

Lessons in The Fiqh of Funerals

(Related to women)

Sickness

Death

Washing

Shrouding

Condolences

Innovations



By: Umm Ziyad

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Preface

All praise to Allâh, we praise Him and seek protection from Him. We ask for His forgiveness; we seek refuge in Allâh from the evils of ourselves and from our misdeeds. Whoever is guided by Allâh none can mislead, and whomever He misleads none can guide. I bear the testimony that there is none worthy of worship except Allâh alone, no partner unto Him; I equally bear the testimony that Muhammad is indeed His slave and messenger – may the peace and blessing of Allâh be upon him.

To proceed:

Verily the guidance of our Prophet – may the peace and blessings of Allâh be upon him – as regards funeral rites is the best. Among his guidance about funeral is establishing servitude for the Lord – the Mighty and Most Sublime – in the best way; such as returning all affairs to Him, accepting that none can stop His preordainment, and that all we have will vanish, only that which is with Allâh will remain. This is why he (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) made it a practice for his Ummah that they should praise Allâh and say ‘Innâ lillâh wa innâ ilayhi râji’ûn (‘we are from Allâh and to Him we shall return’) [when death occurs], and that Allâh is pleased with. This does not negate shedding some tears, showing some sadness, etc. Indeed he (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) was the most submissive to the decree of his Lord among the creatures, and the most praising of Him, among them. That was why he (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) cried on the day his son, Ibrâhim, died; as compassion and mercy for the child; and to show tenderheartedness over him. His heart was filled with pleasure and thankfulness to Allâh – the Most High and Most Sublime; while the tongue was busy with His remembrance and praise.

He (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) also handed down for his Ummah, rulings pertaining to how to take care of a person’s sickness, remind him of the Hereafter, the command that he should make wasiyyah (Voluntary Will) and repentance. He (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) commands those present when a person is dying that they should remind him to say Lâ Ilâha Illa Allâh (There is none worthy of worship except Allâh) so that it may be his last words. And that when he dies, they should treat him well and prepare him to (meet) Allâh in the best of state by washing and shrouding him in a pure and white cloth. He (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) also commands them to stand and make themselves into rows thereby

praising Allâh and seeking forgiveness for the deceased; they should ask Allâh to forgive, pardon and show him mercy. They should accompany him to his grave, stand there seeking steadfastness for him because he will be in great need of that. Then they can thereafter visit his grave, seek peace for him, and make supplications for him after his death just as a living person will do for his friend in life.

Many innovated practices and aspects of inherited custom have crept into the matters of the [Islamic] funeral such that they have spoilt the Deen for the people. Therefore people need to be reminded as regards the correct and lawful rites of funerals, the various innovations that have come in as well as their danger be explained to them especially some rulings of funerals that specifically have to do with women. This effort has become imperative so that the Sunnah can be upheld and innovation thrashed.

May Allâh permit the completion of this soonest such that all other rulings will be touched.

Whatever is correct here is from Allâh; whatever is a mistake is from me and Shaytân. Any advice on whatever is specifically necessary to be corrected is welcomed. May Allâh reward you all in the best way.

May the Lord bestow peace and blessing upon the leader of the first and the later; the end of our supplications is praise to Allâh the Lord of the worlds.

Written by your sister in Islam,
Umm Ziyâd.

Foreword

Enjoining Women to Wash and Shroud Whoever Dies Amongst the Muslim Women Especially Their Close Relations

In the Name of Allâh, the Most Compassionate the Most Merciful. All praise to Allâh, may the peace and blessing be upon the Messenger of Allâh.

To proceed,

I have read the work entitled Rulings of Funerals written by our noble sister, Umm Ziyâd, we have found it a beneficial and useful work on the subject. I ask Allâh to reward her best, and that He use the work to benefit Islam and Muslims.

I want to use this medium to say to all Muslim sisters:

Know, O my Muslim sister, that every soul shall taste death. Allâh the Most High says:

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

“Everyone shall taste death. and only on the Day of Resurrection shall you be paid your wages in full. and whoever is removed away from the Fire and admitted to Paradise, he indeed is successful. the life of this world is only the enjoyment of deception.” [Aal-Imrân: 185]

Know, O my Muslim sister – may Allâh bless you – that when a Muslim man or woman dies, then it becomes obligatory that the deceased should be prepared for the grave. It is from the Sunnah that the close relatives of the deceased should carry out the duty of washing, shrouding and burying the moment it is confirmed that the deceased is actually dead. Washing the deceased – whether a male or female – as well as shrouding him or her is an act of worship to Allâh and a responsibility placed down by the Sharī’ah, and in fact, it is from the rights Muslims owe one another.

Much impurity would appear on a Muslim when he dies; and such must be kept as a secret and not be revealed. It is also obligatory that he should be washed as prescribed in the Sharī’ah. His nakedness should be covered, and that

only the people whom his death has necessitated their presence should be present when he is being washed. The washer should be trustworthy, honest and pious; people that will spread the good they see, and conceal the bad they notice.

Therefore, the best people to wash and shroud the dead person are the most pious and knowledgeable among his close relations, especially when it is known that the manner of washing the dead is very simple; it is closer than the way a living person is washed.

It should be known that when the close relatives of a dead Muslim man or woman stand away from washing him or her, such that the matter is left in the hands of those who do not know how to properly wash the dead, or in the hands of untrustworthy persons, who will steal looks at the dead person's nakedness, or will do that out of their ignorance with respect to the rulings of the Sharī'ah; disobedience to Allāh is what will result from that as regards the obligation of this act of worship.

Also from that, the failure of the female close relations of a dead Muslim woman from washing (and shrouding her) will lead to two things: firstly, their forsaking an act of worship they are in the best position to carry out since the obligation falls upon them first; and secondly, their exposing the dead woman to unlawful glances at some parts of her body when she is being washed, or to talks about what appeared when she is being washed. These are things that are expected to be kept secret.

Therefore, we want to advise our sisters to promptly rise to the responsibility of washing whomever dies among the Muslim women always in obedience to Allāh and His Messenger (salallahu alayhi wa sallam), and as a way of discharging a duty they owe the dead woman.

