE MASJID

As expressed above, it is permissible to perform the *janāzah* prayer in a *masjid*. ‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that when Sa’d Bin Abī Waqqāṣ died, the Prophet’s (ﷺ) wives requested that the *janāzah* be brought into the *Masjid* so that they would pray for him. He was brought next to their houses ¹ (from within the *Masjid*), and they prayed for him. The *janāzah* was then taken out through what was known as “the Gate of Funerals”. When some people heard of this, they criticized it saying, “This is a *bid’ah*! We never heard of funerals brought into the *Masjid*!” ‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) heard this and said:

“How fast do people speak up about things of which they have no knowledge! They objected to bringing a *janāzah* into the *Masjid*! By Allāh, Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) did not pray over Suhayl Bin Bayḍā’ and his brother except inside the *Masjid*.” ²

AMIDST THE GRAVES?

It is generally not permissible to pray over a *janāzah* among the graves. Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported:

“The Prophet (ﷺ) prohibited praying over the *janāzahs* among the graves.” ³

However, it is permissible to pray *janāzah* (but not other prayers) in a graveyard away from the graves, or at a specific grave for specific reasons — as is explained next.

IN A GRAVEYARD

It is permissible to pray *janāzah* in a graveyard, either away from the graves, or in an area designated for that and separated from the graves

1 Which were connected to the *Masjid*.

2 Recorded by Muslim, al-Bayhaqī, and others.

3 Recorded by Ibn ul-A’rābī (in *al-Mu’jam*) and aṭ-Ṭabarānī (in *al-Awsaṭ*). Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 138).

with a wall. When Imām Aḥmad (رضي الله عنه) was asked about praying in a *masjid* built among the graves, with a wall separating it from them, he only allowed it for the *janāzah* prayers. He said:

“It is not permissible to pray in a *masjid* among the graves — except for *janāzah* prayers, because this is the what the Sunnah directs in their regard.”¹

Al-Hāfiẓ Ibn Rajab (رضي الله عنه) said that by this statement, Imām Aḥmad refers to the action of the *ṣaḥābah*. Nāfi‘ (رضي الله عنه) reported:

“We prayed over ‘Ā’ishah and Umm Salamah (رضي الله عنهما) ² in the middle of al-Baqī‘. The *imām* was Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه), and Ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنهما) was present.”³

AT A SPECIFIC GRAVE

The Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ) indicates that the *janāzah* prayer may be performed over a grave, after burial, in two situations: If the dead person was buried before performing the prayer; or if he was buried before giving chance to the Muslims, especially their *imām*, to perform the prayer.

‘Abdullāh Bin ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) reported the Prophet (ﷺ) used to visit a sick man. That man died and was buried during the night. In the morning, his people informed the Prophet (ﷺ) about his death. He asked, «ما منعكم أن تُعلموني؟» **Why didn’t you inform me (earlier)?** They replied, “Because he died during the night; and it was dark. Thus we hated to disturb you.” Ibn ‘Abbās continued:

“The Prophet (ﷺ) went to the grave. He arranged us in rows behind him, led us, and prayed over him, pronouncing four *takbīrs*.”⁴

1 *Taḥṭhir us-Sājid* p. 128.

2 ‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) died in 56 H, and Umm Salamah (رضي الله عنها) died in 61 H.

3 Recorded by ‘Abd ur-Razzāq (*al-Muṣannaf* 1:407:1594). Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Taḥṭhir us-Sājid* p. 128).

4 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that a black woman used to clean the *Masjid* and pick up the dirty rags and sticks from it. She died and, after a few days, the Prophet (ﷺ) missed her. He asked about her «أين فلانة؟» and was told that she died. He said, «هَلَا كُنْتُمْ أَذَنْتُمُونِي؟» **«Shouldn't you have informed me?»** They told him, as if belittling her, “She died and was buried at night. We hated to wake you up.” He said, **«Show me her grave.»** They guided him to it, and he stood over it, prayed *janāzah* for her, then said:

«إِنَّ هَذِهِ الْقُبُورَ مَمْلُوءَةٌ ظِلْمَةً، وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ مُنَوِّرُهَا لَهُمْ بِصَلَاتِي عَلَيْهِمْ.»

«Indeed, these graves engulf their dwellers with darkness; and Allāh illuminates them by my prayer for them.»¹

Yazīd Bin Thābit (رضي الله عنه) reported that he and other companions went with the Prophet (ﷺ) to al-Baqī'. He noticed a new grave and asked about it. He was told, “This is the grave of such and such woman, the servant of such and such family.” He recognized her and said, «أَلَا أَذَنْتُمُونِي بِهَا؟» **«Shouldn't you have informed me?»** They replied, “She died at noon time. You were fasting and napping; and we hated to disturb you.” He (ﷺ) said:

«فَلَا تَفْعَلُوا! لَا أَعْرِفَنَّ! مَا مَاتَ مِنْكُمْ مَيِّتٌ مَا كُنْتُ

بَيْنَ أَظْهُرِكُمْ إِلَّا أَذَنْتُمُونِي بِهِ، فَإِنَّ صَلَاتِي عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةٌ.»

«Do not do this again! I do not want to hear this again. Whenever a person dies while I am still among you, inform me, because my prayer for him is a (reason for) mercy.»

He then stood by the grave. The companions formed rows behind him, and he pronounced four *takbīrs* over it.²

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others. Al-Albānī indicates that this particular report clearly indicates that this was a woman, contrary to others that are uncertain whether it was a man or a woman (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 113-114).

2 Recorded by an-Nasā'ī, Ibn Mājah, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī

Some of the Prophet's companions (رضي الله عنه) reported that he (ﷺ) would visit the sick among the poor and weak Muslims, walk in their *janāzah*, and would let none pray over them other than himself. A poor woman from al-ʿAwālī¹ was sick for a long time. Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) would inquire from her neighbors about her situation; and he asked them that, if something (death) happened to her, they should not bury her before he prayed over her. The woman died one night. She was brought to the place designated for *janāzah* prayer² by the Prophet's *Masjid*, so that he would pray over her as he (ﷺ) requested. They found that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) was asleep, having prayed *ʿishāʾ*. They hated to disturb him in his sleep; so they prayed over her and went (to bury her). In the morning, Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) asked those of her neighbors who were present about her situation. They told him what happened, and that they hated to wake him up. He said, «ولم فعلتم؟ أنطلقوا.» **Why did you do that! Let us go.** They went with him until they stood over her grave. They formed rows behind the Prophet (ﷺ) as they normally do for the *janāzah* prayer, and he prayed for her, pronouncing four *takbīrs* as he would do for *janāzah*.³

Preparing for the Prayer

Wuḍūʾ

Is one required to have a valid *wuḍūʾ* for the *janāzah* prayer? There are no explicit reports in the Sunnah regarding this. However, we would strongly prefer this, because the general rulings of the normal prayers apply to the *janāzah* prayer, and because it contains recitation of the Qurʾān, *thikr* and supplications, which are preferable to be said with complete purity.

(*Aḥkām ul-Janāʿiz* p. 114).

1 A suburb of al-Madīnah at that time.

2 That was to the east of the Prophet's *Masjid*. See above.

3 Recorded by al-Bayhaqī and an-Nasāʾī; verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janāʿiz* p. 115).

PRAYING IN *JAMĀ'AH*

As is the case with the five prescribed prayers, it is obligatory (*wājib*) to perform the *janāzah* prayer in *jamā'ah*. This was the Prophet's (ﷺ) consistent practice, and he commanded the Muslims to follow his example in the prayers by saying:

«صَلُّوا كَمَا رَأَيْتُمُونِي أَصْلِي.»

«Pray as you have seen me pray.»¹

If the people pray individually, the obligation would be fulfilled, but they would sin for leaving off the *jamā'ah* — Allāh (ﷻ) knows best.

An-Nawawī said:

“There is no difference (among the scholars) that it is permissible to pray *janāzah* individually. But the Sunnah is to pray it in *jamā'ah*, because of the well-known authentic *ḥadīths* in this regard, in addition to the consensus of the Muslims.”²

One may wonder then, why did the *ṣaḥābah* pray over the Prophet (ﷺ) individually without an *imām*.³ Al-Hāfiẓ said:

“Ibn Duḥyah said, ‘The truth is that the Muslims prayed for him individually without an *imām*. Ash-Shāfi‘ī confirmed that this was because of the great status of Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) — may my father and mother be sacrificed for him — and that they insisted that no single individual would lead the prayer over him.’ And Allāh knows best.”⁴

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Aḥmad, and others from Mālik Bin al-Ḥuwayrith (رضي الله عنه).

2 *Al-Majmū‘* 5:314.

3 Recorded by al-Bayhaqī (*as-Sunan* 4:30), Ibn Mājah, and Aḥmad from Abū ‘Asīb or Abū ‘Asīm, who al-Baghawī was not sure whether he was a *ṣaḥābī* or not. Al-Albānī indicated that this *ḥadīth* is not reported with a single acceptable *isnād*, but with various weak *isnāds* that strengthen each other (*Aḥkām ul-Janā‘iz* p. 125).

4 *At-Talkhīṣ* 5:187.

This was a special incident that is hard to explain and, therefore, we cannot drop because of it what the Prophet (ﷺ) did consistently during his blessed life. The Prophet's (ﷺ) guidance surely comes first because it is more correct and better established.

WHO LEADS THE PRAYER?

The Muslim ruler or his representative has the first right to lead the prayer. This was the understanding of al-Ḥusayn (رضي الله عنه) in the presence of many of the *ṣaḥābah*.

Abū Ḥazim (رضي الله عنه) reported that he witnessed the *janāzah* of al-Ḥasan Bin 'Alī (رضي الله عنه) in al-Madīnah. The commander over al-Madīnah at that time was Sa'īd Bin al-'Āṣ (رضي الله عنه)¹, who had a conflict with al-Ḥusayn Bin 'Alī (رضي الله عنه). Al-Ḥusayn stabbed with his finger into Sa'īd's neck and said:

“Step forward (to lead the prayer)! Had this not been what the Sunnah bids, I would not have let you lead.”²

This opinion (that the ruler has the first right to lead), further supported by the following *ḥadīth*, is held by most of the scholars, such as Abū Ḥanīfah, Mālik, Aḥmad, Ishāq, ash-Shāfi'ī (in one of his two positions), and others. Ibn Ḥazm's opinion, on the other hand, based on general texts, is that the close relatives have the first priority.³

If the ruler or his representative were not present, the one who knows Qur'ān the most should lead, and so on, as indicated in the *ḥadīth* of Abū Mas'ūd al-Anṣārī (رضي الله عنه) who reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

1 He met the Prophet (ﷺ) and was nine years old when he (رضي الله عنه) died. He was respectful and forbearing, and among the noble people of the Quraysh. He was one of the scribes who wrote the Qur'ān for 'Uthmān (رضي الله عنه). 'Alī (رضي الله عنه) appointed him over al-Kūfah (in Iraq). He led the Muslims in the fighting of Ṭabarstān (in Northern Iran). Mu'āwiyah appointed him over al-Madīnah. He died in 58 H, and was buried in al-Baqī'.

2 Recorded by al-Ḥākim, al-Bayhaqī, and others. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 129-130).

3 Review *Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 130-131, and *Nayl ul-Awṭār* 3:134.

«يَوْمُ الْقَوْمِ أَقْرَبُهُمْ لِكِتَابِ اللَّهِ، فَإِنْ كَانُوا فِي الْقِرَاءَةِ سَوَاءً فَأَعْلَمُهُمْ
بِالسَّنَةِ، فَإِنْ كَانُوا فِي السَّنَةِ سَوَاءً فَأَقْدَمُهُمْ هِجْرَةَ، فَإِنْ كَانُوا فِي
الهِجْرَةِ سَوَاءً فَأَقْدَمُهُمْ سِلْمًا. وَلَا يُؤَمِّنُ الرَّجُلُ الرَّجُلَ فِي أَهْلِهِ وَلَا
فِي سُلْطَانِهِ، وَلَا يَقْعُدُ فِي بَيْتِهِ عَلَى تَكْرِمَتِهِ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ.»

«The people should be led by the one among them who best reads (from memory) Allāh's Book. If they are equal in reading, then the most knowledgeable of the Sunnah (should lead). If they are equal in the Sunnah, then the earliest in *Hijrah*. If they are equal in *Hijrah*, then the earliest in Islām (or the oldest). And one man may not lead another in his home or place of authority, nor sit at his house in his place of choice without his permission.»¹

A male who memorizes the most Qur'ān should lead even if he has not attained the age of puberty. 'Amr Bin Salimah (رضي الله عنه) reported that his people (from the tribe of Jarm) visited the Prophet (ﷺ) (to learn from him). When they were ready to depart, they asked him, "O Allāh's Messenger! Who should lead us (in the prayers)?" He replied:

«أَكْثَرُكُمْ جَمْعًا (أَوْ أَخَذًا) لِلْقُرْآنِ.»

«He among you who memorizes the most Qur'ān.»

'Amr continued:

"None among them had memorized as much Qur'ān as I did. So they made me lead them when I was still a boy wearing a wrap-around cloak. I had not witnessed a gathering from Jarm since but I lead them (in the prayers). And I prayed over their *janāzahs* until this day."²

1 Recorded by Muslim and others.

2 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd and al-Bayhaqī. Al-Bukhārī recorded a part of it. Verified

NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN THE PRAYER

The smallest number reported for the *jamā'ah* in the *janāzah* prayer is three. ‘Abdullāh Bin Abī Ṭalḥah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Abū Ṭalḥah invited Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) to pray for ‘Umayr Bin Abī Ṭalḥah when he died. Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) came to their house to pray over him. He stood in the front, Abū Ṭalḥah behind him, and Umm Sulaym behind Abū Ṭalḥah. There was no one else with them.”¹

The larger the *jamā'ah*, the better it is for the deceased. ‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) and Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

« ما من ميت تصلي عليه أمة من المسلمين يبلغون مئة، كلهم يشفعون له، إلا شُفِّعوا فيه (إلا عُفِّر له). »

«Whenever a group of Muslims numbering one hundred pray *janāzah* for a deceased, all interceding on his behalf, their intercession is granted (by Allāh), and he is forgiven.»²

The deceased will be granted forgiveness with a smaller number of people, provided that their *īmān* is not spoiled with *shirk*. Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

« ما من رجل مسلم يموت، فيقوم على جنازته أربعون رجلاً لا يشركون بالله شيئاً إلا شَفَّعَهُمُ اللهُ فيه. »

«Whenever a Muslim man dies, and forty men pray over his *janāzah*, none of them joining anything with Allāh in worship, Allāh grants them intercession for him.»³

to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* 131).

1 Recorded by al-Ḥākim and al-Bayhaqī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 126).

2 Recorded by Muslim and others

3 Recorded by Muslim and others

Maymūnah (رضي الله عنها) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

« ما من ميت يصلي عليه أمة من الناس، إلا شُفِّعوا فيه. »

«Whenever a large group of (Muslim) people pray *janāzah* for a deceased, they are granted intercession for him.»¹

Shams ul-Ḥaqq Ābādī said in his commentary on *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*:

“These *ḥadīths* indicate that it is recommended to gather a large number of people for the *janāzah* prayer. It should be attempted to reach these numbers (mentioned in the *ḥadīths*), because that could lead to success (in the forgiveness of the deceased). However, this is restricted by two conditions:

- 1) They should sincerely attempt to intercede for him through supplication and seeking forgiveness for him.
- 2) They should be Muslims of correct belief, none among them joining partners with Allāh, as in the above *ḥadīth* of Ibn ‘Abbās.”²

ARRANGING THE ROWS

It is recommended to form three or more rows behind the *imām*, each row containing a minimum of two people.

Mālik Bin Hubayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

« ما من مسلم يموت فيصلِّي عليه ثلاثة صفوفٍ من المسلمين إلاَّ

1 Recorded by an-Nasā'ī; verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Ṣaḥīḥ ul-Jāmi'* no. 5787).

2 'Awn ul-Ma'būd 8:452.

أوجب (أو غفر له).

«Whenever a Muslim dies, and three lines of Muslims pray *janāzah* for him, he is granted forgiveness.»¹

Marthad Bin ‘Abdillāh al-Yazanī reported that, based on this *ḥadīth*, when Mālik felt that the people present for the *janāzah* prayer were few, he would divide them into three rows.

Abū Umāmah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) prayed once over a *janāzah* with seven other people. He formed them into three rows: three in the first, two in the second, and two in the third.²

If only one other person is present with the *imām*, he should not stand foot to foot with him, as is done in the other prayers, but should stand behind him. This is what the Prophet (ﷺ) did when he prayed with Abū Ṭalḥah and Umm Sulaym (see the previous section).

The above *ḥadīths* further indicate that the rows should be straightened in the *janāzah* prayer like the regular prayers.

It is important to note that the above *ḥadīths* emphasize more the virtue of having large numbers of people (who would be possible to form into three rows) than the virtue of the three rows themselves.

Furthermore, with the *janāzah* prayer normally performed in the *muṣallā*, it is easy to form the people into any number of rows — because the rows in a *muṣallā* are usually open ended and unlimited by walls or boundaries. However, if it is performed in a *masjid*, the *imām* should be more concerned about completing the front rows (which is an obligation) than forming incomplete rows that would total to three or more.³

1 Recorded by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, and others. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Ḥāfiẓ and others; however, al-Albānī disagrees with this because Muḥammad Bin Ishāq, one of the narrators, is known to be a *mudallis* (one who is ambiguous in stating his sources), and did not declare direct hearing of this report (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* 128). Yet, the Prophet’s (ﷺ) practice of forming three lines for the *janāzah* prayer provides a further supporting evidence for this *ḥadīth*.

2 Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī (*al-Kabīr* 7785). Al-Albānī indicated that one of the narrators, Ibn Lahī’ah, is considered weak in memory, but his narrations are acceptable when they have other supporting reports — as in this case (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 127).

3 This opinion was approved by ‘Alī al-Ḥalabī in a private conversation between him

POSITION OF THE *IMĀM*

The *Imām* should stand near the head of a male and near the midsection of a woman.

Abū Ghālīb al-Khayyāṭ reported that he witnessed Mālik Bin Anas (رضي الله عنه) pray *janāzah* for a man, and he stood by his head. After that *janāzah* was removed, a woman's was brought, in a green coffin. He prayed for her, standing near her middle (or buttocks). Al-‘Alā’ Bin Ziyād al-‘Adawī ¹ was present and asked him, “O Abū Ḥamzah, is this how Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) used to stand, like you stood, with respect to a man and woman?” He replied, “Yes!” Al-‘Alā’ looked at the people behind him and said, “Memorize this.” ²

Samurah Bin Jundub (رضي الله عنه) reported:

“I prayed behind the Prophet (ﷺ) when he prayed over Umm Ka‘b, who died during delivery. Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) stood for the prayer near her middle.” ³

POSITION OF THE DECEASED’S HEAD

Is it recommended to place the bodies in front of the *imām* so that the heads are on his right side (as in Figure 5.1)? Shaykh Muḥammad Bin Ṣāliḥ al-‘Uthaymīn responds to this question as follows:

“I do not know of any stipulations in the Sunnah in this regard. Thus the *imām* should have the head on his left sometimes for the people to understand that it is not a requirement.” ⁴

And Shaykh ‘Alī al-Ḥalabī responds to the same question as follows:

and the author.

- 1 He is one of the scholars and righteous men among the *tābi‘ūn*. He died in 94 H.
- 2 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, at-Tirmithī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā‘iz* p. 138-139).
- 3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.
- 4 *Sab‘ūna Su‘ālan fī Aḥkām il-Janā‘iz* p. 17-18.

“Since this (placing the head on the right side) is the common practice of the Muslims through the ages and around the world, it should be given preference.”¹

From the above, and taking into consideration the Sunnah’s teaching of giving preference to the right side in all affairs, we conclude that it is preferable, but not obligatory, to place the head on the right side.

MULTIPLE BODIES

If there are several *janāzahs* at the same time, consisting of both men and women, the *imām* would have two options, both of which are supported by the Sunnah:

- a) Perform a separate *janāzah* prayer for each of them.
- b) Perform only one prayer for all of them.

In regard to the first option, Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) reported:

“When Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) saw Ḥamzah, he commanded that his body be prepared and placed in front of him toward the *Qiblah*. He made nine *takbīrs* over him (for the *janāzah* prayer), then had the other *shahīds* brought forward. Each one of the *shahīds* was put next to Ḥamzah, and he prayed for him and the *shahīds* with him. Thus he prayed for him and the *shahīds* seventy two *janāzah* prayers.”²

An-Nawawī said:

“The scholars agree that it is preferable to perform a separate prayer for each — except for the author of *at-*

1 A verbal answer provided in late October 1998.

2 Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī (in *al-Kabīr* 3:107,108). Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janāz* 133-134).

Tatimmah who affirmed that it is better to pray one time for all of them, because that hastens the burial, which is a requirement. We approve of the first opinion, because it involves doing more (for the deceased), making the prayers more likely to be accepted. Besides, it does not result in any major delay.”¹

In regard to the second option, Nāfi^c reported:

“Ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) prayed once over nine *janāzahs* together. He set the men (behind) on the side of the *imām*, and the women (in front) on the side of the *Qiblah*, thus forming them into one column. The *janāzah* of Umm Kulthūm Bint ‘Alī, ‘Umar Bin al-Khaṭṭāb’s wife, and a son of hers called Zayd, both were with the bodies. The boy was set to the side of the *imām*. The commander (of al-Madīnah) at that time was Sa‘īd Bin al-‘Āṣ, and among the people present were Ibn ‘Abbās, Abū Hurayrah, Abū Sa‘īd (al-Khudrī), and Abū Qatādah (رضي الله عنه). A man objected to that, and I turned toward Ibn ‘Abbās, Abū Hurayrah, Abū Sa‘īd, and Abū Qatādah, asking, ‘What is this?’ They replied, ‘This is the Sunnah’s teaching.’ ”²

A similar description of this incident was given by ‘Ammār, the servant of al-Ḥārith Bin Nawfal.³

This indicates that if the *imām* chooses to perform one *janāzah* prayer for several dead persons, he should line them in front of him, so that the males (men and boys) are closest to him, and the females (women and girls) in front of them all.

1 *Al-Majmū‘* 5:225.

2 Recorded by ‘Abd ur-Razzāq, an-Nasā‘ī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā‘iz* p. 132).

3 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, an-Nasā‘ī, and al-Bayhaqī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā‘iz* p. 133).

PROHIBITED TIMES

Similar to the regular prayers, it is not permissible to pray *janāzah* at the three prohibited times — except out of necessity.

‘Uqbah Bin ‘Āmir (رضي الله عنه) reported:

“There are three times at which Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) prohibited us from praying or burying our dead: When the sun rises — until it becomes high, when the noon-time starts — until the sun declines (off the zenith), and when the sun approaches setting — until it sets.”¹

Al-Bayhaqī added in his report of this *ḥadīth* that ‘Uqbah was asked, “Is it permissible to bury at night?” He replied, “Yes, Abū Bakr was buried at night.”²

The *ṣaḥābah* adhered to the instructions of this *ḥadīth*. Mālik reported from Muḥammad Bin Abī Ḥarmalah that Zaynab Bin Abī Salamah died when Ṭāriq was the commander of al-Madīnah. Her *janāzah* was brought and set down at al-Baqī’ (for prayer) after the morning (*fajr*) prayer. Ṭāriq used to pray the morning prayer (early) when it was still dark. So ‘Abdullāh Bin ‘Umar said to the family (of the deceased):

“You either pray over your *janāzah* now, or wait until the sun rises.”³

Mālik also reported from Ibn ‘Umar that he said:

“One may pray over a *janāzah* after the ‘*asr* and morning prayers — provided that they were performed at their (first) time.”⁴

1 Recorded by Muslim, Abū Dāwūd, and others.

2 Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 165).

3 Recorded in *al-Muwaṭṭa’*. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 166).

4 Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 166).

And al-Bayhaqī reported from ‘Alī that a *janāzah* was brought to the graveyard of the people of al-Baṣrah (in Iraq) when the sun turned yellow. No one prayed over it until the sun set, at which time Abū Barzah (رضي الله عنه) requested that the call for prayer be given. He led the people in the *maghrib* prayer, then they prayed over it. Among the people was Anas (رضي الله عنه).¹

MENTIONING THE DECEASED’S NAME

Is it permissible for the *imām* to declare the deceased’s name (or names) prior to starting the prayer? Shaykh Muḥammad Bin Ṣāliḥ al-‘Uthaymīn responds to this question as follows:

“It is permissible to do this so that the people would make a specific supplication for him, in the masculine gender if he was a male, or in the feminine if a female.”²

Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) has declared the names of some of those for whom he prayed *janāzah*, as in the case of an-Najāshī. But one should avoid using the tone of the prohibited *na‘y* in that declaration.