May Allāh make you attain what is most pleasing to Him. Praise to Allāh the Lord of the worlds; peace and blessing upon the seal of the prophets and the messengers.

Written by: Sheikh Fat'hul-Baab bin Muhammad Khidr-

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May Allāh pardon him; forgive his parents and all the Muslims.

Let's Believe for an Hour!

Remembrance of Death...Life to the Hearts

All praise to Allâh alone, no partner unto Him; we praise Him and seek His guidance, we praise Him for all goodness, we thank Him and we do not disbelieve in Him. We disown and forsake whosoever disbelieves in Him. I bear the testimony that there is none worthy of worship except Allâh alone, no partner unto Him; I equally bear the testimony that Muhammad is indeed His slave and messenger. He – may the peace and blessing of Allâh be upon him – delivered the message, rendered the trust and advised the Ummah. He carried out the utmost Jihâd in the path of Allâh. He left us upon a luminescent path whose night is like its day, none will stray from it except a doomed person. He (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) did not see a good path except that he guided his Ummah to it, and an evil one except that he (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) warned his Ummah from it. May the peace and enormous blessing of Allâh be upon him, his family, his wives and his Companions until the Day of Resurrection.

To proceed:

My brothers in Islam, fear Allâh the Most High as He should be feared. That is the enjoyment of Allâh upon the first and the last of the people; He said in His Definite Book:

﴿وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ ۗ وَلَقَدْ وَصَّيْنَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰتٰوْا الْكِتٰبَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَاِيَّاكُمْ اَنْ اَتَّقُوْا اللّٰهَ ۚ وَاِنْ تَكْفُرُوْا فَاِنَّ لِلّٰهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ ۗ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ غَنِيًّا حَمِيْدًا ﴿النِّسَاءُ ١٣١﴾

“And to Allâh belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth. and verily, we have recommended to the people of the Scripture before you, and to you that you (all) fear Allâh, and keep your duty to him, but if you disbelieve, then unto Allâh belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth, and Allâh is ever Rich (Free of All wants), Worthy of All praise.” [An-Nisâ: 131]

My bothers in Islam, the path of Taqwa is difficult. The merchandise is costly; it requires the utmost effort and assiduity from us. We will rest from the toiling of life when we achieve and stand by it, in a House of no cry and weariness, ‘In a seat of Truth (i.e. Paradise), near the Omnipotent King.’

Remembrance of death is one of what aids in the fear of Allâh; many of us however abhors it. He will say to you: ‘We don’t want you to disturb our lives.’

Sub'hânaLlâh! By Allâh, if we tend to forget death, it will not forget us. If we busy ourselves from it, it will not busy itself from us.

Allâh the Most High said:

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

“Say (to them): "Verily, the death from which you flee will surely meet you, then you will be sent back to (Allâh), the All-Knower of the unseen and the seen, and He will tell you what you used to do." [Al-Jumu'ah: 8]

Yes, death is not behind us rather it is in our front. We are indeed making steps towards it; the steps are imperative. We shall very soon get to that hour Allâh had decreed we would leave this world.

Allâh has stated clearly in the Book that death is imperative upon every soul. Therefore, where shall we run to, from the preordainment of Allâh? We are from Him to Him! All the earth is His, all the judgement is His!

Allâh the Most High says:

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

“Everyone shall taste death, and only on the Day of Resurrection shall you be paid your wages in full. And whoever is removed away from the Fire and admitted to Paradise, he indeed is successful. The life of this world is only the enjoyment of deception.” [Aal-Imrân: 185]

Allâh has never decreed that a person would stay in life forever; even His Prophets and Messengers. If that has been the case, the first to merit that would have been the best of Allâh's select, Muhammad – may the peace and blessing of Allâh be upon him, but Allâh – the Mighty and Most Sublime – took his life. He even told him he (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) would die while he was alive:

﴿ إِنَّكَ مَيِّتٌ وَإِنَّهُمْ مَيِّتُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾ الزمر ٣٠

“Verily, you (O Muhammad) will die and verily, they (too) will die.” [Az-Zumar: 30]

What a reminder!

Jibrîl – alayhis salaam – came to him to remind him (salallahu alayhi wa sallam):

"يَا مُحَمَّدُ عِشْ مَا شِئْتَ فَإِنَّكَ مَيِّتٌ، وَأَحِبِّ مَنْ شِئْتَ فَإِنَّكَ مُفَارِقُهُ وَاَعْمَلْ مَا شِئْتَ فَإِنَّكَ مَجْزِيٌّ بِهِ وَاَعْلَمْ أَنَّ شَرَفَ الْمُؤْمِنِ قِيَامُهُ بِاللَّيْلِ وَعِزُّهُ اسْتِغْنَاؤُهُ عَنِ النَّاسِ" رواه حاكم

‘O Muhammad, live in life as you wish, you will surely die. Love whomever you want, you will surely part with him. Carry out deeds as you may wish, you will be rewarded over them. Know that, the honour of a believer lies in his rising in the night (for prayers) and his prestige, in his self-sufficiency from the people.’

The Prophet (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) would not leave his Companions without explaining to them what the life of a Muslim ought to be, and without reminding them of the need not to rely on the world. The Prophet (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) was indeed a mercy and guide (to the Ummah), he was a trustworthy warner. He (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) would choose the best time to counsel his Companions and explain the reality of this world to them; and that it is not the final abode though what is apparent thereof – of greenness and beauty – is tempting and deluding. It will vanish away with all its goodies; like a green flower that will soon wither away with its good scent.

That is the world that has deluded lots of people and got them busy from the Hereafter such that they took it as an abode and a station. There is no bliss or endless ease therein yet people will not cease to be deceived by the world, striving and toiling to attain its splendor until the Command of Allâh shall come and the reality of its falsity will become glaring to them, and that they had been striving towards a mirage.

Ibn ‘Umar – may Allâh be pleased with father and son – said: the Messenger of Allâh (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) held my two shoulders and said:

"كُنْ فِي الدُّنْيَا كَأَنَّكَ غَرِيبٌ، أَوْ عَابِرُ سَبِيلٍ" رواه بخاري

‘Be in this world as if you are a stranger or wayfarer.’

Thereafter, Ibn ‘Umar – may Allâh be pleased with father and son – used to say:

‘When you attain the evening time, do not expect the morn, and when you attain the morning time, do not expect the evening. Take from your health for your sickness, and from your living for your death.’

The Prophet (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) used to remind his Companions of death; he used to say:

" أَكْثَرُوا ذِكْرَ هَادِمِ اللّٰذَاتِ مَوْتًا، فَإِنَّهُ مِمَّا يَذْكُرُهُ أَحَدٌ فِي ضَيْقٍ مِنْ عَيْشٍ إِلَّا وَسَّعَهُ عَلَيْهِ، وَلَا ذَكَرَهُ فِي سَعَةٍ إِلَّا ضَيَّقَهَا عَلَيْهِ " رواه البيهقي

‘Be much in the remembrance of the destroyer of enjoyment: death. None will remember it in a state of penury except that it will wide it for him, and will not remember it in a state of opulence except that it will constrain it over him.’

The Messenger of Allâh (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) also said:

" اسْتَحْيُوا مِنَ اللَّهِ حَقَّ الْحَيَاءِ ".

‘Be bashful of Allâh as necessary.’

We replied: ‘O Messenger of Allâh, we are bashful (of Him) and all praise to Allâh. He (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) said:

قال: " لَيْسَ ذَلِكَ، وَلَكِنَّ اسْتِحْيَاءَ مِنَ اللَّهِ حَقَّ الْحَيَاءِ: أَنْ تَحْفَظَ الرَّأْسَ وَمَا وَعَى، وَتَحْفَظَ الْبَطْنَ وَمَا حَوَى، وَتَتَذَكَّرَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْبَلَى، وَمَنْ أَرَادَ الْآخِرَةَ، تَرَكَ زِينَةَ الدُّنْيَا، فَمَنْ فَعَلَ ذَلِكَ، فَقَدْ اسْتَحْيَا مِنَ اللَّهِ حَقَّ الْحَيَاءِ " رواه أحمد

‘Not that; the rightful bashfulness towards Allâh is for the head to guard what it stores there and the tummy what it holds there, and that you should remember death and when you will become rotten. Whoever desires the Hereafter will forsake the beauty of the world. Whoever does that has indeed showed bashfulness to Allâh as it is necessary.’

The past pious generation of this Ummah (As-Salaf As-Sâlih) harkened to this command such that they never forsook the remembrance of death even in the state of ease and enjoyment, which made them wax stronger in obedience (to Allâh) and faraway from disobedience. Thus the world did not dominate their thoughts rather it was beneath their feet, and with their ascetic attitude in life, the world came to them as something lowly in their sight.

Ibrâhim at-Taymî (may Allâh bestow mercy on him) said: 'Two things have cut off the enjoyment of the world from me: remembrance of death and the remembrance of when I will stand in front of Allâh the Most High.'

'Umar bn 'Abdil-'Azîz (may Allâh bestow mercy on him) was such that anytime he remembered death he would quiver as birds do. He would gather scholars in every night, and they would remind one another of death, the Resurrection, and the Hereafter; they would all cry as if someone had died in their midst.

Ad-Daqqâq (may Allâh bestow mercy on him) said: 'Whoever remembers death much shall be honoured with three things: quick repentance, contentment of the heart and activeness in worship. Whoever forgets death shall be punished with three things: delay of repentance, discontentment of the heart and laziness in worship.'

Mutarrif bn 'Abdillâh Ash-Shikhhîr (may Allâh bestow mercy on him): 'Death causes sorrow to the people of enjoyment; you should rather seek a bliss that has no death.'

Al-Hasan [Al-Basrî] (may Allâh bestow mercy on him) said: 'Death exposes the world; thus it leaves no joy for any human there.'

That is death! None will truly remember it except that he learns from it, fears Allah, knows that he is nothing and abandons the fleeting world.

Forgetting death is a plain misguidance and a great trial. None will forget death except that he will transgress and follow his whims.

The Salaf (the righteous predecessors) were afraid of forgetting death. Sa'îd bn Jubayr (may Allâh bestow mercy on him) said: 'I fear that if my heart parts with the remembrance of death, it will cause my destruction.'

By Allâh, where are we when it comes to remembrance of death? By Allâh, excessive desire in the life of this world has deceived us that we forget the matters of the Hereafter such that we live our life as if we be here forever!

I swear by Him in Whose Hands my soul is, death is very close to us, life is shorter than we think. But why are we so neglectful? Till when shall we remain like this?

Shall we continue to play and forget death until it knocks at our doors? Or our eyes become still? Or soul rattles at our throats? Do we know what will become our end that we rejoice and play about? Do we know if we shall be led into Jannah, or that we shall receive its tidings that we become successful? Or that we shall be pushed into the Fire where we will earn woes? We seek refuge in Allâh.

Mu'âdh bn Jabal (may Allâh be pleased with him) said: 'The believer will not see any rest or safety until he puts the Bridge of Hell behind him.'

'Umar bn Al-Khattâb (may Allâh be pleased with him) used to say: 'Every passing day people say: so-and-so has died; a day is coming when they will say: 'Umar has died.' 'Umar had indeed died. It was said about him: He has died. We are waiting for when that will be said about us; no escape.

There can be some warm tears when a person remembers death, and some fear will shake us for some moment. Then gradually after sometime, we forget everything and get back to what used to be the order of the day and we become neglectful again. This is because the light of our hearts has been blotted by the love of the world and its cravings. This is also because the fear is not profound; it goes off the moment we get relieved. That is not the desired remembrance. The remembrance of death that is desired is the type that softens the hearts and motivates the limbs such that they will act upon the obedience of Allâh and live because of worship of Allâh alone.

Al-Ghazâlî (may Allâh bestow mercy on him): said: 'Collect your heart over three things: during the recitation of the Qur'ân, in Salâh and when you remember death. If you can't get it in these states then ask Allâh to provide you with another heart because you lack one.'

Have our hearts woken up from their slumber before the passage of time? Do we relate, as wayfarers, with the people who live in this world? If death comes, are we obedient enough to Allâh to say we are happy to meet it, and are we desirous of it that we can say when it arrives: you are welcome; what a friend that comes when we are not covetous of the world?