Manner of Performing the Prayer

As is the case with all prayers, one must perform the *janāzah* prayer similar to the way it was performed by the Prophet (ﷺ), because he commanded:

«صَلُّوا كَمَا رَأَيْتُمُونِي أُصَلِّي.»

«Pray as you have seen me pray.»³

1 Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janāz* p. 166).

2 *Sab‘ūna Su‘ālan fī Aḥkām il-Janāz* p. 11.

3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Aḥmad, and others from Mālik Bin al-Ḥuwayrith (رضي الله عنه).

STANDING

One must perform the *janāzah* prayer standing up, because this is the only manner reported from Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ). Unlike the regular prayers, the *janāzah* prayer does not involve any *rukūʿ* or *sujūd*.

There is an important reason for this: Since the body is laid in front of the praying people, *rukūʿ* and *sujūd* actions would appear to be performed for it, and this would resemble praying among the graves, which is prohibited.¹

From this we see a serious common error: The body is brought into the *masjid* and laid in front of the people at the time of a regular prayer. So the people perform that prayer, while the body is in front of them, before performing the *janāzah* prayer. This causes them to commit this prohibited act of making *sujūd* and *rukūʿ* toward it.

NUMBER OF TAKBĪRS

One should make four or more — up to nine — *takbīrs*. It is better to vary the number of *takbīrs*, making four one time, five another, six another, and so on — while giving more weight to the four, because they are reported more frequently in the Sunnah.

Abū Hurayrah’s (رضي الله عنه) *ḥadīth* has been cited earlier (p. 163) in which he reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) made **four** *takbīrs* when he prayed for an-Najāshī.

Ibn ‘Abbās’s (رضي الله عنه) *ḥadīth* has been cited earlier (p. 169) in which he reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) made **four** *takbīrs* when he prayed for a man who was buried during the night.

Yazīd Bin Thābit’s (رضي الله عنه) *ḥadīth* has been cited earlier (p. 170) in which he reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) made **four** *takbīrs* when he prayed over a woman in her grave.

A *ṣaḥābī*’s *ḥadīth* has been cited earlier (p. 171) in which he reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) made **four** *takbīrs* when he prayed over a poor woman in her grave.

1 This was good-naturedly concluded by my young son Muṣṭafā, seven years old, who said, “Father, I know why there is no *rukūʿ* or *sujūd* in the *janāzah* prayer — so that it wouldn’t seem that we worship the body!”

Abū Umāmah (رضي الله عنه) reported that another one of the *ṣaḥābah* told him:

“In *janāzah* prayer, it is recommended for the *imām* to make *takbīr*, recite *al-Fātiḥah* silently after the **first** *takbīr*, pray upon the Prophet (ﷺ) and make sincere *du‘ā* for the deceased without reciting (any Qur‘ān) after the next three *takbīrs*, and finish by saying a silent *salām* to his right. And those behind him should do like their *imām*.”¹

Az-Zuhrī (one of the narrators of this *ḥadīth*) said that another young *ṣaḥābī* called Ḥabīb Bin Maslamah confirmed the same.²

‘Abdullāh Bin Abī Awfā (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) used to make **four** *takbīrs*.³

‘Abdullāh Bin Abī Laylā reported that Zayd Bin Arqam (رضي الله عنه) used to make **four** *takbīrs* over their funerals, but he made **five** once. He asked him about that, and he replied:

“Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) used to make them (the five), so I will never leave them off for whoever’s words.”⁴

‘Abdullāh Bin Mughaffal reported that ‘Alī Bin Abī Ṭālib (رضي الله عنه) prayed over Sahl Bin Ḥunayf (رضي الله عنه) making **six** *takbīrs*, then turned to them and said, “He is from the people of (the battle of) Badr.”⁵

1 Recorded by an-Nasā’ī, ash-Shāfi‘ī (in *al-Umm*), and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī who added, “This is not the famous *ṣaḥābī* Abū Umāmah al-Bāhilī, but another *ṣaḥābī* whose name was As‘ad or Sa‘d al-Anṣārī. He met the Prophet (ﷺ) but did not hear from him. Thus this *ḥadīth* is considered a *mursal* from a *ṣaḥābī* (the immediate *ṣaḥābī* missing from the *isnād*), which is acceptable.” (*Aḥkām ul-Janā‘iz* p. 141,155)

2 Recorded by aṭ-Ṭaḥāwī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā‘iz* p. 142).

3 Recorded by al-Bayhaqī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā‘iz* p. 142).

4 Recorded by Muslim, Abū Dāwūd, and others.

5 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, Aḥmad, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā‘iz* p. 143).

‘Alqumah came from ash-Shām (to Iraq), and said to Ibn Mas‘ūd (ﷺ), “Your brothers in ash-Shām make **five** *tabbīrs* over their funerals. Would you specify for us a certain number that we would expect to make behind you?” Ibn Mas‘ūd was silent for a while and then said, “In your funerals, make as many *tabbīrs* as your *imāms* make — **no specific number.**”¹

‘Abd Khayr reported that ‘Alī (ﷺ) used to make **six** *tabbīrs* for the people of Badr, **five** for the Prophet’s (ﷺ) (other) companions, and **four** for all other people.²

Mūsā Bin ‘Abdillāh Bin Yazīd reported that ‘Alī (ﷺ) prayed for Abū Qatādah (ﷺ) making **seven** *tabbīrs* — and he was one of the people of Badr.³

‘Abdullāh Bin az-Zubayr’s (ﷺ) and ‘Abdullāh Bin ‘Abbās’s (ﷺ) *ḥadīths* have been cited earlier (p. 151,179) in which they reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) made **nine** *tabbīrs* when he prayed for Hamzah (ﷺ).

With all these authentic reports, one has the choice of making any number of *tabbīrs*, from four to nine, without going over nine or under four.

As for reports claiming that towards the end of his life, Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) did not make more than four *tabbīrs*, none of them is authentic.⁴

RAISING THE HANDS

The scholars agree that the hands should be raised with the first *tabbīr*, but they differ in regard to the other *tabbīrs*. An-Nawawī (ﷺ) said:

“Ibn ul-Munthir said in his two books, *al-Ashrāf* and *al-Ijmā‘*, “The *‘ulamā‘* have a consensus that one should

1 Recorded by Ibn Ḥazm. Verified to be authentic by him and al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā‘iz* p. 143).

2 Recorded by aṭ-Ṭaḥāwī and ad-Dāraqūṭnī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā‘iz* p. 143-144).

3 Recorded by aṭ-Ṭaḥāwī and al-Bayhaqī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā‘iz* p. 144).

4 *Aḥkām ul-Janā‘iz* p. 145-146.

raise his hands with the first *takbīr*, but have differed in regard to the other *takbīrs*.' ”¹

The *ḥadīth* (of Ibn ‘Abbās, below) preventing the raising of the hands is weak, and there are authentic reports that some of the *ṣaḥābah* raised their hands. If one believes that they learned this from the Prophet (ﷺ), one should then raise his hands in all of the *takbīrs*.

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported:

“Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) made *takbīr* for a *janāzah*, raising his hands with the first *takbīr*, and then he put his right over his left hand.”²

Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) reported:

“When praying over a *janāzah*, Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) used to raise his hands with the first *takbīr*, but did not do that afterwards.”³

Al-Albānī says:

“We did not find in the Sunnah anything calling to raising the hands in other than the first *takbīr* — thus we hold the opinion that it is not permissible. This is the way of the *Ḥanafīs* and others, and was adopted by ash-Shawkānī, Ibn Ḥazm, and other scholars.”⁴

And Ibn Ḥazm said:

“It has not been reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) raised his hands with any of the *janāzah takbīrs* other than the

1 *Al-Majmū’* 5:232.

2 Recorded by at-Tirmithī, al-Bayhaqī, and others. Al-Albānī verified it to be weak, but can be strengthened by the following *ḥadīth* of Ibn ‘Abbās (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 147).

3 Recorded by ad-Dāraquṭnī. Al-Albānī indicated that it is weak because one of its narrators is unknown (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 147).

4 *Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 148.

first. Thus, it is not permissible to do this an action in the prayer that has no supporting text. It was only mentioned that he (ﷺ) said *takbīr* and raised his hands with every rising or descending motion, but the *janāzah* prayer does not have rising and descending.”¹

However, we do have an authentic report regarding raising the hands in all the *takbīrs* from a *ṣaḥābī* who was most zealous to imitate Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) in all of his actions: ‘Abdullāh Bin ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه). Al-Bayhaqī recorded that Ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) used to raise his hands with each one of the *takbīrs* of the *janāzah* prayer.² Al-Albānī said:

“Whoever believes that Ibn ‘Umar would not do that without a guidance from the Prophet’s (ﷺ), he may then raise his hands.”³

And commenting on the above *ḥadīth* of Abū Hurayrah, at-Tirmithī (رضي الله عنه) said:

“This is an odd *ḥadīth*. The ‘*ulamā*’ have differed about this issue. Most of them from among the companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) and others took the position that one should raise his hands with each *takbīr*. This is also the opinion of Ibn ul-Mubāarak, ash-Shāfi‘ī, Aḥmad, and Ishāq. Others say that one should only raise his hands with the first *takbīr* — which is the opinion of ath-Thawrī and the scholars of al-Kūfah (in Iraq).”⁴

POSITION OF THE HANDS

Between the *takbīrs*, one should place the palm of his right hand over the back of his left palm, wrist, and arm, and hold both hands tight against his chest.

1 *Al-Muḥallā* 5:128.

2 *As-Sunan* 4:44. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā‘iz* p. 148).

3 *Aḥkām ul-Janā‘iz* p. 148.

4 *Sunan ut-Tirmithī* 2:165.

Sahl Bin Sa'd (رضي الله عنه) reported:

“The people were commanded to place the right hand over the left arm in the prayers.”¹

Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه) reported that he heard Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) say:

«إنا معشرَ الأنبياءِ أمرنا بتعجيلِ فِطْرنا، وتأخيرِ سُحُورنا،
وأن نضعَ أيْمائنا على شِمالنا في الصلاة.»²

«Verily, we prophets have been commanded to hasten to breaking our fast, delay our *suhūr*², and place our right over our left (hand) in the prayers.»³

Tāwūs (رضي الله عنه) reported:

“Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) used to put his right over his left hand, and hold them tight against his chest during the prayers.”⁴

Wā'il Bin H̥ijr (رضي الله عنه) reported that he saw Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) put his right over his left hand and place them both on his chest.⁵

Qabīṣah Bin Hulb reported that his father said:

“I saw the Prophet (ﷺ) depart (after finishing a prayer) from the right or left side; and I saw him place these (holding his right hand over his left wrist) on his chest.”⁶

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Mālik, and others.

2 A meal eaten just before dawn by one who plans to fast

3 Recorded by Ibn Ḥibbān and aṭ-Ṭabarānī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 149).

4 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd. Al-Albānī said that the *isnād* of this report is good, and that, even though this report is *mursal* it is taken as an acceptable evidence by all (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 150).

5 Recorded by Ibn Khuzaymah and al-Bayhaqī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 150).

6 Recorded by Aḥmad. Verified to be authentic by at-Tirmithī and al-Albānī (*Aḥkām*

READING *AL-FĀTIHAH*

After the first *takbīr*, one should recite *sūrat ul-Fātiḥah* and another *sūrah*. One may not precede them with an opening supplication, because there are no reports supporting that.

Ṭalḥah Bin ʿAbdillāh Bin ʿAwf reported:

“I prayed behind Ibn ʿAbbās (رضي الله عنه) over a *janāzah*. He loudly recited *al-Fātiḥah* and another *sūrah*, enabling us to hear him. After the prayer, I held his hand and asked him about that and he said, ‘I only raised my voice for you to learn the true guidance (in this regard).’ ” ¹

At-Tirmithī commented on this *ḥadīth*:

“This *ḥadīth* is *ḥasan* and authentic. Thus, the opinion held by a number of ʿulamāʾ from the Prophet’s (ﷺ) companions and others is to read *al-Fātiḥah* after the first *takbīr*. This is also the opinion of Aḥmad, ash-Shāfiʿī, and Ishāq. Other ʿulamāʾ say that there is no reading (of Qurʾān) in the *janāzah* prayer, because it is only reserved for praising Allāh, praying upon His Prophet (ﷺ), and supplicating for the deceased. This is the opinion of ath-Thawrī and others from al-Kūfah.” ²

The above report is an evidence against those to whom at-Tirmithī refers at the end of his statement.

As for reading a *sūrah* after *al-Fātiḥah*, an-Nawawī says that it should be a short one. The reason for this is probably to avoid delaying the burial of the *janāzah* — and Allāh knows best.

ul-Janāʿiz p. 150).

1 This is a collective report recorded by al-Bukhārī, an-Nasāʿī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janāʿiz* p. 151).

2 *Sunan ut-Tirmithī* 2:142.

VOICE LEVEL

In the *janāzah* prayer, the recitation, supplication, and *takbīr* (except for the *imām*), should be done silently. This is supported by the *ḥadīth* of Abū Umāmah Bin Sahl (p. 184) and that of Ibn ‘Abbās (p. 189).

ṢALĀH UPON THE PROPHET

As indicated also in the *ḥadīth* of Abū Umāmah Bin Sahl (p. 184), after the second *takbīr* of the *janāzah* prayer, one should say the *ṣalāh*¹ upon the Prophet (ﷺ).

There are no authentic reports for the wording of the *ṣalāh* upon the Prophet (ﷺ) in the *janāzah* prayer, so one should use one of the forms for the regular prayers recorded in the Sunnah, such as the *ḥadīth* of Ka‘b Bin ‘Ujrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) taught him to say:

«اللَّهُم صل على محمد وعلى آل محمد، كما صليت على إبراهيم
وعلى آل إبراهيم، إنك حميد مجيد. اللَّهُم بارك على محمد وعلى آل
محمد، كما باركت على إبراهيم وعلى آل إبراهيم، إنك حميد مجيد.»

«Allāhumma ṣalli ‘alā Muḥammadin wa-‘alā āli Muḥammad, kamā ṣallayta ‘alā Ibrāhīma wa-‘alā āli Ibrāhīm, innaka ḥamīdun majīd. Allāhumma bārīk ‘alā Muḥammadin wa-‘alā āli Muḥammad, kamā bārakta ‘alā Ibrāhīma wa-‘alā āli Ibrāhīm, innaka ḥamīdun majīd —

O Allāh! Pray upon Muḥammad and the family of Muḥammad, as you have prayed upon Ibrāhīm and the family of Ibrāhīm; verily, You are Praiseworthy and Honorable. O Allāh! Bless Muḥammad and the family of Muḥammad, as you have blessed Ibrāhīm

1 Al-Ḥāfiẓ reported (in *Faṭḥ ul-Bārī*) from Abū al-‘Āliyah (رضي الله عنه), “Allāh’s *ṣalāh* upon His Messenger is praising and honoring him. As for the *ṣalāh* (upon him) from the angels and other creatures, it is asking for that from Allāh (ﷻ), which means to increase him (in praise and honor) and not to initiate that for him.

and the family of Ibrāhīm; verily, You are Praiseworthy and Honorable.»¹

SUPPLICATIONS

In the *janāzah* prayer, one should supplicate for the deceased after each of the *tabkīrs* following the first two.

The supplications should be done sincerely and truthfully, as is mentioned in the above *ḥadīth* of Abū Umāmah. Also, Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

« إذا صليتم على الميت، فأخلصوا له الدعاء. »

«When you pray for a deceased, supplicate sincerely for him.»²

Commenting on this *ḥadīth*, as-Sindī (رضي الله عنه) explained, “Make your supplications specific for him.”³ And al-Manāwī said:

“It means supplicating for him with sincerity and presence of thought, because the goal of this prayer is to intercede and seek forgiveness for the deceased. One can only hope for this to be accepted if it is done with sincerity and submission. Thus more supplications have been legislated in Islām for the deceased than for the living.”⁴

The supplications should best be those established in the *Sunnah* of the Messenger (ﷺ), such as his *du‘ā* for Abū Salamah (p. 24), and the others that are cited below.

‘Awf Bin Mālik (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) once prayed over a *janāzah*, and among what he said in his supplication was the following:

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

2 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, Ibn Mājah, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 156).

3 'Awn ul-Ma'būd.

4 *Fayḍ ul-Qadīr*.

«اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لَهُ وَارْحَمْهُ، وَعَافِهِ وَاعْفُ عَنْهُ، وَأَكْرِمْ نَزْلَهُ وَوَسِّعْ مُدْخَلَهُ، وَأَغْسِلْهُ بِالْمَاءِ وَالثَّلْجِ وَالْبَرَدِ، وَنَقِّهِ مِنْ خَطَايَاهُ كَمَا يَنْقَى الثَّوْبُ الْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ الدَّنَسِ. وَأَبْدِلْهُ دَاراً خَيْراً مِنْ دَارِهِ، وَأَهْلاً خَيْراً مِنْ أَهْلِهِ، وَزَوْجاً خَيْراً مِنْ زَوْجِهِ. وَأَدْخِلْهُ الْجَنَّةَ، وَأَعِزَّهُ مِنَ عَذَابِ الْقَبْرِ وَمِنْ عَذَابِ النَّارِ.»

«*Allāhumm aghfir lahū warḥamh, wa'āfihī wāfu'anh, wa-'akrim nuzalahu wa-wassi' mudkhalah, waghsilhu bil-mā'i wath-thalji wal-barad, wa-naqqihī min khatāyāhu kamā yunaqq ath-thawb ul-abyaḍu min-addanas. Wa-abdilhu dāran khayran min dārih, wa-ahlan khayran min ahlih, wa-zawjan khayran min zawjih. Wa-adkhillh ul-jannata, wa-ā'ithhu min 'athāb il-qabri wa-min 'athāb in-nār* —

O Allāh! Pardon him and have mercy on him, give him well-being and forgive him, honor his arrival, widen his entry, wash him with water and ice and hail, cleanse him from his sins as a white dress would be cleansed from dirt, replace for him a house better than his, a family better than his, and a spouse better than his, admit him into *Jannah*, and shelter him from the punishment of the grave and the punishment of the Fire.>

'Awf remarked, "On hearing this, I wished I was that dead person!"¹ Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that when Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) prayed for a *janāzah*, he would say:

«اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِحِينَا وَمِيْتِنَا، وَشَاهِدِنَا وَغَائِبِنَا، وَصَغِيرِنَا وَكَبِيرِنَا، وَذَكَرِنَا وَأَنْشَانَا. اللَّهُمَّ مِنْ أَحْيَيْتَهُ مِنْ أَحْيَيْتَهُ عَلَى الْإِسْلَامِ، وَمِنْ تَوَفَيْتَهُ مِنْ تَوَفَيْتَهُ عَلَى الْإِيمَانِ. اللَّهُمَّ لَا تَحْرِمْنَا أَجْرَهُ،

1 Recorded by Muslim, an-Nasā'ī, and others.

ولا تضلنا (تفتننا) بعده»

«*Allāhumma aghfir liḥayyinā wa-mayyitinā, wa-shāhidinā wa-ghā'ibinā, wa-ṣaghīrinā wa-kabīrinā, wa-thakarīnā wa-unthānā. Allāhumma man aḥyaytahū minnā fa-aḥyihī 'alal-islām, waman tawaffaytahū minnā fa-tawaffahū 'alal-īmān. Allāhumma lā taḥrimnā ajrah, walā tuḍillanā bādah* —

O Allāh! Forgive our living and dead, our present and absent, our young and old, and our males and females. O Allāh! Whoever You keep alive, keep him alive upon Islām, and whoever you take away, take him in a state of *īmān*. O Allāh! Do not deny us the reward of (being afflicted with) him, and do not misguide us after him.»¹

Wāthilah Bin al-Asqa' (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) once prayed *janāzah* for one of the Muslims, and he heard him say:

«اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ فُلَانَ ابْنَ فُلَانَ فِي ذِمَّتِكَ وَحَبْلُ جِوَارِكَ، فَفَقِهَ فِتْنَةَ الْقَبْرِ وَعَذَابَ النَّارِ، وَأَنْتَ أَهْلُ الْوَفَاءِ وَالْحَقِّ، فَاعْفُرْ لَهُ وَأَرْحَمْهُ، إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ.»

«*Allāhumma inna fulāna bna fulānin fī thimmatika wa-ḥabli jiwārik, faqihī fitnat al-qabri wa-athāb annār, wa-anta ahl ul-wafā'i wal-ḥaqq, faghfir lahū warḥamh, innaka ant al-ghafūr ur-rahīm* —

O Allāh! Verily so and so, son of so and so, is in your custody, holding to the rope that would take him close to You. Shelter him from the trial of the grave and the punishment of the Fire. You are the One worthy of fulfilling the promises and establishing the truth, so forgive him and have

¹ Recorded by Ibn Mājah, al-Bayhaqī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 157-158).

mercy on him, You are the All-forgiving, the All-Merciful.»¹

Yazīd Bin Rukānah Bin al-Muṭṭalib (رضي الله عنه) reported that when Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) stood to pray for a *janāzah*, he would say:

«اللَّهُمَّ عَبْدُكَ وَأَبْنُ أُمَّتِكَ، أحتاجُ إلى رَحْمَتِكَ، وَأنتَ غنيٌّ عن عَذَابِهِ،
 إن كان محسناً فزد في حسناته، وإن كان مسيئاً فتجاوز عنه.»

‘Allāhumma ‘abduka wabnu amatik, ihtāja ilā raḥmatik, wa-anta ghaniyyun ‘an ‘athābih. In kāna muḥsinan fazid fī ḥasanātih, wa-in kāna musī’an fatajāwaz ‘anh —

O Allāh! (This is) your slave, son of Your female slave. He is in need of Your mercy, and you are in no need of punishing him. If he did well, multiply his good deeds, and if he was a sinner, excuse him.»

Yazīd continued, «ثم يدعو ما شاء الله أن يدعو.» **<Then he would make (more) supplication as much as Allāh willed for him.»²**

Sa‘īd al-Maqburī (رضي الله عنه) reported that he asked Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه), “How do you pray *janāzah*?” He replied:

“By Allāh, I will tell you! I follow the *janāzah* from its house. When it is set down (for the prayer), I say *tabkīr*, praise Allāh, say the *ṣalāh* upon His Prophet, then say, as Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«اللَّهُمَّ إنه عَبْدُكَ وَأَبْنُ عَبْدِكَ وَأَبْنُ أُمَّتِكَ، كان يشهد أن لا إله إلا أنت، وأنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُكَ وَرَسُولُكَ، وَأنتَ أَعْلَمُ بِهِ، اللَّهُمَّ إن كان محسناً فزد في حسناته، وإن كان مسيئاً فتجاوز عن سيئاته.»

1 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, Aḥmad, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā‘iz* p. 158).

2 Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī (in *al-Kabīr*) and al-Ḥākim. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā‘iz* p. 159).

اللَّهُمَّ لَا تَحْرِمْنَا أَجْرَهُ، وَلَا تَفْتِنْنَا بَعْدَهُ»

«*Allāhumma innahū ‘abduka wabnu ‘abdika wabnu amatik, kāna yashhadu allā ilāha illā anta, wa-anna muḥammadan ‘abduka wa-rasūluk, wa-anta a‘lamu bih. Allāhumma in kāna muḥsinan fazid fī ḥasanātih, wa-in kāna musī’an fatajāwaz ‘an sayyi’ātih. Allāhumma lā taḥrimnā ajrah, walā taftinnā ba’dah —*

O Allāh! This is your slave, son of Your male slave and Your female slave. He used to testify that there is no (true) god except You, and that Muḥammad is Your ‘Abd and Messenger — and You know better about him. O Allāh! If he did well, multiply his good deeds, and if he was a sinner, overlook his sins. O Allāh! Do not deny us the reward of (being afflicted with) him, and do not misguide us after him.»¹

If the deceased is a child, one may add to the above supplications the following that Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) used to say:

«اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْهُ لَنَا سَلَفًا وَفَرَطًا وَأَجْرًا.»