One of the wise men wrote to a friend of his: 'O brother, be wary of death in this life before you go to another life when you will call for death and you won't find it.'

Abu Al Atahiya (A Poet) said:

Death is a door which every being will pass through

I wish I knew the house to which that door will lead.

The House there is of bliss if you but act in which that pleases the Lord;

but if you disobey then it is Hell

They are two places no other one for men

So see what choice you make for yourself.

My brethren, indeed the key to a better life is remembrance of the Hereafter; death is the first of its doors and it is enough as a reminder and hitter. Verily there is in the remembrance of death, enlivening of hearts. So be wary of causing death to the hearts via neglectfulness and forgetfulness of death.

O Allâh, enliven our hearts through Your remembrance, and our lifespan through Your love and the love of those who love You, and the love of every deed that will make us closer to Your love.

May the peace and blessing of Allâh be upon the leader of the first and the last of the people. The end of our supplications is praise to Allâh the Lord of the worlds.

[Chapter One]

Sickness

Sickness is from the preordainment of Allâh – the Mighty and the Most Sublime. It is correct that what is apparent in sickness is that it brings pains and grief but there are lots of benefits and usefulness beneath every sickness: It makes the sick person attach himself to his Creator such that he will rest his hope in Him and make supplications to Him. Sickness removes self-conceit and pride from the sick person and serves as a means of expiation of his sins which will make him rise in status until he meets Allâh with no sins.

The Messenger of Allâh (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) said:

" وَلَا يَزَالُ بُلَاءٌ بِالْمُؤْمِنِ فِي أَهْلِهِ وَمَالِهِ وَوَقْدِهِ حَتَّى يَلْقَى اللَّهَ وَمَا عَلَيْهِ خَطِيئَةٌ "

‘A believer will not cease to encounter trials in his family, wealth and children until he will meet Allâh without sins.’

What is Obligatory upon the Sick Person?

1. Patience and Being Pleased with Allâh’s Decree.

The difference between patience and pleasure: when one is patient it means one hates what has happened at the point in time, but one will not carry out what may oppose the Shar’ah or negate the sense of patience. When one is however pleased with Allâh’s decree, one does not hate what has happened at the point in time, thus both what has happened and yet to happen will be at the same level with one. That is the difference between patience and pleasure.

Due to the foregoing, majority of the people of knowledge do say: patience is obligatory while pleasure is recommended, and it is a level above patience.

The Messenger of Allâh (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) also said:

" عَجَبًا لِأَمْرِ الْمُؤْمِنِ إِنَّ أَمْرَهُ كُلَّهُ خَيْرٌ وَبِئْسَ لَكَ لِأَحَدٍ إِلَّا لِلْمُؤْمِنِ إِنَّ أَصَابَتُهُ سَرَاءً شَكَرَ فَكَانَتْ خَيْرًا. وَإِنْ أَصَابَتُهُ ضَرَاءً صَبَرَ فَكَانَتْ خَيْرًا. " رواه مُسْلِمٌ.

‘The affair of a believer is wondrous, for all his matter is good for him. None will have that benefit except a believer. If a good thing happens to him, he will be thankful and that will be better for him; if any bad thing happens to him, he will be patient and that will be better for him.’

2. That He Should Be in A State Between Fear and Hope.

Anas (may Allâh be pleased with him) reported that the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) entered upon a young man in throes of death, he (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said: ‘How are you feeling?’ The young man replied: ‘By Allâh, O Messenger of Allâh, I am hopeful of Allâh but fearful of my sins.’ The Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) then said:

" لا يَجْتَمِعَانِ فِي قَلْبِ عَبْدٍ فِي مِثْلِ هَذَا مَوْطِنٍ إِلَّا وَأَعْطَاهُ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ الَّذِي يَرْجُو وَأَمْنَهُ مِمَّا يَخَافُ "

These two things will not meet in the heart of a slave in this state except that Allâh will grant him what he desires and save him from what he is afraid of.’

At-Tir’midhî recorded the hadith with a sound chain.

Also on the authority of Jâbir (may Allâh be pleased with him), he heard the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) say three days before his death:

" لَا يَمُوتَنَّ أَحَدُكُمْ إِلَّا وَهُوَ يُحْسِنُ ظَنًّا بِاللَّهِ " ، أَخْرَجَهُ أَحْمَدُ ، وَمُسْلِمٌ ، وَأَبُو دَاوُدَ

‘None of you should die except that he should ensure that he has a good thought about his Lord.’

3. It Is Not Permissible for the Sick Person to Long for Death.

The reason for that is the hadith of Umm Al-Fadl (may Allâh be pleased with her) that the Prophet (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) entered upon Al-‘Abbâs (may Allâh be pleased with him) while the latter was complaining of pains such that he longed for death. The Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said to him:

" يَا عَبَّاسُ، يَا عَمَّ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ، لَا تَتَمَنَّ الْمَوْتَ، إِنْ كُنْتَ مُحْسِنًا تَزِدَادُ إِحْسَانًا إِلَى إِحْسَانِكَ خَيْرٌ لَكَ، وَإِنْ كُنْتَ مُسِيئًا فَإِنْ تُؤَخَّرَ تَسْتَعْتِبُ خَيْرٌ لَكَ، فَلَا تَتَمَنَّ الْمَوْتَ " رواه أحمد

‘O Abbas,O uncle of the messenger of Allaah, do not long for death because if you are upon good deeds and you are given more years, you will be able to carry out more good deeds, and that will be better for you. And if you are upon evil deeds, and you are given more years and you later repent from your evil deeds that is better for you. So do not long for death.’

Also on the authority of Anas (may Allâh be pleased with him), he said the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

" لَا يَتَمَنَّيَنَّ أَحَدُكُمْ الْمَوْتَ لُضْرٍ أَصَابَهُ، فَإِنْ كَانَ لَا بُدَّ فَاعْلَمْ، فَلْيَقُلْ: اللَّهُمَّ أَحْيِنِي مَا كَانَتْ الْحَيَاةُ خَيْرًا لِي، وَتَوَفَّنِي إِذَا كَانَتْ الْوَفَاةُ خَيْرًا لِي . مُتَّفَقٌ عَلَيْهِ.

‘None of you should call for death over any pain that has befallen him. If he must long for it, let him say the following prayers: Allahumma ahyinî mâ kânatil-hayâtu khayran lî, wa tawaffanî idhâ kânatil-wafâtu khayran lî [O Allâh cause me to live if living is better for me, and cause me to die if death is better for me].’

4. Returning Back the Trusts If That Is Possible Otherwise He Should Make Some Last Words About It

On the authority of Abû Hurairah (may Allâh be pleased with him) who said that the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

" مَنْ كَانَتْ لَهُ مَظْلَمَةٌ لِأَخِيهِ مِنْ عَرَضِهِ أَوْ شَيْءٍ فَلْيَتَحَلَّلْهُ مِنْهُ يَوْمَ قَبْلِ أَنْ لَا يَكُونَ دِينَارٌ وَلَا دِرْهَمٌ إِنْ كَانَ لَهُ عَمَلٌ صَالِحٌ أُخِذَ مِنْهُ بِقَدْرِ مَظْلَمَتِهِ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَكُنْ لَهُ حَسَنَاتٌ أُخِذَ مِنْ سَيِّئَاتِهِ صَاحِبِهِ فَحُمِلَ عَلَيْهِ " رواه البخاري

‘Whoever has his brother’s right with him such as honour or any other thing should absolve himself from it today before a Day where no dinar or dirham will be useful; if he has some good deeds, the right will be commensurably taken from him, and if he has none, some of the evil deeds of the owner of the right will be taken and heaped on the other person.’

5. Hastening to Write Down the Wasiyyah [Voluntary Will]

On the authority of Ibn ‘Umar (may Allâh be pleased with both), the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

" مَا حَقُّ أَمْرِي مُسْلِمًا شَيْءٌ يُوصِي فِيهِ بَيْتًا أَبْلَغَ إِلَّا وَوَصِيَّتُهُ عِنْدَهُ مَكْتُوبَةٌ . "

‘It is not permissible for a Muslim man who has some things to say before he dies, then passes some two nights without having his wasiyyah written with him.’

Among what he could state in his wasiyyah is to enjoin his family that they should follow the Sunnah in the matter of his burial.

Since innovations in the Deen are very common with many people of this time especially in matters that have to do with funerals, it therefore becomes obligatory for a Muslim to state in his wasiyyah that his burial should be carried out according to the Sunnah. This is what some people in the gone pious generations did:

Abû Mûsa (may Allâh be pleased with him) said when he was to die: ‘When you carry my corpse, be hasty with it; do not let an incense burner follow me, and do not place anything in the niche of my grave that will prevent the sand from touching me, and do not make any construction over my grave. And you are my witnesses that I am free from every Hâliqah, Sâliqah and Khâriqah.’ People then asked him: ‘Did you hear anything about this (from the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam))?’ He (may Allâh be pleased with him) said: ‘Yes, I heard it from the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam).’

Al-Hâliqah is the woman who shaves the hair of her head at the time of trial.

As-Sâliqah is the woman who raises her voice at the time of trial.

Al-Khâriqah is the woman who tears her cloth at the time of trial.

‘Aamir bn Sa’d bn Abî Waqqâs (may Allâh be pleased with both) said his father said in the sickness that took his life: ‘Prepare a niche (lahd) for me in my grave, use some bricks to cover it, just as it was done with the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam).’

An-Nawawî (may Allâh bestow mercy on him) said in (his book) Al-Adhkâr: ‘It is highly recommended that he should forewarn his people that they

shun all innovated practices people do with respect to funerals; he should be very stern on this.'

What We Must Do for the Sick Person

1. Medication

The Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) commanded the use of medication; on the authority of Usâmah bn Sharîk (may Allâh be pleased with him) who said: The Bedouins said: 'O Messenger of Allâh, can we make use of medication?' The Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) replied:

نَعَمْ ، يَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ تَدَاوُوا ، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ مَا يَضَعُ دَاءً إِلَّا وَضَعَهُ شِفَاءً إِلَّا دَاءً وَاجِدًا

'Yes, O slaves of Allâh, make use of medication. Allâh has not caused any disease except that He got its cure for it. except a sickness

They asked: 'What is that, O Messenger of Allâh?'

He (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

'Senility.'

" رَوَاهُ تَرْمِذِي "

2. Paying Him Visits

This is one of the rights a Muslim owes his Muslim brother. Abû Hurairah (may Allâh be pleased with him) reported from the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) that he (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

حَقُّ مُسْلِمٍ عَلَى مُسْلِمٍ خَمْسٌ: رَدُّ سَلَامٍ وَعِيَادَةُ مَرِيضٍ وَاتِّبَاعُ جَنَائِزٍ وَإِجَابَةُ دَعْوَةٍ وَتَسْمِيَةُ عَاطِسٍ "

رَوَاهُ بَخَارِي

'Rights owed a Muslim by another Muslim are five: returning the greeting of salaam, visiting the sick person, following the corpse, honoring invitation, saying yar'hamukaLlâh ('may Allâh show mercy to you') to a sneezer (who says Alhamdulillah [praise to Allâh]).'

There is an addition in the hadith of Al-Barâ bn 'Aazib (may Allâh be pleased with him):

وإبرارٌ مفسيم، ونصرتُ مظلوم

‘...helping a swearer to fulfill his oath and helping an oppressed person.’

There are lots of benefits in visiting the sick person. 'Alee (may Allâh be pleased with him) said: I heard the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) say:

" مَا مِنْ مُسْلِمٍ يَعُودُ مُسْلِمًا غُدْوَةً إِلَّا صَلَّى عَلَيْهِ سَبْعُونَ أَلْفَ مَلَكٍ حَتَّى يُمْسِيَ، فَإِذَا عَادَهُ عَشِيَّةً صَلَّى عَلَيْهِ سَبْعُونَ أَلْفَ مَلَكٍ حَتَّى يُصْبِحَ، وَكَانَ لَهُ خَرِيفٌ فِي الْجَنَّةِ " رواه ترمذي

‘No Muslim will visit another sick Muslim in the morning except that seventy thousand angels seek blessings for him until evening. If he pays the visit again in the evening, seventy thousand angels will seek blessings for him until morning; and for him are sweet fruits in the Jannah.’