«*Allāhum aj‘alhu lanā salafan wa-faraṭan wa-’ajran.*
O Allāh, make him for us an advanced and secured reward.»²

As indicated above, these supplications may be said after the third and later *tabbīrs*. Thus, they are said between the last *tabbīr* and the *salām*. Abū Ya’fūr reported that he witnessed ‘Abdullāh Bin Abī Awfā (رضي الله عنه) pray for a *janāzah*. After the fourth *tabbīr*, he remained for a long while supplicating, then asked (after finishing), “Did you think

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- 1 Recorded by Mālik (with the supplication as being from Abū Hurayrah’s words) and Abū Ya’lā (with the supplication from the Prophet’s words). Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 159).
 - 2 Recorded by al-Bayhaqī. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 160-161).

that I was going to make five *takbīrs*?” They said, “No.” He said, “Verily, Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) used to make four *takbīrs*.”¹

It is important to note that one should adhere to whatever he knows of the supplications for the *janāzah* reported in the Sunnah, and not to replace them with other supplications made up by the people. Ash-Shawkānī said:

“You should know that there are many supplications in the books of *fiqh* other than those reported from the Prophet (ﷺ). It is better to adhere to that which is established from him (ﷺ).”²

THE *TASLĪM*

The *janāzah* prayer is concluded with two *taslīms*, which is saying one of the following three forms:

1	Peace be on you.	<i>As-salāmu ‘alaykum.</i>	السلام عليكم
2	Peace be on you, and Allāh’s mercy.	<i>As-salāmu ‘alaykum wa-rahmat ul-Lāh.</i>	السلام عليكم ورحمة الله
3	Peace be on you, and Allāh’s mercy and His blessings.	<i>As-salāmu ‘alaykum wa-rahmat ul-Lāhi wa-barakātuh.</i>	السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

Similar to regular prayers, the *taslīms* are made by turning the face to the right and left. ‘Abdullāh Bin Mas‘ūd (رضي الله عنه) said:

“There are things that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) used to do and the people have left off, one of which is making *taslīm* over a *janāzah* similar to the *taslīm* in the (regular) prayers.”³

1 Recorded by al-Bayhaqī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 160).

2 *Nayl ul-Awṭār* 4:55.

3 Recorded by al-Bayhaqī and aṭ-Ṭabarānī (in *al-Kabīr*). Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 162).

Ibn Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه) also said:

“Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) used to make two *taslīms* in the (regular) prayers,”¹

Taking the above two statement together, we conclude that there are two *taslīms* in the *janāzah* prayer, similar to the regular prayers.

It is also permissible to conclude the *janāzah* prayer with only one *taslīm*. Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported:

“Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) once prayed over a *janāzah*, making four *takbīrs* and only one *taslīm*.”²

Al-Ḥākim commented on this *ḥadīth*:

“There are authentic reports in this regard from ‘Alī Bin Abī Ṭālib, ‘Abdullāh Bin ‘Umar, ‘Abdullāh Bin ‘Abbās, Jābir Bin ‘Abdillāh, ‘Abdullāh Bin Awfā, and Abū Hurayrah, that they all (رضي الله عنه) used to make one *taslīm*.”

His statement was confirmed by ath-Thahabī and al-Bayhaqī (who also added other *ṣaḥābah* such as Wāthilah Bin al-Asqa‘ and Abū Umāmah).

Imām Aḥmad based his opinion (of making only one *taslīm*) on these reports. Abū Dāwūd said that Aḥmad was asked about *taslīm* for the *janāzah*, and he saw him turn his neck to the right and say, “*As-salāmu ‘alaykum wa-rahmat ul-Lāh*.”³

VOICE LEVEL IN *TASLĪM*

It is recommended for the *imām* to make the *taslīm* for the *janāzah* silently or in a very low voice.

In Abū Umāmah Bin Sahl’s *ḥadīth* cited earlier, he said:

1 Recorded by Muslim and others.

2 Recorded by ad-Daraqūṭnī, al-Ḥākim, and al-Bayhaqī. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janāz* p. 163).

3 *Al-Masā’il* 153.

“... (He would) say the *salām* when he finishes, silently, to his right side ...”¹

Al-Bayhaqī reported:

“Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) used to make a silent (one) *taslīm* in the *janāzah* (prayer).”²

He also reported:

“When he prayed over a *janāzah*, Ibn ‘Umar would say his *taslīm* such that those next to him would be able to hear him.”³

COMING LATE TO JOIN THE *JANĀZAH* PRAYER

What would one do if he comes late to the *janāzah* prayer, after the *imām* has said some of the *tabkīrs*? There is no similar case reported in the Sunnah. Thus the general instruction regarding the regular prayers should be applied, which is to pray with the *imām* and, after he finishes, make up whatever was missed.

Therefore, after one makes *tabkīr* to join the prayer, he reads *al-Fātiḥah*, and then follows the above sequence for the other *tabkīrs* until the *imām* makes *taslīm*. If the *taslīm* is made before the late person had completed four *tabkīrs*, he should complete them alone and then make *taslīm*.

And as for those who completely miss the prayer over the *janāzah*, Shaykh Muḥammad Bin Ṣāliḥ al-‘Uthaymīn says:

“Yes, they may pray over it in the graveyard before the burial if possible, or over the grave if they arrive after

1 Recorded by an-Nasā’ī, ash-Shāfi‘ī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 155)

2 Recorded by al-Bayhaqī. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 165).

3 Recorded by al-Bayhaqī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 165).

the burial, because it is confirmed that the Prophet (ﷺ) prayed over the grave.”¹

However, one should observe the considerations discussed earlier in this chapter for such a situation.

Question/Answer Summary

The main elements relating to the *janāzah* prayer are outlined in the following question/answer summary.

Question	Answer
What is the ruling of performing the <i>janāzah</i> prayer for Muslims?	It is a communal obligation.
Does the ruling apply to sinful Muslims?	Yes.
What is the ruling with regard to martyrs?	It is recommended.
What is the ruling with regard to children.	It is optional.
What is the ruling with regard to non-Muslims.	It is prohibited to pray or ask forgiveness for them.
What to do for a Muslim who died in a place with no one to pray for him?	A <i>janāzah</i> prayer is performed for him in absentia.
Where is the <i>janāzah</i> prayer performed?	In a <i>muṣallā</i> (preferable) or a <i>masjid</i> (permissible).
Where is it prohibited to perform the <i>janāzah</i> prayer?	Among the graves.

1 . *Sab'ūna Su'ālan fī Aḥkām il-Janā'iz* p. 19.

Question	Answer
Is it permissible to perform the <i>janāzah</i> prayer individually?	No. It should be performed in <i>jamā'ah</i> .
Who leads the prayer?	The Muslim ruler, his representative, or the most knowledgeable man in Qur'ān.
Is the number of praying people important?	Yes, the more they are, the better are the deceased's chances of being forgiven.
How many rows should pray behind the <i>imām</i> ?	The more the better, with a minimum of three if possible.
Where does the <i>imām</i> stand with respect to the body?	By a man's head, and by a woman's middle.
How are multiple bodies arranged?	The men near the <i>imām</i> , the women beyond them.
When is it prohibited to perform the prayer?	At sunrise, sunset, and when the sun is in the zenith.
How many <i>takbīrs</i> are in the prayer?	A minimum of four, and a maximum of nine.
What to say after the first <i>takbīr</i> ?	<i>Al-Fātiḥah</i> (and another <i>sūrah</i> if the time permits).
What to say after the second <i>takbīr</i> ?	The prayer upon the Prophet (ﷺ).
What to say after the third and subsequent <i>takbīrs</i> ?	Supplicate for the deceased.
How to end the prayer?	With <i>taslīm</i> .
How many <i>rak'ahs</i> is <i>janāzah</i> the prayer?	This is irrelevant, because it has no <i>rukū'</i> or <i>sujūd</i> .

Practical Procedure

In this section, we provide a practical summary of the *janāzah* prayer. The details are contained in the previous sections of this chapter.

#	Act
1	The washed and shrouded body is brought to the <i>muṣallā</i> (or the <i>masjid</i> , but the <i>muṣallā</i> is preferable).
2	The body is placed in the front, toward the <i>Qiblah</i> (Figure 8.1).
3	The <i>imām</i> forms the people into straight rows without gaps. The spacing between the rows may be narrower than that for the regular prayers.
4	The <i>imām</i> faces the <i>Qiblah</i> , standing level with a man's head or a woman's mid-section.
5	The <i>imām</i> raises his hands with the first <i>tabkīr</i> . The people behind him follow him in this and all subsequent actions.
6	<i>Al-Fātiḥah</i> is recited silently, followed by another <i>sūrah</i> if the time permits.
7	The <i>imām</i> makes the second <i>tabkīr</i> (he may raise his hands).
8	The <i>ṣalāh</i> upon the Prophet (ﷺ) is made silently.
9	The <i>imām</i> makes the third <i>tabkīr</i> .
10	Sincere <i>du'ā'</i> from the Sunnah is made for the deceased.
11	The <i>imām</i> makes the fourth <i>tabkīr</i> .
12	Sincere <i>du'ā'</i> from the Sunnah is made for the deceased.
13	Steps 11 and 12 are repeated if the <i>imām</i> chooses to make additional (up to a total of nine) <i>tabkīrs</i> .
14	In a low voice, the <i>imām</i> makes <i>taslīm</i> to the right (required), and to the left (optional).

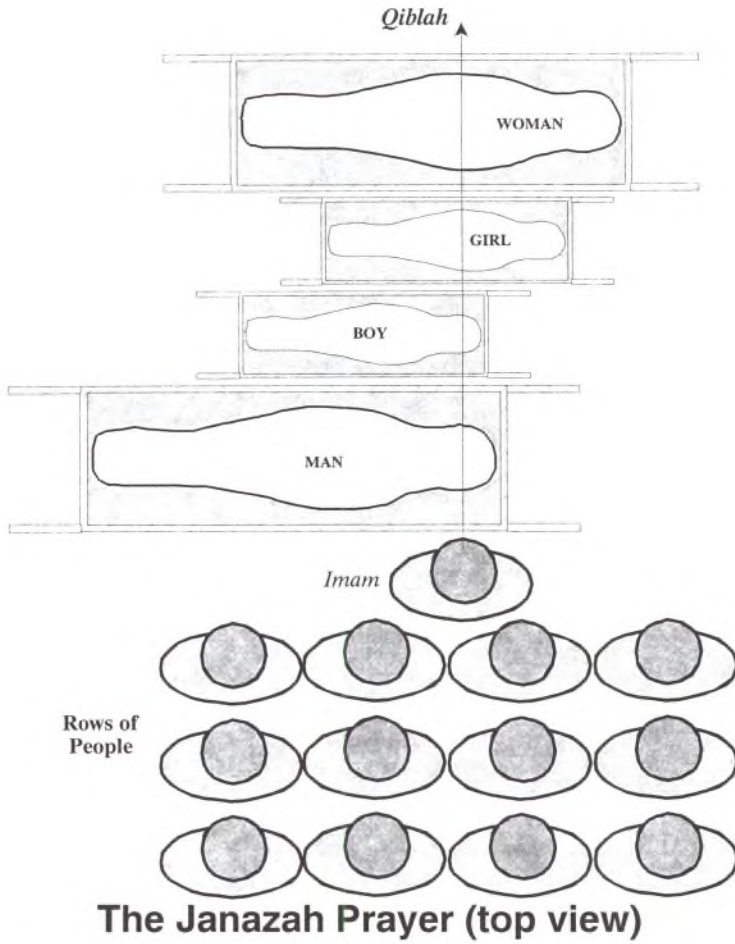


Figure 8.1

Miscellaneous Innovations

The following are some common innovations relating to the *janāzah* prayer.

1. Praying *ṣalāt ul-ghā'ib* for a person although it is known that *janāzah* prayer had already been performed for him.

2. Praying *ṣalāt ul-ghā'ib* every day after *maghrib* for all the Muslims who died on that day.
3. The *imām*'s standing near the middle of a man and by the chest of a woman.
4. Saying the opening supplications that are said at the beginning of normal prayers.
5. Refraining from reading another *sūrah* after *al-Fātiḥah*.
6. Taking off the shoes and standing over them during the prayer.
7. Saying after the prayer, "Exalted be He Who has subdued His slaves with death, and Exalted be the Alive Who does not die."
8. Prompting the people after the prayer by asking them, "What do you testify about him?" So that they would reply, "He was a good man ..."

CHAPTER 9

BURIAL

Ruling

Burying the dead, even if they were nonbelievers, is a *farḍ kifāyah* (communal obligation). This was the Prophet's (ﷺ) practice and his companions' (رضي الله عنهم), as is demonstrated in many of the *ḥadīths* of this chapter, including his burial of the disbelievers after the battle of Badr.

Dealing with Disbelievers

BURIAL

The texts of the Sunnah indicate that when a disbeliever dies, the Muslims should hasten to bury him in two situations:

- a) if there are no other disbelievers to bury him, or
- b) if the closest person responsible for him is a Muslim.

ʿUmar, Ibn ʿUmar, Abū Ṭalḥah, and Anas (رضي الله عنهم) all reported that, after the battle of Badr, Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) commanded his followers to cast twenty four of the most disdainful among the dead of the Quraysh, on top of each other, into a very filthy ditch in Badr — except for Umayyah Bin Khalaf, whose body swelled inside his armor until it filled it. Trying to move him, he started falling apart, so they left him in his place and covered him with dirt and stones.

As was the Prophet's (ﷺ) practice after a victory, he spent three nights in the neighborhood of the battleground. On the third day, he had his animal prepared for departure, and then walked, followed by his companions, until he stood at the verge of the ditch. He called out

to them, and they had by then totally decayed, with their names and the names of their fathers, saying:

«يا أبا جهل بن هشام، ويا عتبة بن ربيعة، ويا شيبه بن ربيعة،
ويا وليد بن عتبة، أيسرُكم أنكم أطعتم الله ورسوله؟ فإننا قد
وجدنا ما وعدنا ربنا حقاً، فهل وجدتم ما وعدكم ربكم حقاً؟»

«O Abū Jahl Bin Hishām! O ‘Utbah Bin Rabī’ah! O Shaybah Bin Rabī’ah! O Walīd Bin ‘Utbah! Don’t you wish that you had obeyed Allāh and His Messenger? Indeed, we have found our Lord’s promises to us true; have you found you Lord’s promises true?»

‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) (and others) exclaimed, “Do you address them after they have been dead for three nights? Do you address bodies with no souls in them? How can they hear, when Allāh (ﷻ) says:

﴿إِنَّكَ لَا تَسْمَعُ الْمَوْتَى﴾ النمل ٨٠

«Verily, you cannot make the dead hear you?»”

The Prophet (ﷺ) replied:

«والذي نفس محمد بيده، ما أنتم بأسمع لما أقول منهم، إنهم الآن
ليسمعون، والله إنهم الآن ليعلمون أن الذي كنت أقول لهم
لهو الحق، غير أنهم لا يستطيعون أن يرُدّوا عليّ شيئاً.»

«By Him in whose hand is Muḥammad’s soul, you cannot hear what I am saying better than they can! They can now hear. By Allāh, they know now that what I had told them was indeed the truth. But they cannot respond to me with anything.»¹

1 This is a combined report from authentic *ḥadīths* recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, Aḥmad, and others (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 167-169).

Commenting on this *ḥadīth*, Qatādah (رضي الله عنه) said:

“Allāh (ﷻ) gave them life in order to hear the Prophet’s (ﷺ) words, as a reproach and scorn, and to make them feel the remorse and regret for what they did.”¹

‘Alī (رضي الله عنه) reported that when his father Abū Ṭālib died, he went to the Prophet (ﷺ) and said, “Your uncle, the misguided old man, has passed away; so who should bury him?” He replied:

«أذهب فواره، ثم لا تُحَدِّثُ شَيْئاً حَتَّى تَأْتِيَنِي.»

«Go bury him, and then do nothing until you return to me.»

He said, “But he died as a pagan!?” He said, «أذهب فواره.» **«Go bury him.»** So he buried him and came back. He (رضي الله عنه) told him:

«أذهب فأغْتَسِلِ، ثم لا تُحَدِّثُ شَيْئاً حَتَّى تَأْتِيَنِي.»

«Go take a bath, and then do nothing until you return to me.»

‘Alī concludes:

“I took a bath and came back to him. He made supplications for me that are more precious to me than the most expensive red and black camels.”

The narrator from ‘Alī (Abū ‘Abd ur-Raḥmān as-Sulamī) added:

“After washing a dead body, ‘Alī used to take a bath.”²

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

2 Recorded by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 169-171).

Note in this *ḥadīth* that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) did not console ‘Alī for the death of his pagan father, which may be taken as an evidence against consoling Muslims for the death of their disbelieving relatives — leave alone consoling the disbelievers.

It is further concluded from this that it is recommended for the men who conduct the burial to take a bath after burial.

Note also that there is no indication in any of the authentic reports of this *ḥadīth* that ‘Alī washed his father. Thus, it cannot be used as an evidence for washing a disbeliever.¹

SEPARATE GRAVEYARDS

The practice of the Prophet (ﷺ) and the believers through the ages until our time indicates that a Muslim must not be buried with a *kāfir*, nor a *kāfir* with a Muslim: Separate graveyards should be designated for Muslims and non-Muslims.

Bashīr Bin al-Khaṣāṣiyah reported that he was once walking with Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) and holding his hand when he told him:

«يا ابن الحَصَاصِيَّةِ، ما أَصْبَحْتَ تَنْقُمُ عَلَيَّ اللهُ؟ أَصْبَحْتَ

تُماشِي رَسولَ اللهِ!»

<O Ibn al-Khaṣāṣiyah! Why are you complaining to Allāh this morning (about being away from your wife and family)? Here you are, walking with Allāh’s Messenger!>

Still holding his hand, Ibn ul-Khaṣāṣiyah replied, “May my father and mother be a ransom for you, O Allāh’s Messenger! I do not complain to Allāh about anything this morning! He did all good things for me.”

While they were walking, they passed by the graves of the *mushriks*, and Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لقد سبق هؤلاء خيراً كثيراً.» (ثلاث مرات)

1 *Aḥkām ul-Janāz* p. 171-172.

«**These have missed a lot of good.**» (Three times)

Then they passed by the graves of the Muslims, and he said:

«لقد أدرك هؤلاء خيراً كثيراً.» (ثلاث مرات)

«**These have attained a lot of good.**» (Three times)

Then his eyes fell on a man walking with two shoes among the graves. He said to him:

«يا صاحب السبئتين، ويحك ألق سبئتيك!»

«**O man with shoes! Woe be to you! Remove your shoes.**»

Recognizing Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ), the man immediately removed his shoes and cast them aside.¹

This *ḥadīth* indicates that there was a clear distinction between the graves of the disbelievers and those of the Muslims. Ibn Ḥazm took it as an evidence that it is not permissible to bury a Muslim with a *mushrik*, and that it is not permissible to walk with shoes among the graves.²

Burial Places

GRAVEYARDS

The dead should normally be buried in graveyards. The Prophet (ﷺ) used to bury the dead Muslims in al-Baqī' graveyard. There are numerous reports in that regard, some of which we have cited earlier. Furthermore, there are no reports indicating that any of the *salaf* was buried in other than a graveyard — except for the special cases that we will discuss below.

1 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, an-Nasā'ī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 172-173).

2 *Al-Muḥallā* 5:142-143.

THE LOCATION OF DEATH

There are numerous (*mutawātir*) reports confirming that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) was buried in his house in the place where he died. This is specific to him, as is indicated by 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها) who reported that when Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) died, the *ṣahābah* differed about his burial, until Abū Bakr (رضي الله عنه) said that he had heard something in that regard from Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ), and had previously forgotten it, which was that:

« ما قبض الله نبياً إلا في الموضع الذي يجب أن يُدفنَ فيه. »

«Never did Allāh take a prophet's life except in the location where he should be buried.»

Thus he was buried in the place of his mattress.¹

THE BATTLEFIELD

The martyrs (i.e., the Muslims killed on the battleground), should not be transferred to graveyards, but should be buried in the same place where they were martyred.

Jābir Bin 'Abdillāh (رضي الله عنه) reported that when Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) went out of al-Madīnah to fight against the *mushriks* (in the battle of Uḥud), his father told him, "O Jābir Bin 'Abdillāh! Why don't you stay behind in al-Madīnah to see what will happen to us. Verily, by Allāh, if it were not that I am leaving behind some daughters (that need help), I would have wished that you be killed before me." Jābir continues:

"While I was waiting in al-Madīnah, my aunt brought my (dead) father and uncle, leveling them on the two sides of a camel. She entered al-Madīnah to bury them in our graveyards. But a man caught up with her saying, 'Surely, Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) commands you to bring

1 Recorded by at-Tirmithī, Ibn Mājah, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 174).

back the killed ones and bury them in the places where they were killed.’ So we took them back and buried them where they were killed.”¹

IN THE HOUSES?

Except for the unique case of Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ), it is not permissible to bury the dead in the houses. Al-Ḥāfiẓ said:

“It is quite possible that other people are prohibited from that, because burial in the houses turns them into burial places, which prohibits praying in them.”²

Al-Bukhārī derived this prohibition from Ibn ‘Umar’s (رضي الله عنه) *ḥadīth* that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«أَجْعَلُوا فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ مِنْ صَلَاتِكُمْ، وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوهَا قُبُورًا.»

«Pray some of your prayers in your homes, and do not turn them to graves.»³

According to al-Ḥāfiẓ, the *ḥadīth* of Abū Hurayrah is more explicit in this regard, clearly indicating that it is absolutely prohibited to bury in the houses:

«لَا تَجْعَلُوا بُيُوتَكُمْ مَقَابِرَ.»

«Do not turn your homes into burial places.»⁴

1 Recorded by Aḥmad and Abū Dāwūd. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 175).

2 *Fatḥ ul-Bārī* 1:420.

3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī.

4 Recorded by Muslim.

Burial Time

HURRYING THE BURIAL

As explained in the previous chapters, great hurry should be made in going through all of the preparatory steps for the final one in the funeral process: burial. A Muslim should normally be buried within twenty four hours from death.

The exceptional delay of the Prophet's (ﷺ) burial should not be taken as an example in this regard. He passed away on Monday (during the day), was washed and shrouded on Tuesday, and was buried in the middle of the night,¹ which was about thirty six hours after his death. The reason for that delay was the *ṣahābah*'s great shock from that painful incident, and their indecision at first regarding washing, shrouding, and burying him (as was discussed elsewhere in this book).

THE THREE PROHIBITED TIMES

It is not permissible to bury at the three times that are specified in the *ḥadīth* of 'Uqbah Bin 'Āmir (رضي الله عنه):

“There are three times at which Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) prohibited us from praying or burying our dead: When the sun rises — until it becomes high, when the noon-time starts — until the sun declines (off the zenith), and when the sun approaches setting — until it sets.”²

BURIAL DURING THE NIGHT

It is also prohibited to bury during the night except if there is a necessity for that. This follows from Jābir Bin 'Abdillāh's (رضي الله عنه) *ḥadīth* (fully cited in the chapter on shrouding) in which he reported:

-
- 1 Recorded by at-Tirmithī (in *ash-Shamā'il*) from 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها) and Muḥammad al-Bāqir (al-Ḥusayn's grandson). Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Mukhtaṣar ush-Shamā'il* p. 197-198).
 - 2 Recorded by Muslim, Abū Dāwūd, and others.

“The Prophet (ﷺ) prohibited that a man be buried during the night before the *janāzah* prayer could be performed for him — unless one is forced to do that.”¹

The reason for this is that the night burial would result in smaller numbers of people praying over the deceased, following his *janāzah*, and burying him. It is important to have large numbers of people, because of the benefit and rewards they attain from performing such Islāmic duties, as well as making it more likely that their intercession for the deceased be granted. An-Nawawī said:

“The *‘ulamā* have differed in regard to burying during the night. Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī disliked it unless there is a necessity for it. This *ḥadīth* is an evidence for him. However, many of the earlier and later *‘ulamā* say that it is not disliked, because Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq (رضي الله عنه) and a large group of the *salaf* were buried at night without objection, and the black woman and the man who used to clean the *Masjid*, both were buried at night without disapproval (of that) from the Prophet (ﷺ) ...”²

Ibn Ḥazm responds to this argument by saying:

“For everyone who was buried at night, whether it was him (ﷺ), his wives, or his companions, it was only for a necessity requiring that, such as fearing the extreme heat for the attendees — which is severe in al-Madīnah, fearing that the body might decay, or other reasons that would allow night burial. No one may assume about them (رضي الله عنهم) anything else.”³

But if the people are forced to bury someone at night, they may use a lamp or lantern and bring it down into the grave to facilitate the burial process. Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) reported that:

1 Recorded by Muslim and others.

2 *Sharḥ Muslim*.

3 *Al-Muḥallā* 5:114-115.

“Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) lowered a man into his grave at night, and a lantern was lighted in the grave.”¹

Grave Description

WIDE, DEEP, AND GOOD

The grave should be dug deep and wide, with square edges and straight walls that hold well together.

Hishām Bin ‘Āmir (رضي الله عنه) reported that on the day of Uḥud, many of the Muslims were killed, and many were wounded. So the *ṣaḥābah* said, “O Allāh’s Messenger! Digging a separate grave for each of the dead is too much for us, so what do you command us to do?” He replied:

«أحفروا وأوسعوا وأعمقوا وأحسنوا، وأدفنوا الاثنين والثلاثة
في القبر، وقدّموا أكثرهم قرآناً.»

◀Dig (graves), and make them wide, deep, and good.
Bury two or three in one grave, putting ahead the
one with the most knowledge of Qur’ān.▶

Hishām added, “My father was the third of three men (in one grave), but knew more Qur’ān than them, so he was placed ahead.”²

A man from the *Anṣār* reported that when he was a young boy, he went with his father and others with Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) in the *janāzah* of a man of the *Anṣār*. Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) sat near the edge of the grave and instructed the digger:

«أوسع من قبيل الرأس، وأوسع من قبل الرجلين.»

1 Recorded by Ibn Mājah and at-Tirmithī. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 180).

2 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, an-Nasā’ī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 181-182).

لرَبِّ عِذْقٍ لَهُ فِي الْجَنَّةِ. «

«Make it wide from the side of the head, and make it wide from the side of the feet. Indeed, a palm tree may be for him in *Jannah*.^{1> 2}

A HOLE VS. A LAHD

It is permissible to make the grave in the form of a plain rectangular vertical hole dug such that the short sides of the rectangle point in the direction of *Qiblah*. It is preferable to add to that a *lahd*, which is another hole, large enough to accommodate the body, made near the

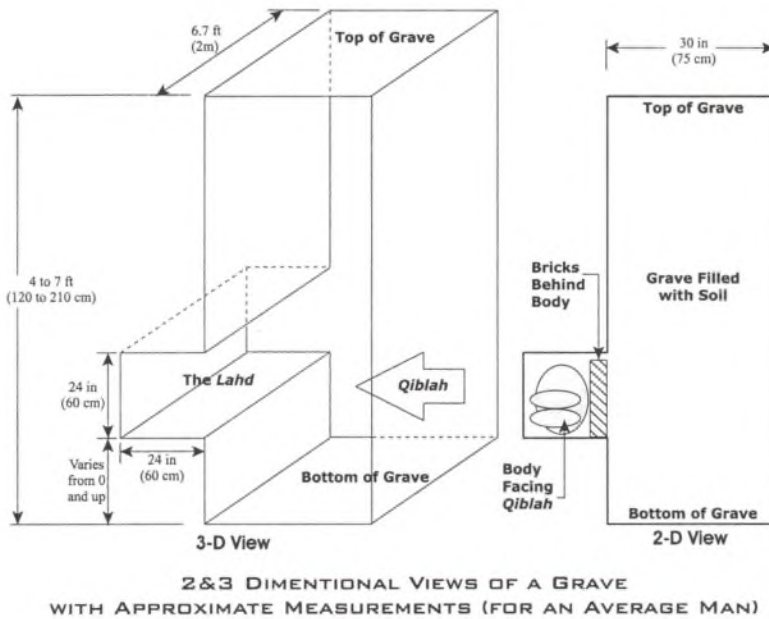


Figure 9.1

- 1 This could be the *janāzah* of Ibn ad-Daḥḍāh (review his story in the chapter on following the *janāzah*).
- 2 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd and al-Bayhaqī. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 182).

bottom of the grave in the wall that is in the direction of *Qiblah*. After the body is laid in the *lahd*, bricks are placed behind it (Figure 9.1). The purpose of the *lahd* is that, when the soil is dumped into the grave, it does not fall directly over the body but behind it.

Both forms of graves have been used during the time of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ), but the *lahd* is preferable for the following reports.

Anas Bin Mālik (رضي الله عنه) reported:

“When the Prophet (ﷺ) passed away, there were two grave-diggers in al-Madīnah, one of them making *lahds* and the other plain holes. The *ṣaḥābah* said, ‘Let us implore our Lord to choose for us, and then call both of them. Whoever arrives first will make the grave.’ They did that, and the one who made *lahds* arrived first. Thus they made a *lahd* for the Prophet (ﷺ).”¹

Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) reported:

“Al-‘Abbās, ‘Alī, and al-Faḍl went down into the Prophet's (ﷺ) grave (to bury him). His *lahd* had been made by a man of the *Anṣār*, who is the same man that had made the *lahds* for the *shahīds* of Badr.”²

‘Āmir, the son of Sa‘d Bin Abī Waqqāṣ (رضي الله عنه), reported that his father instructed:

“Make a *lahd* for me, and erect bricks behind me — as was done for Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ).”³

Ibn ‘Abbās and Jarīr (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

1 Recorded by Ibn Mājah, aṭ-Ṭaḥāwī, and Aḥmad. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 183).

2 Recorded by aṭ-Ṭaḥāwī, Ibn Ḥibbān, and Ibn ul-Jārūd. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 183).

3 Recorded by Muslim, an-Nasā'ī, and others.

«اللَّحْدُ لَنَا وَالشَّقُّ لغيرِنَا.»

«*Laḥds* are for us (Muslims), and plain holes are for other people.»¹

An-Nawawī (رحمته الله) said:

“There is a consensus among the ‘*ulamā*’ that burying in a *laḥd* or a plain grave are both permissible. If the earth is hard so that its soil would not collapse, a *laḥd* is preferable; and if it is soft and may collapse, a plain grave is preferable.”²

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. Dimensions: Figure 9.1 shows approximate dimensions for a grave with a *laḥd*. The *laḥd*’s position varies, and in some areas is made level with the bottom of the grave. The dimensions are given for a 6-ft (180 cm) person. All dimensions should be proportionally changed for a smaller or bigger body.

The depth of a grave varies from place to place, based on the type of soil, climate, geology, wild life, and so on. In Texas, the top of the graveliner (see below) should be at least 18 inches (45 cm) from the surface of the ground.

2. Alternative *Laḥd*: In some Muslim areas, instead of digging a *laḥd*, the body is laid in the bottom *Qiblah*-corner of the grave (sometimes with a partial *laḥd* dug in that direction), and large bricks or concrete slabs are obliquely placed over it, serving the same purpose of the *laḥd*: preventing soil from falling directly over the body, and protecting against the digging of wild animals or robbers.

3. Opening and Closing: “Opening and Closing” is a process in the funeral-language that entails a costly fee, much of which not easily

1 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, Aḥmad, and others. All of its reports are weak, but it is verified to be collectively authentic (for its various reports) by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 184).

2 *Al-Majmū’* 5:287.

avoidable by the Muslims who live in the West. It consists of administration and permanent record keeping, opening and closing the grave (locating the grave, laying out the boundaries, excavating and filling the interment space), installation and removal of the lowering machine, placement and removal of artificial grass dressing and coco-matting at the grave site, levelling and re-sodding the grave if the earth settles, etc.

4. Digging Own Grave: In most countries, the individuals may not dig their graves. The digging (opening and closing) is done by authorized graveyard personnel. The reason for this is protection against personal injury, and protection of the property of adjacent graves.

5. Graveliners: Some of the United States (and other countries), and some funeral homes, require building a container in the bottom of the grave, which is meant to protect the body against the ground's sinking-in after the burial. This container is called a burial vault or a graveliner, and is made of a variety of materials including concrete, stainless steel, galvanized steel, copper, bronze, plastic, or fiberglass.

If required, a concrete graveliner should be used, because it is closest to the Islāmic burial. The body is placed in that liner, and then a concrete lid is brought down, sealing the box, before dumping the soil into the grave. This obviously meets some of the requirements of a *lahd* as well, and may be used by the Muslims if they do not have the better alternatives.

6. Burial in Casket: By all means, the Muslim communities in the West should not allow burying the Muslims inside the caskets, as this is an imitation of the *kuffār*, and is an unnecessary waste of money.

Who Lowers the Body

MEN

Men should lower the dead person into the grave, even if it was a woman. There are several reasons for this, among which the following:

- a) This has been the practice of the Muslims since the time of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ), as in the example of Abū Ṭalḥah (رضي الله عنه) below (in the section on intercourse).
- b) Men are stronger than women for that job.
- c) If women were to do it, some of their bodies may get exposed to the strangers in the process.
- d) It is not recommended for the women to follow the *janāzah*, which limits their presence during the burial.

RELATIVES

The deceased's relatives have the first right to lowering him into the grave. This derives from the general meaning of the following *āyah*:

﴿وَأُولُوا الْأَرْحَامِ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلَىٰ بِبَعْضٍ فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ﴾ الأنفال ٧٥

«Those of blood relationship ¹ have the highest claim to one another, in accordance with Allāh's decree.» ²

Three of the Prophet's (ﷺ) closest relatives lowered him into his grave. This was mentioned in Ibn 'Abbās's (رضي الله عنه) *ḥadīth* (cited earlier in the section on *laḥd*). Similarly, 'Alī (رضي الله عنه) reported"

"I washed Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ), and expected to observe what is usually seen on dead people, but saw none of that. He was good (in looks and smell) alive and dead. Of all people, those who took care of lowering and burying him were four: 'Alī, al-'Abbās, al-Faḍl, and Ṣāliḥ — the servant of Allāh's

1 According to various *'ulamā'*, such as Ibn Ḥazm and an-Nawawī, those with blood relations are: the father and his fathers and the sons and their sons, then the brothers from both parents, then the brothers from the same father, then their sons, then the father's and mother's paternal uncles, then the father's paternal uncles, then their children, then every one beyond that with blood relations.

2 *Al-Anfāl* 8:75, and *al-Aḥzāb* 33:6.

Messenger (ﷺ). A *lahd* was dug for Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ), and bricks were erected behind him.”¹

‘Abd ur-Raḥmān Bin Abzā reported that he prayed behind ‘Umar Bin al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) in al-Madīnah over Zaynab Bint Jahsh (رضي الله عنها). He made four *tabīrs*. Then he sent someone to ask the Prophet's (ﷺ) wives, “Whom do you want to place her in the grave?” He was hoping to do that himself, but they responded to him, “See who was allowed to see her in her life, and let him place her in the grave.” He replied, “You are right!”²

HUSBAND

It is permissible for a husband to place his dead wife in her grave. ‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) came to her on the day when his fatal illness started. She complained about a headache that she had by saying, “Oh my head!” He said:

«وَدِدْتُ أَنْ ذَلِكَ كَانَ وَأَنَا حَيٌّ، فَهَيَّأْتُكَ وَدَفَنْتُكَ.»

«I wish that it (death) would have come to you while I am alive. I would then prepare you and bury you.»

This stirred ‘Ā’ishah's (رضي الله عنها) jealousy who said, “I would expect you on such a day enjoying one of your wives.” He (ﷺ) then said:

«وَأَنَا وَرَأْسَاهُ! أَدْعِي لِي أَبَاكَ وَأَخَاكَ حَتَّى أَكْتُبَ لِأَبِي بَكْرٍ كِتَابًا، فَإِنِّي أَخَافُ أَنْ يَقُولَ قَائِلٌ وَيَتَمَنَّى مُتَمَنَّ: «أَنَا أَوْلَى!» وَيَأْبَى اللَّهُ عِزَّ وَجَلَّ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَّا أَبَا بَكْرٍ.»

«It is my head (that truly hurts)! Summon your father and brother so that I would write a letter (of

1 Recorded by al-Ḥākim and al-Bayhaqī. Verified to be authentic by al-Ḥākim, al-Thahabī, and al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* 186-187).

2 Recorded by aṭ-Ṭaḥāwī, al-Bayhaqī, and Ibn Sa'd. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 187).

assignment) for Abū Bakr, because I am afraid that a sayer would say and a wisher would wish, “I am more worthy (of leadership)!” But Allāh (ﷻ), as well as the believers, would reject anyone other than Abū Bakr.> ¹

NO INTERCOURSE

It is a condition for the man who enters the grave to bury the body not to have had recent sexual intercourse. If the closest relatives do not fulfill this condition, others will have more right to burying the body, even if it were a woman’s and they were not her *maḥrams*.

Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported that he witnessed the *janāzah* of one of Allāh’s Messenger’s (ﷺ) daughters ². Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) sat near the grave, his eyes tearing, and asked:

«هل منكم من رجلٍ لم يقارِفِ اللّيلةَ أهله؟»

«Is there among you a man who did not approach his wife last night?»

Abū Ṭalḥah replied, “I did not, O Allāh’s Messenger!” He told him, «فأنزل في قبرها.» «Go down into her grave then.» And he went down and buried her. ³

In another report of this incident, Anas said that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا يدخلُ القبرَ رجلٌ قارِفُ اللّيلةِ أهله.»

«Any man who has approached his wife last night may not enter into the grave.»

So ‘Uthmān (رضي الله عنه) did not enter into the grave (to bury her). ⁴

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and Aḥmad.

2 This was Umm Kulthūm, ‘Uthmān’s wife, who died in 9 H.

3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and others.

4 Recorded by Aḥmad, al-Ḥākim, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Ḥākim, ath-Thahabī, and al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 188-189). Note that some of the

An-Nawawī (رحمته) commented:

“This is one of the *ḥadīths* used as evidence in that men are the ones who conduct the burial, even if the deceased was a woman. It is well-known that Abū Ṭalḥah (رحمته) was a non-*maḥram* to the Prophet’s (ﷺ) daughter, but was one of the righteous men present. There was no *maḥram* present except the Prophet (ﷺ), who probably had an excuse for not entering her grave — as well as her husband ‘Uthmān. It is well-known that her sister Fāṭimah and other women were available, which indicates that women may not enter into a grave and conduct the burial.”¹

Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar (رحمته) commented:

“This *ḥadīth* indicates that a person who has not recently experienced (sexual) pleasures is given priority over a father and a husband in conducting the burial, even for a woman.”²

Burying the Body

ENTERING FROM THE FEET-SIDE

The body should be brought in lengthwise, head first, from the foot of the grave, which is the side where the deceased’s feet will be (Figure 9.2).

Abū Ishāq reported that al-Ḥārith requested that ‘Abdullāh Bin Yazīd pray over him. He did that, and then

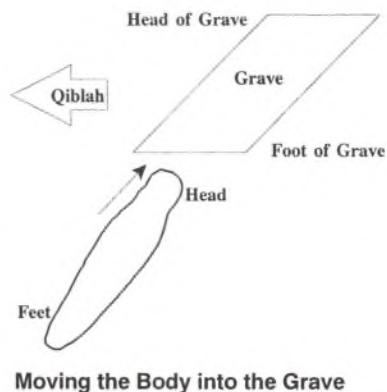


Figure 9.2

reports mention that this daughter’s name was Ruqayyah, which is a mistake from one of the narrators, because Ruqayyah died when the Prophet (ﷺ) was in the battle of Badr, so he did not witness her burial.

1 *Al-Majmū‘* 5:289.

2 *Fatḥ ul-Bārī*.

moved him into the grave from the side of the grave's foot, saying, "This is the Sunnah's guidance (in this regard)." ¹

As expressed by ash-Shāfi'ī and al-Bayhaqī, the reports indicating that the Prophet (ﷺ) was brought in from the side of *Qiblah* are unauthentic. Furthermore, that was impossible to perform since the *Qiblah* side was against the wall of his room. ² Ash-Shāfi'ī (رحمته) added:

"The issue of bringing in the dead body is one of the well-known matters among us because of the frequent occurrence of death, and that it is done in the presence of the scholars and trustworthy people (of knowledge). It is one of the general matters that one could perform without a *ḥadīth*, and the *ḥadīth* would then be like a confirmation of a matter commonly known to the people. Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ), the *Muhājirūn*, and the *Anṣār* are all (buried) among us ³. The transmissions of the common people in that regard do not differ in that the dead body should be shoved in (along its length). Someone ⁴ then comes from a town other than ours, teaching us how to bring in the body! And he did not know better than to report from Ḥammād from Ibrāhīm ⁵ that the Prophet (ﷺ) was brought in width-wise! ⁶ " ⁷

Ash-Shāfi'ī also cited from Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه) and others that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) was brought in length-wise, head first. ⁸

Also, Ibn Sīrīn (رحمته) reported:

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- 1 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, al-Bayhaqī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 190).
 - 2 *Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 190.
 - 3 In al-Madīnah.
 - 4 He is referring here to Abū Ḥanīfah (رحمته).
 - 5 Ḥammād Bin Sulaymān and Ibrāhīm an-Nakhī.
 - 6 This is one of the weak reports to which we referred above.
 - 7 *Al-Umm* 1:241.
 - 8 Verified by al-Albānī to be authentic, except for a doubt regarding ash-Shāfi'ī's *Shaykh* whom he only described as "the Trustworthy" (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 191).

“I was in a *janāzah* with Anas (رضي الله عنه). He instructed that the body be brought in, length-wise, from the foot of the grave.”¹

HOW TO PLACE THE BODY

The dead person should be placed in the grave on his right side, facing *Qiblah*. This makes his head on the right side (for one facing *Qiblah*), and his feet on the left side (Figure 9.1 and 9.3).

Ibn Ḥazm said:

“This has been the practice of the people of Islām from the time of Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) until our present day. This is how the graves are made in every graveyard (for Muslims) on the surface of the earth.”²

WHAT TO SAY

As in most matters of importance, when placing the body in the grave, one mentions Allāh’s name. One also declares that this is being done according to the teachings of Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ).

Ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

« إذا وضعتم موتاكم في القبور فقولوا:
 «بسم الله، وعلى سنة (أو ملة) رسول الله.» »

«When you place your dead in the graves, say,
 “*Bismillāh, wa-‘alā millati rasūlillāh* — With Allāh’s
 Name, and upon the religion of Allāh’s
 Messenger.”»³

1 Recorded by Aḥmad and Ibn Abī Shaybah. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 192).

2 *Al-Muḥallā* 5:173.

3 Recorded by at-Tirmidhī, Ibn Mājah, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 192-193).

Ibn ‘Umar also reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) used to say the above when placing a dead person in the grave.¹

Al-Bayāḍī (رحمته) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«الميتُ إذا وُضع في قبره، فليقل الذين يضعونه حين يوضع

في اللحد: ”بسم الله، وبالله، وعلى ملة رسول الله.“»

«When a dead person is placed in his grave, those who place him should say as they put him in the *lahd*, “*Bismillāh, wa-billāh, wa-‘alā millati rasūlillāh* — With Allāh’s Name, and with Allāh’s help, and upon the religion of Allāh’s Messenger.”»²

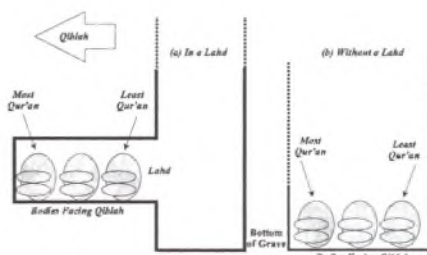
MULTIPLE BODIES IN ONE GRAVE

It is permissible to bury two or more bodies in one grave in situations of necessity. In that case, those who had memorized more Qur’ān should be placed ahead in the direction of *Qiblah* (Figure 9.3).

Jābir Bin ‘Abdillāh (رحمته) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) would use one sheet for shrouding two or three of those who were killed in Uḥud. He would then ask, «أيهم أكثرُ أخذاً للقرآن؟» «Who among them had memorized more Qur’ān?» And when he is told, he would place him ahead in the *lahd*. He also said:

«أنا شهيد على هؤلاء يوم القيامة.»

«I am a witness for those on Resurrection Day.»



Multiple Bodies in One Grave

Figure 9.3

«أيهم أكثرُ أخذاً للقرآن؟» «Who among them had memorized more Qur’ān?» And when he is told, he would place him ahead in the *lahd*. He also said:

1 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, at-Tirmithī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 192).
2 Recorded by al-Ḥākim. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 193).

And he commanded that they be buried in their blood. So they were not washed, and he did not pray over them. Jābi added:

“So my father and uncle ¹ were buried on that day in one grave.” ²

Abū Qatādah (رضي الله عنه) reported that ‘Amr Bin al-Jamūḥ, who used to limp, came to Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) and said, “O Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ)! If I fight for Allāh’s cause until I get killed, would I then walk with this foot good in *Jannah*?” He replied, «نعم.» <Yes.> So on the day of Uḥud, he, his nephew ³, and a servant of theirs were all killed. Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) passed by him and said:

«كأني أنظر إليك تمشي برجلك هذه صحيحة في الجنة.»

<It is as if I look at you walking, with this foot good, in *Jannah*.>

So Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) commanded that all three of them be buried in one grave. ⁴

To the same meaning, we have cited earlier the *ḥadīth* of Hishām Bin ‘Āmir (p. 214) as well as other *ḥadīths* in earlier chapters.

Note that this gives a special merit to those who hold more Qur’ān than others.

Ash-Shāfi‘ī (رضي الله عنه) said:

“In situations of hurry or limited graves, two or three bodies may be buried in one grave. The better and oldest would be placed toward *Qiblah*. And I do not like for a woman to be buried with a man under any circumstance. If that was an unavoidable necessity, the

1 By “uncle” he refers to ‘Amr Bin al-Jamūḥ (رضي الله عنه) who was a close friend of ‘Abdullāh (Jābir’s father) and the husband of his sister Hind Bint ‘Amr.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and others.

3 This was ‘Abdullāh Bin ‘Amr Bin Ḥirām, Jābir’s father (رضي الله عنه). He was not an immediate nephew of ‘Amr Bin al-Jamūḥ, but was thus described out of respect toward the latter for his seniority.

4 Recorded by Aḥmad. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā‘iz* p. 184).

man should be placed in front of her, and a barrier of soil should be made between them.”¹

THROWING THREE HANDFULS

After the *lahd* is closed with bricks, it is recommended for those by the grave to throw in three handfuls (with both hands) of soil.

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported:

“Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) once prayed over a *janāzah*, and then (after burial) he went toward the dead person and threw three handfuls (of soil) on the side of his head.”²

It is to be noted that there is no authentic basis in the Sunnah for a specific *thikr* to be said with each one of these three handfuls.³

DISINTERMENT

It is permissible to take out a body from the grave, shortly after burial, and before it decays. This is an exceptional situation that may only be undertaken for a good reason, such as discovering that it was buried without washing or shrouding.

Jābir Bin ‘Abdillāh (رضي الله عنه) reported:

“Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) went to the grave of ‘Abdullāh Bin Ubayy⁴ after he was placed in the hole. He ordered that he be brought out. He held him over his knees, blew over him of his saliva, shrouded him in his own shirt, and prayed over him⁵. That — Allāh knows

1 *Al-Umm* 1:245.

2 Recorded by Ibn Mājah. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janāz* p. 193).

3 *Aḥkām ul-Janāz* p. 194-195.

4 He was the chief *munāfiq* (hypocrite) in al-Madīnah.

5 As we explained previously in the chapter on *janāzah* prayer, this happened before Allāh (ﷻ) prohibited praying over the hypocrites.

best — was because he had given al-‘Abbās a shirt to wear¹.”²

Another report from Jābir (رضي الله عنه) has a slight weakness, but gives more details to this incident. Jābir said that when ‘Abdullāh Bin Ubayy died, his son came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and said, “O Allāh’s Messenger! If you do not attend, our family will ever be disgraced.” So he went and found that he had already been placed in his hole. He said, «أفلا قبل أن تُدخلوه؟» **«Shouldn’t you have invited me before you put him in?»** He had him taken out of the hole, blew over him from head to foot, and shrouded him in his shirt.³

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Depending of the body’s size and weight, it may require several people to lay it down in its *lahd*. A heavy man may require two or three men (who have not had intercourse on the previous night) to enter the grave, and two or three men to hand them the body from above.

As the head is lowered (from the feet-side of the grave), the rest of the body is passed over the hands along the same direction. The authentic *thikr* is said at this time, and the body is laid facing the *Qiblah* in the *lahd*. If any ties were put around the shroud to hold it together, they should be untied.

Bricks are then placed behind the body, making sure to keep it facing the *Qiblah* with their help. The men get out of the grave, and the soil is dumped to fill it to a hand-span height.

The grave is then mounded, and a stone is placed above the location of the head (with no writing other than the deceased’s name).

1 As recorded by al-Bukhārī, this was after the battle of Badr, when the Prophet’s uncle al-‘Abbās was held hostage (before he declared Islām), and did not have a shirt on him. The Prophet (ﷺ) found ‘Abdullāh Bin Ubayy’s shirt and gave it to him to wear.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

3 Recorded by Aḥmad and others. Al-Albānī verified that it has a good *isnād*, except for Ibn uz-Zubayr, the narrator from Jābir, who did not declare direct hearing (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 203).