3. Asking Him for What He Desires (of Food, Drinks, etc.)

On the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs (may Allâh be pleased with him), the Prophet (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) visited a sick man and asked him: ‘What do you like?’ The man replied: ‘I like a loaf made of wheat.’ Then the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

" مَنْ كَانَ عِنْدَهُ خُبْزٌ بَرٍّ، فَلْيَبِعْهُ لِأَيِّ أَخِيهِ "

‘Whoever has a loaf made of wheat let him take it to his brother.’

Then the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

" إِذَا اسْتَنْهَى مَرِيضٌ أَحَدَكُمْ شَيْئًا، فَلْيُطْعِمْهُ " رواه ابن ماجه

‘When a sick person among you desires anything then give him to eat.’

That, if the food will not harm him.

4. Making Supplications for Him

This state of the sick person is one of those times supplications are hopefully granted, we should therefore make use of this time to supplicate for ourselves, the sick person, and the believing men and women.

Umm Salamah (may Allâh be pleased with her) said that the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

"إِذَا حَضَرْتُمْ مَرِيضًا أَوْ مَيِّتًا فَقُولُوا خَيْرًا فَإِنَّ الْمَلَائِكَةَ يُؤْمِنُونَ عَلَى مَا تَقُولُونَ". رواه مسلم

‘When you visit a sick person or a dead person, say what is good because the angels say Aamîn to what you say.’

The following are some of the supplications the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) used to make whenever he visited the sick:

لَا بَأْسَ طَهُورٌ إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ

Lâ ba’s, tahûrun Inshâ Allâh

[‘No problem, it shall be well, Allâh willing.’]

اللَّهُمَّ اشْفِ عَبْدَكَ يَنْكُأَكَ عَدُوًّا أَوْ يَمْشِيكَ إِلَى جَنَازَةٍ

Allahumma-shfi ‘abdak yankau laka ‘aduwwan au yamshî laka ilâ janâzatin

[‘O Allâh, heal Your slave so that he will be able to strike an enemy of Yours, or walk for Your sake to a funeral.’]

The Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) also said:

‘No Muslim will visit a sick person whose time of death has not reached and say seven times [beside him]:

"أَسْأَلُ اللَّهَ عَظِيمَ رَبِّ عَرْشِ عَظِيمٍ أَنْ يَشْفِيكَ"

As’alu-Llâha al-‘adhîm rabbal-‘ar’shi al-‘adhîm an yashfiyak

[‘I beseech Allâh the Mighty, the Lord of the Mighty Throne, to heal you’]

Such will be healed.

"بِسْمِ اللَّهِ أَرْقِيكَ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ يُؤْذِيكَ مِنْ شَرِّ كُلِّ نَفْسٍ أَوْ عَيْنٍ حَاسِدٍ اللَّهُ يَشْفِيكَ بِسْمِ اللَّهِ أَرْقِيكَ"

Bismillâh ar'qîk min kulli shay'in yu'dhîk, min sharri kulli nafsin wa a'aynin hâsidatin; Bismillâh ar'qîk wa-Llâhu yashfik.

[‘In the Name of Allâh I exorcize you from everything that hurts you; from the evil of every soul, and from a jealous eye; in the Name of Allâh I exorcize you, Allâh will heal you.’]

"لَهُمْ رَبِّ نَّاسٍ، مُدْهِبِ بَّاسٍ، اشْفِ أَنْتَ شَافِي، لا شَافِي إِلا أَنْتَ، شِفَاءَ لا يُغَادِرُ سَقَمًا "

رواه البخاري.

Allahumma rabban-nâsi adh'hibil-ba's wash'fi antash-shâfi lâ shifâ'an illâ shifâ'uk shifâ'an lâ yughâdiru saqaman.

[‘O Allâh, the Lord of men, cause the ailment to vanish; give healing for You are the Healer. There is no other healing beside Yours; a healing that vanishes any ailment’]

" بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ تَرْبَةُ اَرْضِنَا، بِرِيقَةِ بَعْضِنَا، يُشْفَى سَقِيمُنَا، بِإِذْنِ رَبِّنَا "

Bismillâh, turbatu ardinâ bi-rîqati ba'dinâ yashfi saqîmanâ bi'idhni rabbinâ.

[In the Name of Allâh, (this is the) soil of our land touched with the saliva of one of us, to heal the sick one amongst us by the leave of our Lord].

5. Reminding Him of the Rewards in Being Pleased (with Allâh's Decree), and Patience as well as Returning the Rights of Slaves to Them and Showing Pure Repentance

[Chapter Two]

The Point of Death

What will happen to a slave at the point of death?

When a person sees the angels, all his power will disappear and he will not be able to muster any resistance. He will surrender to reality; he will become dejected and helpless such that he will not be able to talk. He will hear but will not be able to reply. He will be too shocked that he will not be able to control himself. He will sometimes slumber and at other times, doze off due to the severe pains of death. The stupor of death symbolizes its suffering (leading to stupor) and woes.

Ar-Râghib (may Allâh bestow mercy on him) said in his book, Al-Mufradât: 'As-Sakr (stupor) is a state whereby a man loses his intellect; it is often used in connection with food and drinks. It is let loose in the state of anger, passion, pains, sleepiness, drowsiness. The one that arises from pains is what is intended here.'

The Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) himself went through these throes as was seen in the sickness that led to his death (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam); he was holding a container that contained some water. He would dip his hand into the container and use it to wipe his face saying:

" لا إله إلا الله، إنَّ لَمَوْتَ سَكَرَاتٍ " رواه البخاري

Lâ Ilâha illal-Laah; indeed death has throes.

Aisha (may Allâh be pleased with her) said about the sickness of the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam): 'I never saw a pain over anybody as encountered by the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam).'

The author of Tuhfatul-Ahwadhî wrote that [Aisha (may Allâh be pleased with her) said]: 'When I saw the severity of his death (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam), I came to know that severity of death is not an indication of a bad end for the dead person, just as ease and simple death do not mean that whoever so died is honoured.' End of quote.