After the Burial

SUPPLICATING

After completing the burial, it is recommended to stand near the grave for a while and supplicate for the deceased. It is not recommended to prompt the dead person to say things to the angels who would be questioning him then ¹.

‘Uthmān Bin ‘Affān (رضي الله عنه) reported that when the Prophet (ﷺ) finished a burial, he would stand over the grave and say:

«استغفروا لأخيكم، وسلوا له التثبيت، فإنه الآن يُسأل.»

«Ask forgiveness for your brother, and that he be firm (in his answers), because he is being questioned now.» ²

When he approached death, ‘Amr Bin al-‘Āṣ (رضي الله عنه) said:

“After you bury me, stand around my grave for as long as it takes to slaughter a camel and distribute its meat; I will thus be comforted by your presence while I respond to my Lord's Messengers (the two angels).” ³

REMINING THE PEOPLE NEAR THE GRAVE

It is permissible to sit around the grave during the burial, reminding the present people about death and related matters.

Al-Barā’ Bin ‘Āzib (رضي الله عنه) reported that he and other companions went out with Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) in the funeral of an *Anṣārī* man. They reached the location of the grave before the *lahd* was dug. The Messenger (ﷺ) sat down facing the *Qiblah*, and they sat around him

1 There is a report in that regard indicating that one should instruct the deceased to say certain things, but it may not be used, because it is extremely weak, as verified by al-Albānī (*as-Silsilah aḍ-Ḍa‘īfah* no. 599).

2 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, al-Ḥākim, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā‘iz* p. 198).

3 Recorded by Muslim.

quietly, as if afraid to disturb birds perching on their heads. He held in his hand a stick with which he moved the earth. He looked toward the sky, then toward the earth, raising and lowering his eyes three times. He said, ثلاثاً «استعيذوا بالله من عذاب القبر.» **Seek refuge with Allāh from the punishment of the grave.** (Three times) Then he said:

«اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ عَذَابِ الْقَبْرِ.» ثلاثاً

<O Allāh, I seek refuge in You from the punishment of the grave.> (Three times)

He (ﷺ) continued:

«إن العبد المؤمن إذا كان في انقطاع من الدنيا وإقبال على الآخرة نزل إليه ملائكة من السماء، بيض الوجوه، كأن وجوههم الشمس، معهم كفن من أكفان الجنة وحنوط من حنوط الجنة، حتى يجلسوا منه مد البصر. ثم يجيء ملك الموت عليه السلام، حتى يجلس عند رأسه فيقول: "أيتها النفس المطمئنة، أخرجي إلى مغفرة من الله ورضوان." فتخرج تسيل كما تسيل القطرة من في السقاء. حتى إذا خرجت روحه صلى عليه كل ملك بين السماء والأرض، وكل ملك في السماء، وفتحت له أبواب السماء، ليس من أهل باب إلا وهم يدعون الله أن يعرج بروحه من قبيلهم. فيأخذها، فإذا أخذها لم يدعوها في يده طرفه عين حتى يأخذوها فيجعلوها في ذلك الكفن، وفي ذلك الحنوط، فذلك قوله تعالى...

<Verily, when a believing 'abd is at the point of departure from the worldly life, and is about to enter the next life, angels descend from the heaven, their faces white like the sun. They carry with them a shroud from the fabric of Jannah, and

embalmmnt from the fragrance of *Jannah*. They sit away from him at the limit of his eyesight. The angel of death then arrives, sits by his head, and says, “O good and peaceful soul, depart to Allāh’s forgiveness and pleasure.” On hearing this, the soul leaves the body (as easily) as water drops flow from the spout of a water skin, and he (the Angel of Death) takes it.

When the soul leaves the body, all angels between the heavens and the earth, and all angels in the heavens, pronounce *ṣalāh* on him ¹. All gates of the heavens open for him; the guardians of every gate implore Allāh that this soul ascends in their direction.

When the Angel of Death takes the soul, they (the other angels) do not leave it in his hand for as little as the blinking of an eye. They take it and place it in their shroud, and put on it their embalmmnt. To this apply Allāh’s (ﷻ) words ...»

﴿ تَوَفَّتْهُ رُسُلُنَا وَهُمْ لَا يُفِرُّونَ ﴾ الأنعام ٦١

«...Our messengers (the angels) take his soul, and they never neglect their duty.» ²

He (ﷻ) continued:

«وَيَخْرُجُ مِنْهَا كَأَطِيبٍ نَفْحَةٍ مَسْكٍ وَجَدَتْ عَلَى وَجْهِ الْأَرْضِ،
فَيَصْعَدُونَ بِهَا فَلَا يَمُرُّونَ عَلَى مَلَأٍ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ إِلَّا قَالُوا:
”مَا هَذَا الرُّوحِ الطَّيِّبِ؟“ فَيَقُولُونَ: ”فُلَانُ ابْنِ فُلَانٍ“ –
بِأَحْسَنِ أَسْمَائِهِ الَّتِي كَانُوا يُسَمُّونَهُ بِهَا فِي الدُّنْيَا، حَتَّى يَنْتَهَوْا بِهَا
إِلَى السَّمَاءِ الدُّنْيَا، فَيَسْتَفْتِحُونَ لَهُ، فَيَفْتَحُ لَهُمْ، فَيَشِيعُهُ مِنْ كُلِّ

1 i.e. they ask that he be forgiven.

2 *Al-An ām* 6:61.

سَمَاءٍ مُّقْرَّبُوها إِلَى السَّمَاءِ الَّتِي تَلِيها، حَتَّى يُنْتَهَى بِهِ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ السَّابِعَةِ، فَيَقُولُ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: «اَكْتُبُوا كِتَابَ عَبْدِي فِي عَلِيِّينَ،»

«From it (the soul) issues the best scent of musk that ever existed on the surface of the earth.

The angels ascend with it. As they pass by gatherings of angels, they ask them, “What is this good soul?” They reply, “He is so and so, son of so and so,” using the best names with which he had been addressed in the first life. When they reach the lowest heaven, they request admission, and the gates open for them. The most elite (angels) from each heaven escort him to the next one, until he reaches the seventh heaven. Allāh (ﷻ) then says, “Write My servant’s records in ‘*Illiyūn*’¹»

﴿وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا عَلِيُّونَ ۖ كِتَابٌ مَّرْقُومٌ ۖ يَشْهَدُهُ الْمُقَرَّبُونَ ۗ﴾

المطففين ١٩-٢١

«And what will make you know what ‘*Illiyūn*’ is? An inscribed register, witnessed by those (angels) nearest (to Allāh).»²

He (ﷻ) continued:

«فِيَكْتَبُ كِتَابَهُ فِي عَلِيِّينَ، ثُمَّ يَقَالُ: “أَعِيدُوهُ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ، فَإِنِّي وَعَدْتُهُمْ أَنِّي مِنْهَا خَلَقْتُهُمْ، وَفِيهَا أَعِيدُهُمْ وَمِنْهَا أُخْرِجُهُمْ تَارَةً أُخْرَى.” فَيُرَدُّ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ، وَتُعَادُ رُوحُهُ فِي جَسَدِهِ، فَإِنَّهُ يَسْمَعُ حَقَقَ نِعَالِ أَصْحَابِهِ إِذَا وَلَّوْا عَنْهُ مَدْبَرِينَ. فَيَأْتِيهِ مَلَكَانِ شَدِيدَا الْإِنْتِهَارِ، فَيَنْتَهَرَانِهِ وَيُجْلِسَانِهِ، فَيَقُولَانِ لَهُ: “مَنْ رَبُّكَ؟”

1 A place most high; the highest register.

2 *Al-Muṭaffifīn* 83:19-21.

فَيَقُولُ: "رَبِّي اللَّهُ،" فَيَقُولَانِ لَهُ: "مَا دِينُكَ؟" فَيَقُولُ: "دِينِي
 الْإِسْلَامُ،" فَيَقُولَانِ لَهُ: "مَا هَذَا الرَّجُلُ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِيكُمْ؟" فَيَقُولُ:
 "هُوَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (ﷺ)،" فَيَقُولَانِ لَهُ: "وَمَا عَمَلُكَ؟" فَيَقُولُ:
 "قَرَأْتُ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ، فَأَمَنْتُ بِهِ، وَصَدَّقْتُ." فَيَنْتَهَرُهُ فَيَقُولُ:
 "مَنْ رَبُّكَ؟ مَا دِينُكَ؟ مَنْ نَبِيُّكَ؟" وَهِيَ آخِرُ فِتْنَةٍ تُعْرَضُ عَلَى
 الْمُؤْمِنِ، فَذَلِكَ حِينَ يَقُولُ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ ...»

<Thus, his records are inscribed in *'Illiyūn*, and the angels are told, "Take him back to the earth, because I promised them that from it I create them, into it I send them back, and from it I resurrect them once again."¹

He is then returned to the earth; and his soul is returned to his body, so that he hears the thumping of his companions' shoes as they walk away from his grave.

Two angels of severe reprimand then come to him and shake him. They make him sit up, and ask him, "Who is your Lord?" He replies, "My Lord is Allāh." They ask him, "What is your *dīn*?" He replies, "My *dīn* is Islām." They ask him, "Who is that man who was sent to you?" He replies, "He is Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ)." They ask him, "What did you do?" He replies, "I read Allāh's Book, believed in it, and obeyed it." They shake him again, asking, "Who is your Lord? What is your *dīn*? Who is your prophet?" This is the last *fitnah* to which a believer is subjected. In this regard, Allāh (ﷻ) says ...>

﴿يُثَبِّتُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا بِالْقَوْلِ الثَّابِتِ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا

وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ﴾ إبراهيم ٢٧

«Allāh keeps the believers firm with firm words in the first life, and in the last one.»¹

He (ﷺ) continued:

فيقول: "ربي الله، ودينني الإسلام، ونبيي محمد (ﷺ)،" فينادي مُنادٍ في السماء: "صدق عبدي، فأفرشوه من الجنة، وألبسوه من الجنة، وافتحوا له باباً إلى الجنة." فيأتيه من رُوحها وطيبها، ويفسح له في قبره مدَّ بصره، ويأتيه رجل حسن الوجه، حسن الثياب، طيب الريح، فيقول: "أبشر بالذي يسرك، أبشر برضوان من الله، وجناتٍ فيها نعيم مقيم، هذا يومك الذي كنت تُوعدُ." فيقول له: "وأنت، فبشرك الله بخير، من أنت؟ فوجهك ألوجه يجيء بالخير." فيقول: "أنا عمك الصالح. فوالله ما علمتك إلا كنت سريعاً في طاعة الله، بطيئاً في معصية الله، فجزاك الله خيراً." ثم يفتح له باب من الجنة، وباب من النار، فيقال: "هذا منزلك لو عصيت الله، أبدلك الله به هذا"، فإذا رأى ما في الجنة قال: "رب عجل قيام الساعة، كيما أرجعُ إلى أهلي ومالي." فيقال له: "اسكن!"

«He repeats, "My Lord is Allāh, my *dīn* is Islām, and my Prophet is Muḥammad (ﷺ)." A caller then calls from the heavens, "My servant has spoken the truth; so provide him with furnishings from *Jannah*; clothe him from *Jannah*; and open for him a door to *Jannah*." Thus he receives provision and perfume from it, and his grave is spread to the extent of his eyesight.

1 *Ibrāhīm* 14:27.

Before him appears a man with a pleasant face, nice garments, and a good smell. He says to him, "I am to give you glad news that will please you: news of Allāh's acceptance, and gardens with everlasting bliss. This is the day that you had been promised." He responds, "Glad news from Allāh be to you too. Who are you? Your face is one that brings good." He says, "I am your good deeds. By Allāh, I only knew you quick in obeying Allāh, and slow in disobeying Him. May Allāh reward you well."

A door is opened for him to *Jannah* and another one to the Fire, and he is told, "This (the Fire) would have been your dwelling had you disobeyed Allāh. But Allāh has substituted it for you with this (*Jannah*)." When he sees what is awaiting him in *Jannah* (of pleasures), he says, "O my Lord, speed up the arrival of the Hour (of Resurrection), so that I may rejoin my family and property." He is told, "Calm down.">

He (ﷺ) continued:

« وإن العبد الكافر، إذا كان في انقطاع من الدنيا وإقبال على الآخرة، نزل إليه من السماء ملائكة غلاظٌ شدادٌ سود الوجوه، معهم المسوح من النار، فيجلسون منه مدَّ البصر. ثم يجيءُ مَلَكُ الموت عليه السلام، حتى يجلس عند رأسه، فيقول: "أيتها النفس الخبيثة، أخرجي إلى سخطٍ من الله وِعَضَب." فتَفَرَّقُ في جَسَدِهِ، فَيَنْتَزِعُهَا كَمَا يُنْتَزِعُ السُّفُودُ الكَثِيرُ الشَّعْبُ من الصوف المبلول، فَتُقَطَّعُ مَعَهَا العُرُوقُ وَالْعَصَبُ. فَيَلْعَنُهُ كُلُّ مَلَكٍ بين السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ، وَكُلُّ مَلَكٍ في السَّمَاءِ. وَتُغْلَقُ أَبْوَابُ السَّمَاءِ، ليس من أهل باب إلاَّ وَهُمْ يَدْعُونَ اللَّهَ ألاَّ تَعْرِجَ رُوحَهُ

مِنْ قِبَلِهِمْ. فَيَأْخُذُهَا، فَإِذَا أَخَذَهَا لَمْ يَدْعُوهَا فِي يَدِهِ طَرْفَةَ عَيْنٍ، حَتَّى يَجْعَلُوهَا فِي تَلْكَ الْمَسْوُوحِ، وَيَخْرُجُ مِنْهَا كَأَنَّ رِيحَ جِيْفَةٍ وَجَدَتْ عَلَى وَجْهِ الْأَرْضِ. فَيَصْعَدُونَ بِهَا، فَلَا يَمُرُّونَ عَلَى مَلَأٍ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ إِلَّا قَالُوا: "مَا هَذَا الرُّوحِ الْخَبِيثِ؟" فَيَقُولُونَ: "فُلَانِ ابْنِ فُلَانٍ،" - بِأَقْبَحِ أَسْمَائِهِ الَّتِي كَانَ يُسَمَّى بِهَا فِي الدُّنْيَا، حَتَّى يُنْتَهَى بِهَا إِلَى السَّمَاءِ الدُّنْيَا، فَيُسْتَفْتَحُ لَهُ، فَلَا يُفْتَحُ لَهُ: ...»

«And verily when a disbelieving (or disobedient) *‘abd* is at the point of departure from the worldly life, and is about to enter the hereafter, strong hulking angels with dark faces descend to him from the heavens. They bring with them tough fabrics from the Fire. They sit away from him at the limit of his eyesight. The Angel of Death (الْمَلَكُ الْمَوْتِ) arrives, sits by his head, and says, “O malicious soul, depart to a wrath and anger from Allāh.” On hearing this, it becomes terrified, and clings to the body, but he extracts it (by force), like a skewer is pulled from wet wool, causing the veins and nerves to burst.

Every angel between the heavens and the earth, and every angel in the heavens, curses him. The gates of the heavens are shut, and the guardians of every gate implore Allāh that this soul does not ascend in their direction.

When the Angel of Death takes the soul, they (the other angels) do not leave it in his hand for as little as the blinking of an eye. They put it in that tough fabric, and from it emanates the most repugnant odor of a decaying cadaver that ever existed on the surface of earth.

The angels then ascend with it. As they pass by gatherings of angels, they ask them, “What is this malicious soul?” They respond, “He is so and so, son of so and so,” using the worst names with which he

had been addressed in the first life. When they reach the lowest heaven, they request admission, but the gates are not opened for him: ...»

«لَا تُفْتَحُ لَهُمْ أَبْوَابُ السَّمَاءِ وَلَا يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ حَتَّىٰ يَلِجَ الْجَمَلُ فِي سَمِّ الْخِيَاطِ» الأعراف ٤٠

«For them (the disbelievers), the gates of heaven will not be opened; and they will not enter *Jannah* until the camel goes through the eye of the needle.»¹

He (ﷺ) continued:

«فَيَقُولُ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: ”اَكْتُبُوا كِتَابَهُ فِي سِجِّينَ، فِي الْأَرْضِ السُّفْلَى.“ ثُمَّ يُقَالُ: ”أَعِيدُوا عَبْدِي إِلَى الْأَرْضِ، فَإِنِّي وَعَدْتُهُمْ أَنِّي مِنْهَا خَلَقْتُهُمْ، وَفِيهَا أَعِيدُهُمْ، وَمِنْهَا أُخْرِجُهُمْ تَارَةً أُخْرَى.“ فَتُطْرَحُ رُوحُهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ طَرْحًا حَتَّىٰ تَقَعَ فِي جَسَدِهِ:»

«Allāh (ﷻ) then says, “Write his record in *Sijjīn*² in the lowest earth.” And they are told, “Take him back to the earth, because I promised them that from it I create them, into it I send them back, and from it I resurrect them once again.”³ His soul is then cast down from the heavens without regard, and it falls into his body: ...»

«وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَكَأَنَّمَا خَرَّ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ فَتَخْطَفُهُ الطَّيْرُ أَوْ تَهْوِي بِهِ الرِّيحُ فِي مَكَانٍ سَحِيقٍ» الحج ٣١

«As for the one who joins partners with Allāh, it is as if he plunges down from the skies – whereupon

1 Al-A ʿrāf 7:40.

2 A place most low; a place of Imprisonment.

3 Tāhā 20:55.

birds snatch him off, or the wind casts him away to a remote place (from Allāh's mercy).»¹

He (ﷺ) continued:

«فَتَعَادُ رُوحُهُ فِي جَسَدِهِ، فَإِنَّهُ لَيَسْمَعُ خَفَقَ نَعَالِ أَصْحَابِهِ إِذَا وَلَّوْا عَنْهُ. وَيَأْتِيهِ مَلَكَانِ شَدِيدَا الْإِنْتِهَارِ، فَيَنْتَهَرَانِهِ وَيُجْلِسَانِهِ، فَيَقُولَانِ لَهُ: "مَنْ رَبُّكَ؟" فَيَقُولُ: "هَاهُ هَاهُ لَا أَدْرِي،" فَيَقُولَانِ: "مَا دِينُكَ؟" فَيَقُولُ: "هَاهُ هَاهُ لَا أَدْرِي،" فَيَقُولَانِ: "فَمَا تَقُولُ فِي هَذَا الرَّجُلِ الَّذِي بُعِثَ فِيكُمْ؟" فَلَا يَهْتَدِي لِاسْمِهِ، فَيُقَالُ: "مُحَمَّد!" فَيَقُولُ: "هَاهُ هَاهُ لَا أَدْرِي، سَمِعْتُ النَّاسَ يَقُولُونَ ذَلِكَ!" فَيُقَالُ: "لَا دَرَيْتَ، وَلَا تَلَوْتَ." فَيُنَادِي مُنَادٍ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ: "كَذَبَ، فَأَفْرَشُوا لَهُ مِنَ النَّارِ، وَافْتَحُوا لَهُ بَابًا إِلَى النَّارِ." فَيَأْتِيهِ مِنْ حَرِّهَا وَسَمُومِهَا، وَيُضَيِّقُ عَلَيْهِ قَبْرُهُ حَتَّى تَخْتَلِفَ فِيهِ أَضْلَاعُهُ، وَيَأْتِيهِ رَجُلٌ قَبِيحُ الْوَجْهِ، قَبِيحُ الْثِّيَابِ، مُنْتِنُ الرِّيحِ، فَيَقُولُ: "أَبْشِرْ بِالَّذِي يَسُوءُكَ، هَذَا يَوْمُكَ الَّذِي كُنْتَ تُوعَدُ." فَيَقُولُ: "وَأَنْتَ، فَبَشَّرَكَ اللَّهُ بِالشَّرِّ، مَنْ أَنْتَ؟ فَوَجَّهَكَ الْوَجْهَ يَجِيءُ بِالشَّرِّ." فَيَقُولُ: "أَنَا عَمَلُكَ الْحَبِيثُ. فَوَاللَّهِ مَا عَلِمْتُ إِلَّا كُنْتُ بَطِيئًا عَنِ طَاعَةِ اللَّهِ، سَرِيعًا إِلَى مَعْصِيَةِ اللَّهِ، فَجَزَاكَ اللَّهُ شَرًّا." ثُمَّ يُقَيِّضُ لَهُ أَعْمَى أَصْمٌ أَبْكَمٌ فِي يَدِهِ مِرْزَبَةٌ، لَوْ ضُرِبَ بِهَا جَبَلٌ كَانَ تَرَابًا. فَيَضْرِبُهُ ضَرْبَةً حَتَّى يَصِيرَ بِهَا تَرَابًا، ثُمَّ يَعِيدُهُ اللَّهُ كَمَا كَانَ، فَيَضْرِبُهُ ضَرْبَةً أُخْرَى، فَيَصِيحُ صَيْحَةً يَسْمَعُهُ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا الثَّقَلَيْنِ، ثُمَّ يُفْتَحُ لَهُ بَابٌ مِنْ

¹ Al-Hajj 22:31

النار، وَيْمَهْدُ مِنْ فُرْشِ النَّارِ، فيقول: "رَبِّ لَا تُقِمِ السَّاعَةَ." «

His soul is restored to his body, so that he hears the thumping of his companions' shoes as they walk away from his grave.

Two angels of severe reprimand come to him and shake him. They make him sit up, and ask him, "Who is your Lord?" He replies, "Alas, alas, I do not know!" They ask him, "What is your *dīn*?" He replies, "Alas, alas, I do not know!" They ask him, "Who is that man who was sent to you?" He cannot recall his name, and he is told, "(His name is) Muḥammad!" He says, "Alas, alas, I do not know. I just heard the people say that." He is then told, "You did not know; and you did not recite (the Qur'ān)!" A caller calls from the heaven, "He lies! So spread for him furnishings from the Fire, and open for him a door to the Fire." Thus its heat and fierce hot wind reach him; and his grave is tightened around him, causing his ribs to break.

Before him appears a man with an ugly face, repulsive clothes, and a foul smell; he says, "I am to give you evil news that will displease you. This is the day that you had been promised." He responds, "Evil news from Allāh be to you too! Who are you? Your face is one that brings evil." He says, "I am your malicious deeds. By Allāh, I only knew you slow in obeying Allāh, and quick in disobeying Him. May Allāh repay you with evil."

A blind, deaf, and dumb person is appointed for him. He carries in his hand a sledgehammer that, if it hits a mountain, would turn it to dust. He hits him (with it) once; and he becomes dust. Allāh then restores him as he was, and the person hits him again; he emits a shriek that is heard by everything except men and *jinn*s.

A door is opened for him to the Fire; and he is given from the Fire's furnishings. He then says, "O my Lord! Do not establish the Hour."»¹

RAISING THE GRAVE A HAND-SPAN

It is recommended to raise the grave about a hand-span (about 10 inches or 25 centimeters) above ground-level. That would make it distinctive and preserve it from disrespect or abuse. Jābir Bin 'Abdillāh (رضي الله عنه) reported:

"A *lahd* was made for Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) in his grave, bricks were erected behind him, and his grave was raised about a hand-span above ground-level."²

Raising the grave should be done with the extra soil (replaced by the body) that was dug from the grave, without adding to it additional soil. Ash-Shāfi'ī (رضي الله عنه) said:

"I recommend that no additional soil be added to the grave from outside, because that would raise it too much. I recommend that it be raised above the surface of the earth approximately one hand-span."³

MOUNDING THE GRAVE

It is recommended to make the top of a grave mounded, and not flat. Sufyān at-Tammār reported:

"I saw the grave of the Prophet (ﷺ) (with Abū Bakr and 'Umar) mounded."⁴

1 Recorded by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd and others; verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 198-202).

2 Recorded by Ibn Ḥibbān and al-Bayhaqī. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 195).

3 *Al-Umm* 1:245-246.

4 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and others.

MARKING THE GRAVE

It is recommended to mark a grave with a rock or something like that, so that other family members who die later may be buried in the same grave. The rock should be placed at the location of the head.

Al-Muṭṭalib, son of ‘Abdullāh Bin al-Muṭṭalib Bin Ḥanṭab (ﷺ), reported from one of the *ṣaḥābah* that when ‘Uthmān Bin Maẓ‘ūn (ﷺ) died, his *janāzah* was taken out (to al-Baqī‘), where he was buried¹. The Prophet (ﷺ) commanded a man to hand him a rock, but could not carry it. Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) went to it, exposed his arms, carried it until he placed it at the location of the head, and said:

«أَتَعْلَمُ بِهَا قَبْرَ أَخِي، وَأَدْفِنُ إِلَيْهِ مَنْ مَاتَ مِنْ أَهْلِي.»