Al-Hâfidh – Ibn Hajar – (may Allâh bestow mercy on him) said: 'The hadith indicates that severity of death does not mean that one is less in status;

rather it will be an addition for a believer in his good deeds, or as expiation for his sins.' End of quote.

As for when the soul is about to leave the body, there are many proofs from the Book and Sunnah explaining that the soul of a believer will leave the body with all ease and tranquility while it will be at rest afterwards, unlike the soul of a disbeliever or a hypocrite which will leave the body forcefully with no mercy or tenderness.

Allâh the Majestic Lord says:

﴿ الَّذِينَ تَتَوَفَّيْهُمْ الْمَلَائِكَةُ طَيِّبِينَ يَقُولُونَ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ آدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴾ (النحل ٣٢)

Those whose lives the angels take while they are in a pious state (worshipping none but Allâh Alone) saying (to them): Salâmun 'Alaikum (peace be on you) enter you Paradise, because of (the good) which you used to do (in the world)."[Nahl: 32]

He the Most High also said:

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ ارْجِعِي إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَّةً فَادْخُلِي فِي عِبَادِي وَادْخُلِي جَنَّتِي ﴾ (الفجر ٢٧-٣٠)

“(It will be said to the pious): "O (you) the one in (complete) rest and satisfaction! "Come back to your Lord, well-pleased (yourself) and well-pleasing unto him! "Enter you, then, among My honoured slaves, "And enter you My Paradise!"” [al-Fajr: 27-30].

He the Majestic also said:

﴿ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَمُوا تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَلَّا تَخَافُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَبْشِرُوا بِالْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي كُنْتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ ﴾ (فصلت ٣٠)

“Verily, those who say: "Our Lord is Allâh (Alone)," and then they are steadfast, on them the angels will descend (at the time of their death) (saying): "Fear not, nor grieve! But receive the glad tidings of Paradise which you have been promised!" [Fusilat: 30]

He the Most High however said about the unbeliever:

﴿ وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذْ يَتَوَفَّى الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَضْرِبُونَ وُجُوهَهُمْ وَأَدْبَارَهُمْ وَذُوقُوا عَذَابَ الْحَرِيقِ ﴾
(الأنفال ٥٠)

“And if you could see when the angels take away the souls of those who disbelieve (at death), they smite their faces and their backs, (saying): "Taste the punishment of the blazing Fire." [Al-Anfâl: 50]

He the Majestic also said:

﴿ وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذِ الظَّالِمُونَ فِي غَمَرَاتِ الْمَوْتِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ بَاسِطُوا أَيْدِيهِمْ أَخْرِجُوا أَنفُسَكُمُ الْيَوْمَ تُجْزَوْنَ عَذَابَ الْهُونِ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ وَكُنْتُمْ عَنْ آيَاتِهِ تَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴾ (الأنعام ٩٣)

“... and if you could but see when the wrong-doers are in the agonies of death, while the angels are stretching forth their hands (saying): "Deliver your souls! This Day you shall be recompensed with the torment of degradation because of what you used to utter against Allâh other than the truth. And you used to reject His proofs with disrespect!" [al-An'âm: 93]

On the authority of Al-Barâ bn 'Aazib (may Allâh be pleased with him) who said:

We went out with the Prophet (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) to the funeral of a man among the Ansâr. When we got to his grave while the lahd (niche) was being dug for him, the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) sat and we sat around him as if birds were on our heads. The Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) was holding a rod with which he was scratching the earth.

Then he (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) raised his head and said: 'Seek refuge in Allâh from the punishment of the grave – he said that two or three times – indeed when a believing slave reaches the last stage whereby he will leave the world and face the Hereafter, angels would descend upon him from the heaven, their faces would be white like the sun, they have with them some shrouds and perfume of Jannah. They would sit within his eyeshot after which the Angel of Death – peace be upon him – would approach him then sit by his head; he would say to him: O Pure Soul, come out to the forgiveness and pleasure of Allâh.'

The Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said: Then the soul will come out gently as water pours out of a container, the Angel of Death will get hold of it but will quickly place it in the shroud and the perfume with him. Some good scent

like the best musk found on earth will come out of it. He (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

They will then ascend with it. Whenever they walked by any group of angels the latter would say: who is the pure soul with you? They will reply: so-and-so the son of so-and-so – they will describe him in his best name that he was known with, in the world. (They would move on) until they reach the closest heaven while the soul is still with them. They will ask for its door to be opened and it will be opened.

The inhabitants of each heaven will greet him until the other heaven, until they will get to the seventh heaven. Allâh the Majestic and Most Sublime will say: write the name of My slave in the 'Iliyyûn (the Highest Place) then return him to the earth; thence I created him thence I shall return him, and from there I shall bring him again. He (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said: His soul shall be returned to his body then two angels will approach him; they will sit him down and say to him: Who is your Lord? He will reply: My Lord is Allâh. They will ask him again: What is your Deen? He will reply: My Deen is Islam. They will ask him again: Who is that man that was raised among you? He will reply: He was the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam). They will say: What knowledge have you? He will reply: 'I recite the Book of Allâh; I believed in it and I held it as truth'. Then a caller will call out from the heaven: My slave has said the truth; spread his Jannah for him, get him clothing from Jannah, open the door to Jannah for him.

He (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said: The breath and perfume of Jannah will come to him; his grave will be widened for him as far as his eyes could reach. He (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said: A man with a cheerful face, good cloth and scent will come to him and say: Take good tidings of what shall please you; this is your day that you have been promised. He [the dead believer] will say: But who are you, your face is beautiful, it brings good? He will reply: I am your good deeds. He will say: O my Lord, let the Hour come so that I can return to my family and wealth.'

He (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said: 'As for the disbelieving slave, when he reaches the last stage in his life facing the Hereafter, dark-faced angels will descend upon him from the heaven with a sackcloth, they will sit within his eyeshot then the Angel of Death will come and sit by his head, he will say to him: O Dirty Soul, come out to the anger and displeasure of Allâh. Then the soul will be forcefully removed from his body the way needle passes through the wet wool. When the Angel of Death seizes his soul, he will quickly place it in the sackcloth with him from which the foulest of smell, found on earth, like that of a carcass will

come. They will ascend with it into the heaven; they will not walk by any group of angels except that they will say: What dirty soul is this? They will reply: so-and-so the son of so-and-so; they will mention him with his worst name in life until they will get to the closest heaven; they will seek the permission that the door be opened but the request will not be granted.