‘I mark with it my brother’s grave, and bury with him those who will die of his family.’²

SPREADING PEBBLES OVER A GRAVE?

A report from al-Qāsim (ﷺ) indicates that he asked ‘Ā’ishah (ﷺ) to show him the graves of the Prophet (ﷺ) with his two companions (ﷺ), and she showed him three graves neither high nor flat with the ground, with red pebbles spread over them. However, this report is weak³ and cannot be taken as evidence for spreading pebbles over a grave.

TAKING A BATH

Based on ‘Alī’s (ﷺ) *ḥadīth* when he buried his father (cited early in this chapter), it is recommended for those who lower and bury the body to take a bath after the burial.

1 He died on 3 H, and was the first Muslim to be buried in al-Baqī‘.

2 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd and al-Bayhaqī. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Ḥāfiẓ and al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* 197).

3 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd and al-Ḥākim. Verified to be weak by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 196).

Wrong Acts Related to Making Graves

PLASTERING A GRAVE

Decorating a grave is a form of extravagance that has no benefit, and was not a practice of the righteous *salaf*. Some of the old peoples used to plaster the graves with a layer of gypsum (chalk), but Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) prohibited that. Jābir (رضي الله عنه) reported:

“Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) prohibited plastering a grave (with chalk), sitting on it, building over it, adding to its height, or writing on it.”¹

Similar to plastering is coating a grave with clay. Such a coating is not permissible either — unless it is required to preserve the grave from rain and wind in a land with extreme weather situations.

BUILDING-UP A GRAVE

Jābir’s above *ḥadīth* indicates that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) prohibited building anything on top of a grave. In addition, Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī (رضي الله عنه) reported:

“Allāh’s Messenger prohibited building over graves.”²

RAISING A GRAVE

As explained earlier in this chapter, a grave may not be raised more than a handspan, which is done by using the extra soil remaining from digging it after burying the body. In Jābir’s above *ḥadīth*, Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) prohibits raising a grave above that normal height. Also, Abū Hayyāj al-Asadī (رضي الله عنه) reported that ‘Alī Bin Abī Ṭālib (رضي الله عنه) told him, “Shouldn’t I send you with the same mission as that with which Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) sent me:

1 This is a combined report from Muslim, Abū Dāwūd, an-Nasāʾī, and others. All of its parts are verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janāʾiz* p. 260).

2 Recorded by Ibn Mājah and Abū Yaʿlā. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janāʾiz* p. 263-264).

«أن لا تدع تمثالاً في بيت إلا طمسته، ولا قبراً مشرفاً إلا سويته.»

«Do not leave a statue in a house but destroy it, and do not leave a high grave but level it.» ¹

Ash-Shawkānī (رحمته الله) said:

“One form of raising the graves, to which this *ḥadīth* more worthily applies, is building domes and structures over them. That also falls under making the graves places of worship, and the Prophet (ﷺ) has cursed whoever does that.

Building, raising, and adorning the graves has resulted in evils that make Islām cry! Among those is that the ignorants’ belief in these graves resembles the pagans’ belief in their idols — to the extent that they believe that they bring benefit and prevent harm ...” ²

Thumāmah Bin Shufayy reported that he went with Fuḍālah Bin ‘Ubayd (رحمته الله) fighting in the lands of the Romans. A man was hit in Rhodes ³. Fuḍālah prayed over him and stood over his grave until the burial was completed. Then he told them:

“Make it light on top of him, because Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) commanded us to level the graves.” ⁴

Mu‘āwiyah (رحمته الله) said:

“Leveling the graves is a stipulation of the Sunnah. The Jews and the Christians raise their graves, so do not imitate them.” ⁵

1 Recorded by Muslim and others.

2 *Nay ul-Awṭār* 4:72. Ash-Shawkānī also has a very useful booklet on this subject titled, “*Sharḥ uṣ-Ṣudūr, fī Tahṛīmi Raf‘il-Qubūr* — Pleasing the Hearts in Regard to the Prohibition of Raising the Graves”.

3 A Mediterranean island to the south-west of Turkey.

4 Recorded by Muslim, Aḥmad, and others.

5 Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī (in *al-Kabīr*). Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām*

From previous reports, it should be noted that “leveling” in the above reports means lowering the graves to a hand-span above the ground.

WRITING ON A GRAVE

In Jābir’s above *ḥadīth*, Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) prohibits writing on graves. An-Nawawī (رحمته) said:

“Our scholars say that whether the writing was in a plate on the side of the head, as has been the practice of some people, or other than that — all of that is prohibited because of the general meaning of the *ḥadīth*.”¹

Some scholars have only permitted writing the deceased’s name in a plain (non-fancy) manner, in order to distinguish the grave, as Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) put a stone to mark ‘Uthmān Bin Maz‘ūn’s grave. However, this may not be exceeded to writing dates, poetry, Qur’ān, or any other text.

WAYS OF THE DISBELIEVERS

There are many practices of the disbelievers in their graveyards and cemeteries that need to be pointed out for warning and reference.

1. A Mausoleum: A community mausoleum is a large building designed to provide above-ground entombment for a number of people. It is made up of many crypts, each designed to hold casketed remains. Following a casket entombment, the crypt is sealed, and a granite or marble front is attached.

2. A Columbarium: A columbarium, often located within a mausoleum or chapel, is constructed of numerous small compartments (niches) designed to hold urns containing cremated remains.

ul-Janā‘iz p. 267).

1 *Al-Majmū‘* 5:298.

3. Cremation: Many funeral homes and cemeteries provide the option of cremating (burning) the body. The cremated remains are put into an urn, which is then interred or placed in a columbarium niche. Some cemeteries also provide for scattering the remains in a garden set aside for that purpose, in addition to a plaque memorializing the deceased.

4. Traditional Cemeteries vs. Memorial Parks: Traditional cemeteries have upright stone monuments, private mausoleums, statuary, etc. Memorial parks and gardens, on the other hand, are cemeteries without tombstones. Bronze memorials are placed level with the ground to blend with the beauty of the landscape.

Question/Answer Summary

The main elements relating to burial are outlined in the following question/answer summary.

Question	Answer
What is the ruling of burying dead Muslims?	It is a communal obligation.
What is the ruling with regard to non-Muslims.	The Muslims should bury them if there is no one else to do it.
May the Muslims be buried in their houses?	No. They should be buried in graveyards.
Where should the non-Muslims be buried?	In their own graveyards.
Who should be buried at the location of death?	Those who are killed fighting for the cause of Allāh.
At what times is the burial prohibited?	At sunrise, sunset, and when the sun is in the zenith (at noon). Night burial is also disapproved except in situations of necessity.

Question	Answer
How should a grave be made?	Wide, deep, and good (well dug), preferably with a <i>lahd</i> . Its width should be in the <i>Qiblah</i> -direction.
What is a <i>lahd</i> ?	It is a horizontal recess made for the body in the <i>Qiblah</i> wall of the grave.
Who should lower the body into the grave?	Men who did not have intercourse on the previous night. The closest relatives have the first priority.
How to lower the body into the grave?	Bring it, head first, from the feet-side of the grave.
What to say as the body is being lowered?	“With Allāh’s name, and upon Allāh’s Messenger’s religion.”
How is the body buried?	It is laid in the <i>lahd</i> on its right side, facing <i>Qiblah</i> . Bricks are put behind it before dumping the earth.
What should the people close to the grave do?	Throw in three handfuls of earth.
How should a grave be completed?	It should be raised a handspan, mounded, and marked over the head.
What should the people do immediately after the burial?	They should stay by the grave for a short while, supplicating and asking forgiveness for the deceased.
What things should be avoided in regard to graves?	Raising, building, plastering, or writing on them.
Should those who buried the body take a bath?	This is recommended.

Miscellaneous Innovations

The following are common innovations relating to burial.

BEFORE THE BURIAL

1. Digging one's grave prior to death. This was not done by the Prophet (ﷺ) or his companions. Furthermore, a person cannot foretell in which land he will die.
2. Slaughtering a calf upon arrival to the graveyard, and distributing its meat over the people present.
3. Making *thikr* around the bier before burying the body.

DURING THE BURIAL

1. Putting blood from the slaughtered animal in the grave.
2. Calling *athan* while lowering the body into the grave.
3. Lowering the body from the head's or *Qiblah* side of the grave.
4. Putting some of al-Husayn's (ﷺ) soil in the grave.
5. Placing a pillow or sand under the deceased's head in the grave.
6. Placing a soft plush piece of velvet under the body in the grave.
7. Spraying rose water over the body in the grave.
9. Throwing soil into the grave with the backs of the hands.
10. Saying specific *thikr* while throwing each handful.
11. Reciting *al-Fātiḥah* by the deceased's head and the beginning of *al-Baqarah* by his feet (based on a weak *ḥadīth*).

12. Reciting various portions of Qur'ān during and after the burial.

AFTER THE BURIAL

1. Prompting the deceased with the *Shahādah* while in his grave.
2. Placing two stones on a woman's grave.
3. Praising the deceased and lamenting over his grave after burial.
4. Putting food and drink over the grave to be taken by the poor.
5. Giving alms around the grave.
6. Pouring water over the grave.
7. Raising and building the grave with marble, and making upright tombstones.
8. Writing Qur'ān, dates, poetry, and other things on the tombstone.
9. Planting flowers, myrtle, and other plants on the grave, or placing green branches on it when it is visited.
10. Hanging the deceased's picture on the tombstone.
11. Delivering a speech after the burial. The admonitions that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) gave were not in the form of speeches, were not his consistent practice, and he did not deliver them while standing.¹

1 *Sab'ūna Su'ālan fī Aḥkām il-Janā'iz* by Shaykh Muḥammad Bin Ṣāliḥ al-Uthaymīn, p. 26.

CHAPTER 10

VISITING THE GRAVES

Ruling

It is recommended to visit the graves for the purpose of getting admonishment and remembering the hereafter. However, one may not associate the visit with anything that would anger Allāh (ﷻ), such as supplicating to the dead, invoking their assistance, wailing over them, or performing there any of the actions prohibited in Islām, as will be discussed in this chapter.

Buraydah Bin al-Ḥuṣayb (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إني كنت نهيتكم عن زيارة القبور، فزوروها، فإنها تذكركم
الآخرة، ولتزدكم زيارتها خيراً. فمن أراد أن يزور فليزُر. ولا
تقولوا هُجراً. ونهيتكم عن لحوم الأضاحي فوق ثلاث،
فأمسكوا ما بدا لكم، ونهيتكم عن النبيذ إلا في سقاء،
فأشربوا في الأسقية كلها، ولا تشربوا مُسكراً.»

«I had prohibited you from visiting the graves. Now, visit them, because they will remind you of the hereafter — and may your visits benefit you. Thus whoever wishes to visit them let him do so, but do not say heedless words.

And I had prohibited you from eating the sacrifices's meat beyond three days. Now, you may store as much of it as you wish.

And I had prohibited for you drinking grape juice except from a waterskin. Now, you may drink

it from any container — but do not drink any intoxicating liquors.»¹

Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إني نهيتكم عن زيارة القبور، فزوروها، فإن فيها عبرة.
ولا تقولوا ما يُسخطُ الربَّ.»

«I had prohibited you from visiting the graves, so visit them, because they provide admonishment. But do not say anything that would anger the Lord.»²

Anas Bin Mālik (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«كنتُ نهيتكم عن زيارة القبور، ألا فزوروها، فإنها تُرِقُّ القلبَ وتُدمعُ العينَ وتذكرُ الآخرةَ. ولا تقولوا هُجراً.»

«I had prohibited you from visiting the graves, so visit them, because that softens the heart, makes the eye tear, and reminds of the hereafter. But do not say heedless words.»³

An-Nawawī (رحمته الله) said:

“The earlier prohibition was because of their closeness to *Jāhiliyyah* — when it was likely for them to say some of the heedless words that were said during *Jāhiliyyah*. After the foundations of Islām became well-established, its rulings clear, and its characteristics distinctive, they were permitted to visit (the graves), and

1 Recorded by Muslim, an-Nasāʿī, and others.

2 Recorded by Aḥmad, al-Ḥākim, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janāʿiz* p. 228).

3 Recorded by Aḥmad and al-Ḥākim. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janāʿiz* p. 228-229).

the Prophet (ﷺ) took precaution by telling them not to say heedless words.”¹

Needless to say, many of the things said by the common people in our time when they visit the graves, such as invoking the dead, seeking their help, and asking Allāh through them, are all among the worst heedless things to say.

Women’s Visits to the Graves

RULING

The above recommendation to visit the graves applies to both men and women, because the Prophet’s (ﷺ) above statements are general in this regard. This is most clear from Buraydah’s above *ḥadīth* in which the Prophet (ﷺ) permitted other things that he had prohibited earlier, and no one ever said that those apply only to men.

Also, the purpose for which Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) permitted visiting the graves (softening the heart, making the eye tear, and reminding of the hereafter) is applicable to both men and women.

Furthermore, the Prophet (ﷺ) has allowed the women to visit the graves during his lifetime.

‘Abdullāh Bin Abī Mulaykah reported that he once saw ‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) coming from the direction of the graveyard (in Makkah). He asked her, “O Mother of the Believers! Whence are you coming?” She replied, “From the grave of ‘Abd ur-Raḥmān Bin Abī Bakr.” He asked, “Had not Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) prohibited visiting the graves?” She replied, “Yes, but he later permitted visiting them.”²

Muḥammad Bin Qays Bin Makhramah Bin al-Muṭṭalib (رضي الله عنه) reported that ‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) told him:

“One night when it was my turn with Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ), he retired to bed, laid down his upper

1 *Al-Majmū’* 5:310.

2 Recorded by al-Ḥākim, al-Bayhaqī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 230).

garment, took off his shoes and put them near his feet, spread the edge of his *izār* (lower garment), and lied down. He only waited until it appeared that I was asleep, so he quietly took his upper garment, quietly put on his shoes, quietly opened the door and stepped out, and quietly closed it.

I put my dress through my head, wore my head-cover, wrapped my *izār* around myself, and ran after him, until he reached al-Baqī. He stood for a long time, and raised his hands three times. Then he turned around, and I turned; he hurried, and I hurried; he ran, and I ran — until he reached the houses, and I reached them. I then hurried ahead of him and entered (my house).

I had just lied down when he entered. He said, «ما لك يا عائشُ حشياً رابية؟» **«What is wrong with you, O 'Ā'ish¹, panting and your abdomen rising and falling?»** I replied, 'Nothing O Allāh's Messenger.' He said, «لنخبرني أو ليُخبرني اللطيفُ الخبير.» **«You either tell me, or the Most-Subtle and Well-Aware will tell me.»** So I said, 'May my father and mother be a ransom for you, O Allāh's Messenger,' and I told him what had happened. He said, «فأنت السوداء الذي رأيته أمامي؟» **«So you were the black thing that I saw before me?»** I replied, 'Yes!'

He pushed me a painful push in the chest and said, «أظننت أن يحيفَ الله عليكِ ورسوله؟» **«Did you think that Allāh and His Messenger would be unfair to you (by giving your rightful time to another wife)?»** I said, 'Whatever the people hide, Allāh knows.' He said:

«فإن جبريلَ أتاني حينَ رأيتِ، فناداني فأخفاه منكِ، فأجبته فأخفيته منكِ، ولم يكن ليُدخلَ عليكِ وقد وضعتِ ثيابكِ، وظننتُ أن قد رقدتِ، فكرهتُ أن أوقظكِ، وخشيتُ أن تستوحشي.»

1 A nickname with which Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) sometimes called his wife.

فقال: «إن ربك يأمرُك أن تأتيَ أهلَ البقيعِ فتستغفِرَ لهم.»

«Yes! Verily, Jibrīl came to me when you saw that. He called me without letting you hear, and I responded to him without letting you know. He was not to enter into your house after you have laid down your clothes. I thought that you had slept, and hated to wake you up, and feared that you would feel lonely (if you knew that I was leaving). He told me, ‘Your Lord commands you to go to the (dead) people of al-Baqī and ask forgiveness for them.’»

I said, ‘What should I say for them, O Allāh’s Messenger?’ He instructed:

«السلامُ على أهلِ الديارِ من المؤمنِينَ والمسلمِينَ، ويرحمُ اللهُ
المستقدمِينَ منا والمستأخِرِينَ، وإنا إن شاء اللهُ بكم للاحقون.»

‘As-Salāmu ‘alā ahl id-diyāri min al-mu’minīna wal-muslimīn, wa-yarḥam Ullāh ul-mustaqdimīna minnā wal-musta’khirīn, wa-innā in shā’a ‘Llāhu bikum lalāḥiqūn.

Peace be on the dwellers of these places — of believers and Muslims. May Allāh have mercy upon the earlier and later among us. Certainly, we will follow you when Allāh wills.»¹

Al-Ḥāfiẓ took this *ḥadīth* as an evidence that it is permissible for the women to visit the graves.

We have also cited earlier (in the beginning of Chapter 3) Anas’s *ḥadīth* regarding the woman whom Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) saw crying by a grave. Al-Bukhārī cited that *ḥadīth* under the chapter of “Visiting the Graves.” Al-Ḥāfiẓ commented on that:

1 Recorded by Muslim, Aḥmad, and others.

“The place of evidence in it is that he (ﷺ) did not reproach the woman for sitting by the grave. His approval is considered an evidence.”¹

And al-‘Aynī commented:

“This indicates that it is absolutely permissible to visit the graves — whether the visitor was a man or a woman, and whether the visited grave was that of a Muslim or a *kāfir*, because the Prophet (ﷺ) did not inquire about that.”²

FREQUENT VISITS

It is not recommended for the women to visit the graves frequently, because that could lead to committing various prohibited acts, such as wailing, display of beauty and adornment, turning the graves into recreation places, and wasting the time in useless talk — as is witnessed in some of the Muslim countries.

Abū Hurayrah, Hassān Bin Thābit, and ‘Abdullāh Bin ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لعن الله (أو رسول الله) زوّارات القبور.»

«Allāh (or Allāh’s Messenger) curses the women who frequent the graves.»³

Al-Qurṭubī commented on this:

“This curse is in regard to the women who visit the graves frequently.”

This was approved and adopted by ash-Shawkānī who added:

1 *Faḥ ul-Bārī*.

2 *‘Umdat ul-Qārī* 3:76.

3 Recorded by at-Tirmiḥī, Ibn Mājah, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā‘iz* p. 235-236).

“This is the position that should be adopted in reconciling between the various *hadīths* that may appear conflicting.”¹

Visiting Disbelievers' Graves

RULING

It is permissible to visit the grave of a *kāfir* only for the purpose of admonishment.

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) visited his mother's grave, and he cried and made those around him cry. Then he said:

«أستأذنتُ ربي في أن أستغفرَ لها، فلم يؤذنَ لي. وأستأذنتُهُ في أن أزورَ قبرها فأذنَ لي. فزوروا القبورَ فإنها تُذكّر الموت.»

«I requested my Lord's permission to ask forgiveness for her, but I was not granted that. And I requested His permission to visit her grave, and He permitted me. So visit the graves, for they remind of death.»²

Buraydah (رضي الله عنه) reported that during the trip of conquering Makkah, there were more than one thousand riders with Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ). He stopped at a place, prayed two *rak'āt*, then turned to them with his eyes tearing. 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) said, “May my father and mother be your ransom, O Allāh's Messenger! What bothers you?” He (ﷺ) replied:

«إني سألت ربي عز وجل في الاستغفارِ لأمي، فلم يأذن لي. فدمعت عينايا رحمةً لها من النار. وأستأذنتُ ربي في زيارتها، فأذن لي. وإنني كنتُ نهيتُكم عن زيارة القبور، فزوروها.»

1 *Nayl ul-Awṭār* 4:95.

2 Recorded by Muslim and others.

ولتزدكم زيارتها خيراً.»

«I requested my Lord’s permission to ask forgiveness for my mother, but He did not permit me, so my eyes shed tears out of mercy for her that she will suffer the Fire. Then I requested my Lord’s permission to visit her, and He permitted me. I had previously prohibited you from visiting the graves, so visit them, and let your visits to them benefit you.»¹

PURPOSE OF THE VISIT

As indicated in the above *ḥadīths*, the purpose of visiting the disbelievers’ graves must be getting admonishment and remembering death. An-Nawawī commented on Abū Hurayrah’s above *ḥadīth* by saying:

“It indicates that it is permissible to visit the *mushriks* during their life, and their graves after death: because if it is permissible to visit their graves, it is worthier to visit them alive. It also indicates that it is prohibited to ask forgiveness for the disbelievers. ‘Iyāḍ said, ‘The reason that he (ﷺ) visited her grave is that he sought to strengthen the admonishment and remembrance by viewing her grave, as he expressed that visiting the graves reminds of death.’”²

WHAT TO SAY?

When visiting or passing by a disbeliever’s grave, one may not give him *salām* or supplicate for him, but should rather give him the tidings of the hellfire. Sa’d Bin Abī Waqqāṣ (رضي الله عنه) reported that a bedouin came to Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) and said, “My father was good to his relatives, and did such and such, and such and such, so where is he?” He replied, « في النار. » **In the Fire.** And it seems that the bedouin

1 Recorded by Aḥmad, Ibn Abī Shaybah, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 238).

2 *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*.

disliked that, so he said, “O Allāh’s Messenger! Where is your father?” He replied:

«حيثما مررت بقبر كافر فبشره بالنار.»

«Wherever you pass by a disbeliever’s grave, give him the tidings of the Fire.»

That bedouin later embraced Islām and said, “Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) has burdened me with a toilsome task: I never passed by a disbeliever’s grave but gave him the tidings of the Fire.”¹

Etiquettes of the Visit

PURPOSES

Visiting the graves has two purposes:

- a) Remembering death and the things that happen in the grave and on the hereafter. This provides an important admonishment for the visitors, and is the main purpose expressed in various *ḥadīths* discussed earlier in this chapter.
- b) Benefiting the dead Muslims and rendering kindness toward them by greeting them with peace, supplicating, and asking forgiveness for them.

QUIETNESS

One should enter the graveyards with quietness and serenity — in order to benefit from the visit and remember the hereafter. This is demonstrated in the *ḥadīth* (cited in the last chapter) of al-Barā’ Bin ‘Āzib (رضي الله عنه) in which he described the sitting of the Prophet (ﷺ) and

¹ Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī (in *al-Kabīr*) and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 251).

his companions (ﷺ) around him, silently, as if they were afraid to scare away birds perching right on their heads.

SUPPLICATING

In the long *ḥadīth* of ‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) cited earlier, she asked Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) what can she say for the dead people, and he taught her a supplication that was presented there, and other versions of which are presented in this section.

‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) used to go out to al-Baqī’ to supplicate for the dead. She asked him about that, and he explained:

«إني أمرتُ أن أدعوَ لهم.»

«I have been commanded to supplicate for them.»¹

‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that when it was her turn with Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ), he would go out (to al-Baqī’) late at night and say:

«السلامُ عليكم دار قومٍ مؤمنين، وإنا وإياكم وما
توعدون غداً مُؤجّلون، وإنا إن شاء الله بكم لاحقون.
اللهم اغفر لأهل بقيع الغرقد.»

«*As-Salāmu ‘alaykum dāra qawmin mu’minīn, wa-
innā wa’iyyākum wamā tū‘adūna ghadan mu’ajjalūn,
wa-innā in shā’a ’Llāhu bikum lāḥiqūn. Allāhumma
’ghfir lahum.*

Peace be on you — the dwellings of believing folks.
Verily, we and you and whatever you have been
promised are all postponed for tomorrow (Judgment
Day). Certainly, we will follow you when Allāh wills.
O Allāh! Forgive the dwellers of al-Baqī’.»²

1 Recorded by Aḥmad. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 239).

2 Recorded by Muslim and others.

Buraydah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) taught them (the *ṣaḥābah*) to say when they went to the graveyards:

«السلامُ عليكم أهل الديارِ من المؤمنين والمسلمين،
وإنا إن شاء الله بكم للاحقون. أنتم لنا فرطٌ، ونحن لكم تبع.
أسألُ الله لنا ولكم العافية.»

«As-Salāmu 'alaykum ahl id-diyāri min al-mu'minīna wal-muslimīn, wa-innā in shā'a 'Llāhu bikum lalāḥiqūn, antum lanā farat̃, wanaḥnu lakum taba'.
As'al Ullāha lanā wa-lakum ul-'āfiyah.

Peace be on you — dwellers of these places — of believers and Muslims. Certainly, we will follow you when Allāh wills. You have preceded us, and we will follow you. I ask Allāh to grant well-being to us and you.»¹

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that once Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) visited a graveyard and said:

«السلامُ عليكم دار قومٍ مؤمنين، وإنا إن شاء الله بكم للاحقون.
وددتُ أنا قد رأينا إخواننا.»

«As-Salāmu 'alaykum dāra qawmin mu'minīn , wa-innā in shā'a 'Llāhu bikum lāḥiqūn.

Peace be on you — the dwellings of believing folks. Certainly, we will follow you when Allāh wills. I wish that we could see our brothers.»

He was asked, “Aren't we your brothers, O Allāh's Messenger?” He replied:

«بل أنتم أصحابي. وإخواننا الذين يأتون بعدُ، وأنا فرطهم على الحوض.»

1 Recorded by Muslim and others.

«Rather, you are my companions; but our brothers have not come yet; and I will precede them to the *Hawd* (on Judgment Day).»

He was asked, “How would you know those who have not yet come of your *ummah*, O Allāh’s Messenger?” He said:

«أَرَأَيْتُمْ لَوْ أَنَّ رَجُلًا لَهُ خَيْلٌ غُرٌّ مَحْجَلَةٌ، بَيْنَ ظَهْرِي خَيْلٍ دُهِمٍ
بُهُمْ، أَلَا يَعْرِفُ خَيْلَهُ؟»

«If a man had horses with white faces and legs among horses that are totally black, wouldn’t he be able to distinguish his horses?»

He was told, “ Yes indeed, O Allāh’s Messenger.” He said:

«فَإِنَّهُمْ يَأْتُونَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ غُرًّا مُحَجَّلِينَ مِنَ الْوَضْوَاءِ (ثَلَاثًا).
وَأَنَا فَرَطُهُمْ عَلَى الْحَوْضِ. أَلَا لِيُذَادَنَّ رَجَالٌ مِنْكُمْ عَنْ حَوْضِي
كَمَا يُذَادُ الْبَعِيرُ الضَّالُّ. أَنَادِيهِمْ: “أَلَا هَلُمَّ، أَلَا هَلُمَّ.” فَيُقَالُ:
”إِنَّهُمْ قَدْ بَدَّلُوا بَعْدَكَ، وَلَمْ يَزَالُوا يَرْجِعُونَ عَلَى أَعْقَابِهِمْ.”
فَأَقُولُ: “أَلَا سُحْقًا سُحْقًا.”»

«So verily they will come on the Day of Resurrection with white faces, arms, and legs, from *wudū*’ (he repeated this three times). And I will precede them to the *Hawd*.

And indeed, some men among you will be turned away from my *Hawd* like a lost camel is turned away (in order not to bring disease to the cattle). I would call them, “Come forth, come forth!” But I will be told, “They have changed (your religion) after you, and have continued to go back upon their heels.” So

I would say, “Verily, let them get lost, let them get lost.”¹

RAISING THE HANDS WITH THE SUPPLICATION

It is permissible to raise the hands while supplicating for the dead at the graveyard. ‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) went out of her house one night, and she sent Barīrah (her servant) to trace him. She told her that he went to al-Baqī’, stood at the side nearest to al-Madīnah, raised his hands, and then left. In the morning, ‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) asked him, “O Allāh’s Messenger! Where did you go last night?” He replied:

« بُعِثْتُ إِلَى أَهْلِ الْبَقِيعِ لِأُصَلِّيَ عَلَيْهِمْ. »

«I was sent to al-Baqī’'s people to pray for them.»²

Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) also raised his hand three times on the night that ‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) followed him, as was cited earlier (p. 252).

FACING THE QIBLAH WHILE SUPPLICATING

It is not recommended to face the graves while supplicating. Rather, one should face the *Qiblah*, because supplication is a form of prayer, and the Prophet (ﷺ) prohibited facing the graves in the prayer (as will be detailed later in this chapter). Ibn Taymiyyah (رحمته الله) said:

“This is a consistent rule: that it is not permissible for a supplicating person to face except where he is allowed to face during the prayer. Thus, similar to the fact that it is not permissible for a person (in Damascus) to pray toward the east, it is not permissible for him to seek that specific direction for supplication. Some people make sure, while supplicating, to face a righteous man,

1 Recorded by Muslim and others.

2 Recorded by Aḥmad and Mālik. Verified to be *ḥasan* by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 246).

whether he were to the east or other directions. This is a clear misguidance and an obvious wrong ...”¹

This is particularly important when visiting the Prophet’s (ﷺ) grave, where the common and ignorant people make long supplications facing the grave instead of facing the *Qiblah*. Ibn Taymiyyah (رحمته الله) also said:

“The position of the Four *Imāms*: Mālik, Abū Ḥanīfah, ash-Shāfi‘ī, and Aḥmad, as well as other great scholars of Islām, is that after one says *salām* to the Prophet (ﷺ), if he wanted to supplicate for himself, he should face the *Qiblah*.”²

Wrong Acts Related to the Visit

SAYING THINGS THAT WOULD ANGER ALLĀH

As was mentioned early in this chapter, an important restriction that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) clearly set for visiting the graves is to refrain from saying any heedless words that would anger the Lord.

FACING THE GRAVES IN PRAYER

Abū Marthad al-Ghanawī (رحمته الله) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

« لا تُصَلُّوا إِلَى الْقُبُورِ، وَلَا تَجْلِسُوا عَلَيْهَا. »

«Do not face the graves in prayer, nor sit on them.»³

This indicates that it is prohibited to pray in places where facing the *Qiblah* would require facing some nearby graves.

1 *Iqtiḍā’ uṣ-Ṣirāṭ il-Mustaqīm* p. 182.

2 *At-Tawassul wal-Wasīlah* p. 125.

3 Recorded by Muslim and others.

It is important to note that this prohibition applies to those who face the graves in their prayer without intending any kind of glorification for the graves. If they face the graves in the prayer out of respect and glorification, their action would be an act of *shirk*.

PRAYING AMONG THE GRAVES

It is not permissible to pray among the graves, even if one did not face them in the prayer.¹

Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«الأرض كلها مسجد إلا المقبرة والحمام.»

«All of the earth is a place for prayer — except a graveyard or a bathroom.»²

Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported:

“Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) prohibited praying among the graves (over *janāzahs*).”³

Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) commands us to distinguish our homes from graveyards through praying in them — which means that graveyards are not places for prayer. Ibn ʿUmar (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«أجعلوا في بيوتكم من صلاتكم، ولا تتخذوها قبوراً»

«Offer some of your prayers in your houses, and do not turn them into graves.»⁴

1 A very detailed discussion of this is provided by al-Albānī in *Aḥkām ul-Janāʿiz* (p. 270-275) and *Taḥṭīr us-Sājīd*.

2 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, at-Tirmidhī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janāʿiz* p. 270).

3 Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī, al-Bazzār, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janāʿiz* p. 270).

4 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and Aḥmad.

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

« لا تجعلوا بيوتكم مقابر. إن الشيطان ينفر من البيت الذي
تُقرأ فيه سورة البقرة. »

«Do not turn your houses into graveyards, because Satan runs away from a house in which *sūrat ul-Baqarah* (2) is recited.» ¹

MAKING THE GRAVES PLACES OF PRAYER

It is prohibited to build or establish *masjids* over graves. Both 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها) and Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه) reported that when Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) was in the throes of death, he would cover and uncover his face with a black piece of cloth as the pain subdued and intensified. While he was in that state, he said:

« لعنة الله على اليهود والنصارى، اتخذوا قبور أنبيائهم مساجد. »

«Allāh's curse is upon the Jews and Christians: They turned their prophets' graves into prayer places.»

With that, he was warning of their action. ²

In one of the reports, 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها) added:

“If it were not for that reason, his grave would have been made visible to the people — but it was feared that they would make it a place of prayer.” ³

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

« قاتل (لعن) الله اليهود والنصارى، اتخذوا قبور أنبيائهم مساجد. »

1 Recorded by Muslim and others.

2 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and others.

«Allāh curses the Jews and Christians: They turned their prophets' graves into prayer places.»¹

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«اللَّهُم لا تجعل قبري وثناً، لعن الله قوماً
أخذوا قبور أنبيائهم مساجد.»

«O Allāh! Do not make my grave an object of worship. Allāh curses the people who have turned their prophets' graves into prayer places.»²

Jundub (رضي الله عنه) reported that he heard Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) say the following five nights before he passed away:

«قد كان لي فيكم أخوة وأصدقاء، وإنني أبرأ إلى الله أن يكون لي منكم خليل، فإن الله تعالى قد اتخذني خليلاً كما اتخذ إبراهيم خليلاً. ولو كنت متخذاً من أمتي خليلاً لا اتخذت أبا بكر خليلاً. ألا وإن من كان قبلكم كانوا يتخذون قبور أنبيائهم وصالحيهم مساجد، ألا فلا تتخذوا القبور مساجد، إني أنهاكم عن ذلك.»

«I have from among you brothers and friends. But I disavow before Allāh to have a *khalīl*³ from among you, because Allāh (ﷻ) has chosen me to be His *khalīl* as he had chosen Ibrāhīm to be His *khalīl*. Were I to choose a *khalīl* from my *ummah*, I would have chosen Abū Bakr.

And verily, those who passed before you had made the graves of their prophets and righteous men

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

2 Recorded by Aḥmad, Ibn Sa'd, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 276).

3 A very close and highly beloved friend.

places of prayer. So do not make the graves prayer places, for I surely prohibit you from doing that.»¹

‘Abdullāh Bin Mas‘ūd (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إن من شرار الناس من تدركه الساعة وهم أحياء،
ومن يتخذ القبور مساجد.»

«Among the worst of people are those who will be alive when the Dooms Hour comes, and those who turn the graves into prayer places.»²

‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that during the Prophet’s (ﷺ) final illness, some of his wives were talking about a church in Abyssinia called Māriyah — Umm Salamah and Umm Ḥabībah, having traveled to Abyssinia, described its grandeur and images. So the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«إن أولئك إذا كان فيهم الرجل الصالح فمات بنوا على قبره مسجداً
ثم صوّروا فيه تلك الصور. أولئك شرار الخلق عند الله يوم القيامة.»

«Those people, when a righteous man among them died, they used to build over his grave a place of prayer and draw those images. Those are the worst of people before Allāh on the Day of Resurrection.»³

It is unfortunate that, despite the Prophet’s (ﷺ) great warning against making the graves places of worship, his grave was eventually introduced into his *Masjid*, thereby violating a command and wish that he (ﷺ) voiced repeatedly shortly before his death.

1 Recorded by Muslim and others.

2 Recorded by Aḥmad, aṭ-Ṭabarānī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 278).

3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

GATHERING OR CELEBRATING BY THE GRAVES

It is prohibited to make a grave a place of seasonal gathering visited for worship or other purposes.¹

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لا تتخذوا قبوري عيداً، ولا تجعلوا بيوتكم قبوراً،
وحيثما كنتم فصلوا علي، فإن صلاتكم تبلغني.»

«Do not turn my grave into a place of seasonal celebration and visitation, and do not turn your houses into graves. Wherever you are, pray upon me, because your prayer will reach me.»²

It is also unfortunate that, after the five prayers, many ignorant people in the Prophet's (ﷺ) *Masjid* run to the grave to say *salām* to him, and perform *du'ā'* in loud voices, instead of performing the prescribed *thikr* after the prayers. This is another clear defiance to his Sunnah, as established in this *ḥadīth*. Ibn Taymiyyah (رحمته الله) said:

“Because of this (*ḥadīth*), Mālik (رحمته الله) and other scholars of al-Madīnah have hated for a person to go and say *salām* over the grave of the Prophet (ﷺ) and his two companions every time he entered the *Masjid*. He said, ‘This should only be done when one comes from a travel, intends to travel, or something like that. Some scholars have permitted saying *salām* on him every time one enters the *Masjid*. But as for going intently to the grave to utter *ṣalāh* and *salām* upon him, I do not know of anyone who permitted it, because it becomes a form of making it a place of ‘*id.*’ ...”³

1 A more detailed discussion of this, with several quotations from Ibn Taymiyyah, is found in *Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 280-285.

2 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd and Aḥmad. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 280).

3 *Iqtidā' uṣ-Ṣirāṭ il-Mustaqīm* p. 175 and thereafter.

If this is true about the Prophet's (ﷺ) grave, which is the best grave on Earth, it is more rightfully true about all other graves as well.

TRAVELING TO VISIT THE GRAVES

It is not permissible to travel for the purpose of visiting a grave, even if that grave was the Prophet's (ﷺ). Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

« لا تُشدّ الرحال إلا إلى ثلاثة مساجد: المسجد الحرام،
ومسجد الرسول، ومسجد الأقصى. »

«The camels may not be saddled (for travel) except to three *masjids*: the Sacred *Masjid* (in Makkah), the Prophet's *Masjid* (in al-Madīnah), and the Furthermost *Masjid* (in Jerusalem).»¹

He also reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

« إنما يُسافر إلى ثلاثة مساجد: مسجد الكعبة، ومسجدي،
ومسجد إيلياء. »

«Verily, travel may only be made to three *masjids*: the *Masjid* of al-Ka'bah, my *Masjid*, and the *Masjid* of Īliyā' (Palestine).»²

A similar meaning is reported from Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) by Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī³

The above *ḥadīths* indicate that it is prohibited to travel to visit any revered place, other than the Three *Masjids*, with the intention of pleasing Allāh by such a visit.⁴

1 Recorded by al-Bukhārī and others.

2 Recorded by Muslim.

3 Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

4 A very detailed discussion of this is provided by al-Albānī in *Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* (p. 285-293) and *Taḥṭhīr us-Sājīd*.

RECITING QUR'ĀN OVER THE GRAVES

Despite being a very common practice among the Muslims, there is no basis in the Sunnah for reading Qur'ān over graves. Rather, the *ḥadīths* in the beginning of this chapter prove that it is not recommended to do so, because the Prophet (ﷺ) did not prescribe it to his companions together with the supplications that he taught them. When his beloved wife 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها) asked him what to say at the graveyard, he taught her a supplication, but did not tell her to recite *al-Fātiḥah* (1), *Yā-Sīn* (36), or any other portions of the Qur'ān.

Furthermore, Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

« لا تجعلوا بيوتكم مقابر، فإن الشيطان يفرُّ من البيت الذي تُقرأ فيه سورة البقرة. »

«Do not turn your houses into graveyards, because Satan runs away from a house in which *sūrat ul-Baqarah* (2) is recited.»¹

The Prophet (ﷺ) indicates in this *ḥadīth* that the graveyards are not places for reading Qur'ān, and that the houses should be distinguished from them in that regard. Therefore, it is not recommended to recite Qur'ān at the graveyards.

The great scholars of this *ummah*, such as Abū Ḥanīfah, Mālik, Aḥmad, and ash-Shāfi'ī, disliked reading Qur'ān over the graves.² Mālik (رضي الله عنه) indicated that he did not know of anyone doing it, from which Ibn Taymiyyah (رضي الله عنه) concluded that neither the *ṣaḥābah* nor the *tābi'ūn* did it.³

All reports mentioning reading *sūrat ul-Ikhlāṣ* (112), *Yā-Sīn* (36), or other portions of the Qur'ān over the graves are weak.⁴

1 Recorded by Muslim and others.

2 *Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 242.

3 *Iqtidā' uṣ-Ṣirāṭ il-Mustaqīm* p. 182.

4 *Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 243-245.

SACRIFICING ANIMALS NEAR THE GRAVES

It is not permitted to slaughter or sacrifice animals near a grave — even if the slaughtered animal was purely offered to Allāh (ﷻ). The people of *Jāhiliyyah* used to slaughter there cows and goats, so Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

« لا عَقْرَ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ . »

«No slaughtering by a grave (is allowed) in Islām.»¹

Ibn Taymiyyah (رحمته) said:

“Slaughtering there is absolutely prohibited ... And Abū ‘Abdillāh (Imām Aḥmad) hated eating that meat. Some of our scholars say, ‘Similar to this is what many people do at our time: giving away bread and other types of food by the graves.’ ”²

An-Nawawī (رحمته) said:

“Slaughtering near a grave is prohibited — because of Anas’s *ḥadīth*.”³

Furthermore, if the sacrifice is offered to the one in the grave rather than Allāh (ﷻ) — as some of the ignorant people do, it becomes a clear form of *shirk*, and eating that meat becomes absolutely prohibited. Allāh (ﷻ) says:

« حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ أَمْيَتُهُ وَأَلْدَمُ الْخَنزِيرِ، وَمَا أَهْلٌ لِعَيْرِ
 اللَّهِ بِهِ، وَالْمُنْحَنِقَةُ وَالْمَوْفُودَةُ وَالْمُتَرَدِّيَةُ وَالنَّطِيحَةُ، وَمَا أَكَلَ
 السَّبْعُ إِلَّا مَا ذَكَيْتُمْ، وَمَا ذُبِحَ عَلَى النُّصُبِ، وَأَنْ تَسْتَقْسِمُوا

1 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, al-Bayhaqī, and Aḥmad, from Anas (رضي الله عنه). Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 259).

2 *Iqtiḍā' us-Ṣirāṭ il-Mustaqīm* p. 182.

3 *Al-Majmū'* 5:320.

بِأَلَّا زَلِمَ، ذَالِكُمْ فِسْقٌ.» المائدة ٣

«It has been made prohibited for you (eating) dead (non-slaughtered) animals, blood, the flesh of swine, that which has been offered to other than Allāh, that killed by strangling or by a violent blow or by a headlong fall or by the gorging of horns, that which has been partly eaten by a wild animal — unless you (are able to) slaughter it (before death), that which has been sacrificed on stone alters, and (prohibited too) your seeking decisions through divining arrows: All of those are grave acts of disobedience.»¹

‘Alī and Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنهما) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:
«لَعْنُ اللَّهِ مَنْ ذَبَحَ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ.»

«Allāh curses whoever slaughters to other than Allāh.»²

WALKING WITH SHOES AMONG THE GRAVES

In the *ḥadīth* of Bashīr Bin al-Khaṣaṣiyah (cited in the previous chapter under “the disbelievers’ graveyards”), the Prophet (ﷺ) commanded a man walking among the graves to remove his shoes. On the other hand, al-Barā’ Bin ‘Āzib’s long *ḥadīth* (also cited last chapter), mentions that the righteous dead person hears the knocking of his companions’ shoes as they depart from the grave. From this, some scholars conclude that it is prohibited to walk among the graves wearing specific leather shoes. Others consider that a disliked act, as al-Hāfiẓ said:

“That *ḥadīth* indicates that it is disliked to walk among the graves wearing shoes.”³

And Abū Dāwūd (رضي الله عنه) reported:

1 *Al-Mā'idah* 5:3.

2 Recorded by Muslim and Aḥmad.

3 *Faṭḥ ul-Bārī* 3:160.

“I observed that when Imām Aḥmad followed a *janāzah*, he removed his shoes as he approached the graves.”¹

This ruling is most emphasized when walking very close to the graves, so that one is almost walking right on top of the bodies — a very prohibited act, as is expressed in Abū Hurayrah’s next *ḥadīth*.

SITTING OR STANDING ON A MUSLIM’S GRAVE

Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لأن يجلسَ أحدكم على جمرةٍ، فتحرقَ ثيابه فتخلصَ إلى جلده،
خيرٌ له من أن يجلسَ (أو يَطأ) على قبرٍ.»

«For one of you to sit on a hot coal that would burn his clothes and reach his skin — that is better for him than sitting or standing on a grave.»²

‘Uqbah Bin ‘Āmir (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«لأن أمشيَ على جمرةٍ أو سيفٍ، أو أخصِفَ نعلي برجلي، أحبُّ
إليّ من أن أمشيَ على قبرٍ مسلمٍ. وما أبالي أوسطَ القبورِ
قضيتُ حاجتي أو وسطَ السوق.»

«I would rather walk on a burning coal or a sword’s edge, or use my foot for (the impossible task of) mending my shoes, than to walk over a Muslim’s grave. And it does not make a difference (because they are equally bad) if I go to toilet among the graves or in the middle of the marketplace.»³

1 *Al-Masā’il* p. 158.

2 Recorded by Muslim, Abū Dāwūd, and others.

3 Recorded by Ibn Abī Shaybah and Ibn Mājah. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī and others (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 267).

The prohibition of sitting on graves has also been expressed in Abū Marthad's (رضي الله عنه) above *ḥadīth* (cited under "Facing the Graves in Prayer").

GOING TO TOILET AMONG THE GRAVES

‘Uqbah Bin ‘Āmir's (رضي الله عنه) above *ḥadīth* also indicates that it is prohibited to urinate or defecate among the graves.

PLACING FLOWERS, BRANCHES, OR LEAVES ON A GRAVE

It is not permissible to place leaves or flowers over the graves. That involves imitation to the disbelievers, and is an innovation that has no basis in the Sunnah or the practice of the *salaf*. Those who do it sometimes mistakenly justify their action by something that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) did.

Jābir Bin ‘Abdillāh (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) asked him to give him two branches. He placed them over two graves and said:

«إني مررت بقبرين يُعذَّبَان، فأحببت بشفاعتي أن
يُردَّ (أو يُرفَّه) عنهما ما دام الغصنان رطبين.»

«I passed by two graves (the two men in them) being punished. I hoped, through my intercession, that their punishment will be reduced as long as the two branches are green.»¹

And Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) reported that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) passed by two graves and said:

«أما إنهما ليُعذَّبَان، وما يُعذَّبَان في كبير. بلى، إنه لكبير!
أما أحدهما، فكان يمشي بالنميمة، وأما الآخر فكان لا يستتره
من بوله.»

¹ Recorded by Muslim.

«Verily, these two are being tortured. Their punishment is for matters that are not important (to many people). Rather, they are very serious indeed. As for the first, he used to walk about spreading slander; and as for the other, he did not cover himself from his urine.»

He then requested a palm branch, cut it in half, and stuck each half into one of the graves. He was asked, “O Allāh’s Messenger! Why did you do this?” He replied”

«لعله يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمَا مَا لَمْ يَبْسِ .»

«Perhaps their punishment will be reduced as long as the branches have not dried up yet.»¹

It is clear from these two *ḥadīths* that the reason for the reduction of punishment is the Prophet’s (ﷺ) intercession or supplication, and not the green state of the branches. The letter merely was a sign indicating the duration of the reduction and not a cause for it.

Therefore, those who place green leaves, or plant green bushes (such as myrtle), over a grave make several mistakes because of their misunderstanding of the above *ḥadīth*, such as the following:

1. They presume that their intercession and supplication are equal to that of the Prophet (ﷺ) who was provided with the Revelation and was informed that the punishment will be reduced for a specific duration.
2. Their action implicitly reflects bad thoughts toward their deceased: It means that he needs their help because he is being punished — a matter only known to Allāh (ﷻ).
3. This is a clear act of imitation of the disbelievers.

¹ Al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

4. It is an obvious defiance of the Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ) and the practice of the *salaf* whose graves were simple, only covered with soil and pebbles.

LIGHTING CANDLES BY A GRAVE

Lighting candles or lamps by a grave is prohibited for various reasons:

1. It is an innovation that was unknown to the righteous *salaf*.
2. Its is a waste of money and resources, which is prohibited, as we have discussed in regard to being excessive with shrouds.
3. It involves an imitation to the fire-worshippers.

It is to be noted that the commonly cited *ḥadīth* in this regard, “Allāh curses the women who frequent the graves, and pray and light candles over them,” is weak ¹ and, therefore, may not be used as a supporting evidence.

MUTILATING OR DISTURBING THE BODIES

It is prohibited to break the bones of a dead believer, mutilate his body, cut any of his parts, or burn him — even if he requested that in his will.

‘Ā’ishah (رضي الله عنها) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

«إِنْ كَسَرَ عَظْمَ الْمُؤْمِنِ مِثْلًا مِثْلُ كَسْرِهِ حَيًّا»

⟨Indeed, breaking a dead believer’s bones is similar (in prohibition) to breaking them when he was alive.⟩ ²

Commenting on this, al-Ḥāfiẓ (رحمته الله) said:

1 *Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 294-295.

2 Recorded by Abū Dāwūd, al-Bayhaqī, and others. Verified to be authentic by al-Albānī (*Aḥkām ul-Janā’iz* p. 295-296).

“We conclude from it that the sanctity of a Muslim extends after his death as it was during his life.”¹

This provides an answer to a question commonly posed by medical students, “Is it permissible to cut the bones or parts of a dead person for the purpose of testing or study?” The answer is, “This is prohibited with the Muslims’ bodies, but permissible with other bodies.”

An exception to the above would be a woman who dies with a baby in her womb. If the doctors expect the baby to live by cutting the mothers’ body open, that should be done because it involves saving a Muslim’s life.

We also conclude from ‘Ā’ishah’s (رضي الله عنها) *ḥadīth* that it is not permissible to exhume a Muslim’s body out of his grave, unless there is a *shar‘ī* reason for that.

On the other hand, it is permissible to exhume the bodies of *kāfīrs*, as is deduced from the same *ḥadīth*, as well as the following.

‘Ā’ishah and Anas (رضي الله عنهما) reported that when Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) wanted to build his *Masjid*, he summoned the tribe of an-Najjār (who owned the land) and told them:

«يا بني النجار، ثامنوني بجائتكم هذا.»

«O Family of an-Najjār, tell me what price you want for this land of yours.»

They replied, “By Allāh, we do not seek its price except from Allāh.”

In that land, there were graves of pagans, ruins, and palm trees. The Prophet (ﷺ) commanded that the pagans’ graves be dug (and removed), the ruins demolished, and the palms cut. The palm was lined toward the *Qiblah* of the *Masjid*, and the two pillars were made of stone. They (the *ṣaḥābah*) then started carrying rocks and bricks with the Prophet (ﷺ); and they were chanting (without music) and the Prophet (ﷺ) chanting with them:

«هذا الجمالُ لا جمالُ خيبرُ هذا أبرُّ ربِّنا وأظهُرُ»

1 *Fatḥ ul-Bārī*.

اللَّهُمَّ لَا خَيْرَ إِلَّا خَيْرُ الْآخِرَةِ فَأَغْفِرْ لِلْأَنْصَارِ وَالْمُهَاجِرَةِ
 اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّ الْأَجْرَ أَجْرُ الْآخِرَةِ فَأَرْحَمْ الْأَنْصَارِ وَالْمُهَاجِرَةِ»

⟨This burden (should be sought) — not the burden of Khaybar. This is more righteous and pure, O our Lord!

O Allāh! There is no good but the hereafter's. So forgive the *Anṣār* and *Muhājirūn*.

O Allāh! The true rewards are the hereafter's. So have mercy on the *Anṣār* and *Muhājirūn*.»¹

Question/Answer Summary

The main elements relating to visiting the graves are outlined in the following question/answer summary.

Question	Answer
What is the ruling of visiting the graves?	It is recommended if it fulfills the requirements of the visit.
What are the requirements of the visit?	a) Avoid acts that displease Allāh, b) seek admonishment in the visit.
Are the women allowed to visit the graves?	Yes, but not frequently.
Is it allowed to visit the disbelievers' graves?	Yes, only for admonishment.
What to say when visiting the believers' graves?	Greet them with <i>salām</i> and supplicate for them.
What to say when visiting the disbelievers' graves?	Give them the tidings of the Fire.

¹ Recorded by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others.

Question	Answer
Which direction should one face while supplicating?	The direction of <i>Qiblah</i> , and not the grave.
Is it allowed to break the bones or sever parts of a dead body?	This is not allowed for a Muslim's body, but is allowed for non-Muslims (if there is a need).
What acts of worship are prohibited among the graves?	Allowed acts of worship are the ones that have an evidence, such as <i>salām</i> , <i>thikr</i> , and supplication. All others (like prayer, sacrifice, reciting Qur'ān) are prohibited.
What other acts are disliked or prohibited among the graves?	All acts that display disrespect or excessive reverence of the dead people.

Miscellaneous Innovations

The following are some common innovations relating to visiting the graves.

SPECIFIC DAYS AND TIMES

1. Specifically visiting the grave on the third, seventh, fifteenth, and fortieth days after burial.
2. Specifically visiting the parents' graves every Friday (based on a fabricated *ḥadīth* ¹).
3. Specifically visiting the graves on the days of 'īd, the day of 'Āshūrā' ², and the middle night of *Sha'bān*.

1 *Aḥkām ul-Janā'iz* p. 324.

2 The tenth day of the month *al-Muḥarram*.

4. Specifically visiting the graves on Mondays and Thursdays.
5. Specifically visiting the graves during the months of *Rajab*, *Sha'bān*, and *Ramaḍān*.
6. Specifically visiting some graves on the day of 'Arafah¹, and crowding around them in large numbers in resemblance to what the pilgrims do on the mountain of 'Arafah.
7. Visiting a deceased's grave early on the morning following the burial in order to "alleviate his loneliness".
8. Sleeping a number of nights (up to forty) by a deceased's grave.

UNSUBSTANTIATED RITUALS

1. Standing quietly by the gate of the cemetery, as if asking permission to enter.
2. Standing near the grave with the hands on the chest, as if in prayer.
3. Performing *tayammum* upon reaching the graves.
4. Reversing the *salām* by saying 'alykum *us-salām* instead of *as-salāmu 'alaykum* to the dead (based on a misinterpreted *ḥadīth* in this regard).
5. Giving admonishment in the graveyards during nights with full-moon.
6. Raising the voice among the graves with "*Lā ilāha illa 'Llāh*" or other forms of *thikr*.
7. Seeking help from the dead person or asking him to supplicate for the visitors.

1 The ninth of the month of *Thul-Hijjah*.

8. Visiting a grave for the purpose of supplication, and believing that the supplications are more acceptable there.
9. Slaughtering and sacrificing animals by a grave.

PRAYING AND RECITING QUR'ĀN

1. Starting the visit with praying two *rak'āt*, reading in them *al-Fātiḥah*, *āyat ul-Kursī*¹, and *sūrat ul-Ikhlāṣ* (112), and offering the prayer's blessings to the deceased.
2. Reciting *Sūrat ul-Ikhlāṣ* (112) or *Yā-Sīn* (36) over the graves (based on fabricated *ḥadīths*, as was indicated earlier).
3. Paying someone to recite Qur'ān over a grave, and offering the reward of the recitation to the deceased.
4. Offering the blessings of one's acts of worship (like prayer and Qur'ānic recitation) to the dead Muslims.
5. Taking Qur'ān books to the graveyards to read from them, or placing them on the graves for others to read.

THE PROPHETS AND RIGHTEOUS

1. Offering the blessings for acts of worship to the Prophet (ﷺ).
2. Traveling specifically to visit the graves of the prophets and other righteous people.
3. Asking the visitors of the graves of the prophets or other righteous people to convey their *salāms* to them.
4. Calling the visitors of the graves of the prophets or some righteous people "pilgrims".

¹ *Al-Baqarah*, *āyah* 255.

5. Touching and kissing the graves of the prophets and other righteous people.
6. Making *ṭawāf* (circumambulation) around the graves of the prophets and other righteous people.
7. Visiting Yaḥyā's (ﻳﺤﻴﻴﺎ) tomb in the Umawī Mosque (in Damascus) on Saturday mornings, and believing that doing that forty times is a means of atonement.
8. Believing that the supplications are acceptable by the graves of the prophets and other righteous people.
9. Putting curtains around the prophets' or righteous people's graves.
10. Believing that sustenance and victory are granted to a town because of the grave of a specific righteous person in it.
11. Believing that various tombs are specialized in curing specific diseases or fulfilling specific wishes.
12. Giving sanctity to trees, stone, etc., around a *walī*'s¹ tomb, and believing that anyone who removes or cuts them will be harmed.
13. Supplicating to the dead prophets or righteous people, and asking them to grant them certain wishes.
14. Tying strings on the windows of a *walī*'s tomb, and believing that the *walī* will remember them and grant their wishes.
15. Wiping clothes and handkerchiefs on the walls of the graves of the prophets and other righteous people in order to get blessings.
16. Kissing the graves of the prophets or other righteous people, or rubbing the face or body on them.

1 A person believed by some people to be righteous.

17. Going specifically to pray by the graves of the prophets or other righteous people, or turning toward them in the prayer.
18. Offering gifts to the graves of the prophets and righteous people, such as oil and candles.
19. Standing by the Prophet's (ﷺ) grave saying long supplications.
20. Gathering near the Prophet's (ﷺ) grave to complete a recitation of the entire Qur'ān or chant some poetry in his praise.
21. Asking for rain by the prophets's or righteous people's graves.
22. Giving the visitors of the Prophet's (ﷺ) grave pieces of paper with requests to be handed to him (thrown into the windows).

VARIOUS ACTS

1. Visiting the tomb of the Unknown Soldier, the Unknown Martyr, and so on.
2. Visiting the tombs of famous people (often non-Muslims), and placing flowers or wreaths on them.
3. Burying the dead in a *masjid*, or building a *masjid* on a grave.
4. Laying down carpets and mats for the visitors to sit on them.
5. Erecting a tent over a deceased's grave.
6. Offering food, drinks, and showing hospitality toward those who visit a deceased's grave.
7. Recommending entering the graveyard with the right foot and exiting with the left. ¹

1 *Sab'ūna Su'ālan fī Aḥkām il-Janā'iz* by Shaykh Muḥammad Bin Šāliḥ al-'Uthaymīn, p. 27.

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ARABIC TERMS

A number of Arabic terms are frequently used in Islāmic discussions, and seem to constitute a basic vocabulary that needs to be available to the readers of most books on Islām. We attempt to provide such terms, together with their definitions, in the following “Glossary” section. Other terms pertinent to the current book are included in the “Index” section, together with a page-reference indicating where they are defined in this book.

A: Glossary of Common Terms

Term	Definition
<i>‘Abd</i>	Slave or servant. In reference to Allāh (ﷻ), it usually means a devout worshiper (as in ‘Abd Ullāh). But it frequently refers to a “human being” because every human being is subdued by Allāh (ﷻ) whether one admits it or not. Plural: <i>‘ibād</i> or <i>‘abīd</i> .
<i>Adab</i>	Good characters or manners; etiquettes. Plural: <i>Ādāb</i> .
<i>Al-Fātiḥah</i>	The first chapter of the Qur’ān.
<i>‘Ālim</i>	A scholar or learned man in Islām.
<i>‘Allāmah</i>	Exaggerated form of “ <i>‘ālim</i> ”.
<i>Āmīn</i>	Means, “O Allāh, answer my supplication.”
<i>Anṣār</i>	“The Supporters”: the residents of al-Madīnah who supported the Prophet (ﷺ) and the <i>muhājirūn</i> .
<i>‘Aṣr</i>	Afternoon. It is usually applied to the third daily obligatory prayer, whose time extends from when the shadows are as long as the objects until sunset.

Term	Definition
<i>Athān</i>	Call to the prayer.
‘ <i>Awrah</i>	A weakness that needs covering or protection. In <i>fiqh</i> : the body-parts that must be covered from others.
<i>Āyah</i>	Literally means a miracle and a sign. The Qur’ān is a miracle in itself, and so is any portion of it. The smallest subdivision of the Qur’ānic text is thus called an <i>āyah</i> . An <i>āyah</i> is usually one sentence in length, but is sometimes longer or shorter than a complete sentence. The plural of <i>āyah</i> is <i>āyāt</i> .
<i>Āyāt</i>	Plural of <i>āyah</i> .
<i>Biḍāh</i>	Innovation in the creed or in acts of worship.
<i>Dā‘wah</i>	Call or mission.
<i>Dīn</i>	Religion. It is usually used in reference to the religion of Islām.
<i>Dīnār</i>	A valuable old currency that was made of gold.
<i>Dirham</i>	A low-value old currency that was made of silver or copper.
<i>Du‘ā</i>	Supplication.
<i>Fajr</i>	Dawn. It usually applies to the first daily obligatory prayer, whose time extends from dawn until sunrise.
<i>Farḍ</i>	Obligation.
<i>Farḍ Kifāyah</i>	A communal obligation; if some Muslims perform it, the obligation is considered fulfilled by all; and if none does, all Muslims are considered sinful.
<i>Farḍ ‘Ayn</i>	An individual obligation, i.e., an obligation that each individual must fulfill.
<i>Fatwā</i>	A religious verdict; plural: <i>fatāwā</i> or <i>fatāwī</i> .

Term	Definition
<i>Fiqh</i>	The ability to understand and derive conclusions from the available evidence. It is often applied to the subject of “Islāmic jurisprudence” that deals with the practical regulations in Islām.
<i>Fitnah</i>	Trial, test, temptation, or affliction.
<i>Ghayb</i>	Matters beyond human senses or perception.
<i>Ghusl</i>	A ritual bath required after intercourse, ejaculation, or after a women becomes clean from her menses.
<i>Ḥadīth</i>	Reports of the Prophet’s (ﷺ) sayings, actions, and approvals.
<i>Ḥajj</i>	Pilgrimage to Makkah.
<i>Ḥalāl</i>	Permissible.
<i>Ḥalqah</i>	A circle or ring. It normally refers to a study circle.
<i>Ḥarām</i>	Prohibited.
<i>Ḥasan</i>	Good or acceptable. This is usually mentioned when indicating the degree of authenticity of some reports.
<i>Ḥijāb</i>	Cover. It usually refers to a woman’s clothing that covers all of her body except her face and hands.
<i>Hijrah</i>	Migration. It usually refers to migration from Makkah to al-Madīnah.
<i>‘Ibād</i>	Plural of “‘abd”.
<i>‘Īd</i>	A day of celebration in Islām. There are two annual ‘īds (<i>al-fīṭr</i> and <i>al-Aḍḥā</i>) and one weekly ‘īd (the day of <i>Jumū‘ah</i>).
<i>Ijmā‘</i>	Consensus of the scholars.

Term	Definition
<i>Ijtihād</i>	Exerting <i>juhd</i> (maximum possible effort) to reach the right conclusion based on the available evidence.
<i>Imām</i>	A leader or distinguished Islāmīc scholar. It is often applied to the leader of prayer.
<i>Īmān</i>	Belief or conviction.
<i>‘Ishā’</i>	Night. It is usually applied to the fifth and last daily obligatory prayer, whose time extends from the disappearance of the red light from the horizon until the middle of the night (which is half way between sunset and dawn).
<i>Isnād</i>	Chain of narrators of a <i>ḥadīth</i> .
<i>Jāhiliyyah</i>	The era of extreme ignorance (<i>jahl</i>) and disbelief that preceded the advent of the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ).
<i>Jamā‘ah</i>	A Muslim congregation or gathering. It is often applied to the congregational prayers. <i>Al-Jamā‘ah</i> (the <i>Jamā‘ah</i>) refers to the original community of the <i>ṣaḥābah</i> and their true followers through the ages.
<i>Janāzah</i>	A funeral or a deceased’s prepared body.
<i>Jannah</i>	The gardens of paradise.
<i>Jihād</i>	Striving or fighting for Allāh’s cause.
<i>Jinn</i>	An invisible creation that Allāh (ﷻ) made from fire and smoke, sometimes translated as “demons”. Satan is one of the <i>jinnns</i> .
<i>Jumu‘ah</i>	Friday. It also applies to the Friday prayer.
<i>Kāfir</i>	A person who practices <i>kufr</i> . Plural: “ <i>kuffār</i> ”.

Term	Definition
<i>Khalīfah</i>	Derives from <i>khalafa</i> , which means “succeeded” or “followed”. It commonly refers to a Muslim ruler who succeeded the Prophet (ﷺ) in leading the Muslims. Plural: <i>khulafāʾ</i> .
<i>Khamr</i>	Alcoholic beverages.
<i>Khilāfah</i>	Successorship. It usually refers to the period of rule of a <i>khalīfah</i> .
<i>Kufr</i>	Disbelief or rejection of faith.
<i>Khuṭbah</i>	Speech or sermon.
<i>Maghrib</i>	Sunset. It is usually applied to the fourth daily obligatory prayer, whose time extends from sunset until the red light disappears from the horizon.
<i>Makrūh</i>	An act that is disapproved in Islām.
<i>Maḥram</i>	A person who is closely related to another in such a way as to be permanently prohibited from marrying him or her. This relationship results from blood, suckling, or marriage ties. A woman’s <i>maḥrams</i> are: her father, grandfather, sons, grandsons, brothers, immediate paternal and maternal uncles, father in law, sons in law, suckling sons, suckling brothers, etc. Examples of non- <i>maḥrams</i> : first cousins, step brothers, brothers in law, etc.
<i>Masjid</i>	A place designated for <i>sujūd</i> . It usually refers to a mosque.
<i>Mathhab</i>	Way or approach. It usually refers to one of the four Islāmic schools of <i>fiqh</i> established by the Four <i>Imāms</i> : Abū Ḥanīfah an-Nuʿmān Bin Thābit, Mālik Bin Anas, Muḥammad Bin Idrīs ash-Shāfiʿī, and Aḥmad Bin Ḥanbal — May Allāh bestow His mercy on them all.

Term	Definition
<i>Minbar</i>	Steps (normally three) mounted by an <i>imām</i> in a <i>masjid</i> for delivering a <i>khuṭbah</i> .
<i>Muhājir</i>	A migrator - one who undertakes <i>hijrah</i> . Plural: <i>muhājirūn</i> or <i>muhājirīn</i> . It usually refers to a <i>ṣaḥābī</i> who migrated from Makkah to al-Madīnah.
<i>Mujāhid</i>	A person who performs <i>jihād</i> . Plural: <i>mujāhidūn</i> or <i>mujāhidīn</i> .
<i>Munkar</i>	Disapproved; rejected.
<i>Muṣallā</i>	A place designated for <i>ṣalāh</i> . Most commonly, it applies to the grounds where the prayers of <i>ʿīd</i> and <i>janāzah</i> are performed.
<i>Mushrik</i>	A person who practices <i>shirk</i> .
<i>Nafl</i>	Extra, voluntary, or supererogatory deeds.
<i>Qadar</i>	Allāh's decree and measure.
<i>Qiblah</i>	The direction of al-Kaʿbah in Makkah.
<i>Qudusī</i>	Holy. A <i>qudusī ḥadīth</i> is a <i>ḥadīth</i> that the Prophet (ﷺ) relates from his Lord (ﷻ).
<i>Rakʿah</i>	A full prayer unit, containing one <i>rukūʿ</i> . Plural: <i>rakʿāt</i> .
<i>Ramaḍān</i>	The month of fasting. It is the ninth month of the Islāmic lunar calendar.
<i>Rukūʿ</i>	The act of bowing in the prayer. It derives from the verb <i>rakaʿa</i> which means "bowed down".
<i>Ṣadaqah</i>	Charity.
<i>Ṣaḥābah</i>	The Prophet's companions; singular: <i>ṣaḥābī</i> .
<i>Ṣaḥīḥ</i>	True or authentic.

Term	Definition
<i>Salaf</i>	The early righteous pioneers and scholars of Islām—the <i>ṣahābah</i> and their true followers.
<i>Ṣalāh</i>	The prayer.
<i>Salām</i>	Peace. It also means the greeting with peace (<i>as-salāmu ʿalaykum</i>) among the Muslims.
<i>Sanad</i>	Same as <i>isnād</i> .
<i>Shahādah</i>	Testimony; it is mostly applied to the testimony of Islām: “There is no true deity but Allāh, and Muḥammad is Allāh’s Messenger.” Also, it is often applied to the most truthful form of physical testimony, which is martyrdom in Allāh’s (ﷺ) cause.
<i>Shahīd</i>	A person martyred for Allāh’s cause. Feminine: <i>Shahīdah</i> .
<i>Shām</i>	General Middle-East area of Palestine, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon, including the major cities of Jerusalem and Damascus.
<i>Sharʿ</i> or <i>Sharīʿah</i>	Derive from <i>sharāʿa</i> , which means “legislated”. They are usually used in reference to the Islāmic Law. “ <i>Sharīʿ</i> ” means a legislated or permissible matter in Islām. And “ <i>ash-Shāriʿ</i> ” is the Legislator: Allāh (ﷻ).
<i>Shaykh</i>	Literally means an old man. It is commonly used as a title of respect for a man of better Islāmic knowledge. It is also used in some Arab countries as a title of authority similar to “prince”.
<i>Shayṭān</i>	Satan.
<i>Shirk</i>	Polytheism, ascribing divinity to other than Allāh, or joining partners with Him in worship. A pagan or a person who practices <i>shirk</i> is a <i>mushrik</i> .
<i>Ṣiyām</i>	Fasting.

Term	Definition
<i>Sujūd</i>	The act of prostration in the prayer.
Sunnah	Way, guidance, or teachings. Most commonly, it refers to the Prophet's (ﷺ) way and guidance.
<i>Sūrah</i>	Qur'ānic chapter.
<i>Tābi'ī</i>	Literally, follower. It normally refers to a disciple of the <i>ṣaḥābah</i> . Plural: <i>tābi'ūn</i> or <i>tābi'in</i> .
<i>Tafsīr</i>	Qur'ānic commentaries and interpretations.
<i>Takbīr</i>	Saying, "Allāhu Akbar — Allāh is the greatest."
<i>Tahlīl</i>	Saying, "Lā ilāha illallāh — There is no true god except Allāh."
<i>Taqlīd</i>	Imitation, especially without knowledge.
<i>Taqwā</i>	Fearing Allāh and revering him.
<i>Tasbīḥ</i>	Saying, "Subḥān Allāh — Exalted is Allāh."
<i>Tashahhud</i>	Pronouncing the <i>Shahādah</i> . It is mostly applied to the part of the prayer where one sits, pronounces the <i>Shahādah</i> , invokes <i>ṣalāh</i> upon the Messenger, and supplicates.
<i>Tayammum</i>	A symbolic ablution performed by wiping clean dust, instead of water, over the hands (to the wrists) and face.
<i>Taslīm</i>	Saying <i>salām</i> , especially to conclude the prayer.
<i>Tawḥīd</i>	Belief in Allāh's oneness — that He is the only Creator and Lord of the creation, He is the only God who deserves to be worshiped, and He possesses the most excellent and perfect attributes.
<i>Thikr</i>	Remembering Allāh and mentioning Him.
' <i>Ulamā'</i>	Plural of "‘ālim".

Term	Definition
<i>Ummah</i>	Community, nation, or followers.
<i>Wahy</i>	Revelation or inspiration.
<i>Wājib</i>	Obligatory or required.
<i>Witr</i>	Odd numbered. The entire night prayer is sometimes called <i>witr</i> because the total number of its <i>rak'āt</i> is odd.
<i>Wuḍū'</i>	Ablution for the prayer. It consists of rinsing the mouth, blowing the nose, washing the face, washing the forearms to the elbows, wiping over the head (including the ears), and washing the feet up to the ankles.
<i>Zakāh</i>	Obligatory charity.
<i>Zinā</i>	Adultery or fornication.
<i>Ẓuhr</i>	Noon. It is usually applied to the second daily obligatory prayer, whose time extends from the sun's crossing the zenith until the time when the shadows are as long as the objects.

B: Index

<i>Al-Baqī'</i>	26	<i>Khalīl</i>	265
<i>Al-Ḥabashah</i>	162	<i>Laḥd</i>	215
<i>Al-Ḥūr ul-'Īn</i>	74	<i>Mahr</i>	42
<i>An-Najāshī</i>	51	<i>Mawqūf</i>	137
<i>'Arafah</i>	279	<i>Minbar</i>	52
<i>'Āshūrā'</i>	278	<i>Munāfiq</i>	227
<i>Āyat ul-Kursī</i>	280	<i>Mursal</i>	184
<i>Bay'ah</i>	46	<i>Mutawātir</i>	210
<i>Dalasa</i>		<i>Najis</i>	106
<i>Mudallis</i>	177	<i>Na'y</i>	49
<i>Dayyūth</i>	92	<i>Qīrāṭ</i>	145
<i>Fājir</i>	153	<i>Ṣalāt ul-ghā'ib</i>	162
<i>Ghayrah</i>	92	<i>Ṣā'</i>	30
<i>Ḥadd</i>	154	<i>Sijjīn</i>	237
<i>Ḥawḍ</i>	152	<i>Suḥūr</i>	188
<i>Ḥidād</i>	40	<i>Talbīnah</i>	61
<i>'Iddah</i>	42	<i>Talbiyah</i>	25
<i>Iḥrām</i>	25	<i>Talqīn</i>	19
<i>Iḥtisāb</i>	34	<i>Tarbiyah</i>	xvii
<i>'Illiyūn</i>	232	<i>Taṣfiyah</i>	xvii
<i>Iḥkhir</i>	120	<i>Tashmīt</i>	129
<i>Izār</i>	96	<i>Tayammum</i>	279
<i>Janābah</i>	102	<i>Walī</i>	154, 281
<i>Junub</i>	102	<i>Wasq</i>	30
<i>Kayf</i>	xxxi		

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