At that point, the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) recited the Words of Allâh:

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَاسْتَكْبَرُوا عَنْهَا لَا تُفْتَحُ لَهُمْ أَبْوَابُ السَّمَاءِ وَلَا يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ حَتَّى يَلِجَ الْجَمَلُ فِي سَمِّ الْخِيَاطِ﴾ الأعراف ٤٠

“Verily, those who belief Our proofs and treat them with arrogance, for them the gates of heaven will not be opened, and they will not enter Paradise until the camel goes through the eye of the needle (which is impossible). Thus do We recompense the criminals.” [Al-‘Arâf: 40]

Allâh the Majestic and Most Sublime will then say: write his name in the sijjîn, in the lowest earth. From there, his soul will be thrown as described by Allâh:

﴿وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَكَأَنَّمَا خَرَّ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ فَتَخَطَّفَهُ الطَّيْرُ أَوْ تَهْوَى بِهِ الرِّيحُ فِي مَكَانٍ سَحِيقٍ﴾ الحج ٣١

“... whoever assigns partners to Allâh, it is as if he had fallen from the sky, and the birds had snatched him, or the wind had thrown him to a far off place”. [Hajj: 31]

Then his soul will return to his body after which two angels will come to him, they will sit him down and say: Who is your Lord? He will reply: ‘Hah! Hah! I don’t know.’ Then a caller will call out from the heaven: ‘He has lied; spread the hell for him, open the door of the hell for him so that its heat and hot smell can touch him.’ His grave shall be constrained for him such that his ribs will intertwine. Then a bad looking man with dirty cloth and foul smell will come to him and say: ‘Take the news of what shall sadden you; this is the day you have been promised.’ He will say: ‘Who are you; your face brings evil? He will reply: ‘I am you evil deeds.’ He will say: ‘O my Lord, do not establish the Hour!

What We Must Do for the Dying Person

1. Prompting Him to Say Lâ Ilâha Illa Allâh So That It will be His Last Words

On the authority of Abu Saïd Al-Khudrî (may Allâh be pleased with him) who said the Messenger of Allâh (salaLLâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

﴿قِنُّوا مَوْتَكُمْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ﴾ " رواه مسلم

‘Say Lâ Ilâha Illa Allâh to your dying person (for him to pick).’

At-Talqeen is instructing and teaching. What is however intended by it when a person is dying is that there should be someone around him to pronounce Lâ Ilâha Illa Allâh for the dying person to say.

On the authority of Mu’âdh bn Jabal (may Allâh be pleased with him) who said, I heard the Messenger of Allâh (salaLLâhu alayhi wa sallam) say:

" مَنْ كَانَ آخِرُ كَلَامِهِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَجَبَتْ لَهُ الْجَنَّةُ " رواه أحمد

‘Whoever’s last word is Lâ Ilâha Illa Allâh will surely enter the Jannah.’

The dying person should not be hurt with the Talqeen such that he is excessively prompted to say it whereby he says it and does not say anything after it.

An-Nawawî (may Allâh bestow mercy on him) said: It is discouraged that the Talqeen should be much over him, or said repeatedly, so that he will not get tired of it due to his constrained state and severe condition, and thereafter say what is improper. Some scholars say: when he says it one time, he should not be asked again to say it unless if he says another word after it then he will be gently asked to say it again so that it will be his last word.’ End of quote.

When Abdullâh bn Al-Mubarak (may Allâh be pleased with him) were to die, a man was prompting him with Lâ Ilâha Illa Allâh; he was very excessive in that. He [Ibn Mubarak] said to him: ‘You have not done well; I am afraid if you will not hurt a Muslim after me. When you ask me to say Lâ Ilâha Illa Allâh, and I say it without mentioning any other word after it, leave me, but if I say any other word after it then ask me to say it again until it becomes my last word.’

Here is a beneficial comment from Ash-Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen (may Allâh be pleased with him): ‘The condition of the sick person has to be considered here; if he were a strong person then he should be endured but if he were a Kâfir, he should be commanded to say Lâ Ilâha Illa Allâh, ‘End your life with Lâ Ilâha Illa Allâh’ or what is similar. But if he were a weak Muslim, he will not be commanded rather it will be mentioned around him until he will hear and remember (to say) it.

It is permissible to do Talqeen for a dying disbeliever because if he is able to say it before life is snuffed out of him he will be benefitted by it even if he will have to encounter some other punishment for his other sins.

On the authority of Abû Hurairah (may Allâh be pleased with him), he said the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

□ قَنُّوا مَوْتَكُمْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ فَإِنَّهُ مَنْ كَانَ آخِرَ كَلِمَتِهِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ عِنْدَ مَوْتِهِ دَخَلَ جَنَّةً يَوْمَئِذٍ مِنْ دَهْرٍ وَإِنْ أَصَابَهُ قَبْلَ ذَلِكَ مَا أَصَابَهُ " رواه ابن حبان .

‘Prompt your dying ones to say Lâ Ilâha Illa Allâh; whoever says Lâ Ilâha Illa Allâh as his last words when he is to die will enter Jannah one day even if something has to touch him (of punishment) before that.’

One of the indicators that the command to do Talqeen for a dying person also includes a dying unbeliever is the act of the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) with his uncle, Abû Tâlib, and that Jewish lad who used to serve him (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam).

2. Making Good Supplications Beside Him

Umm Salamah (may Allâh be pleased with her) said that the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

" إِذَا حَضَرْتُمْ مَرِيضًا أَوْ مَيِّتًا، فَقُولُوا خَيْرًا؛ فَإِنَّ الْمَلَائِكَةَ يُؤْمِنُونَ عَلَى مَا تَقُولُونَ " رواه مسلم

‘When you are with a sick or dead person say good because the angels say Aamîn over what you say.’

3. Making Him to Face the Qiblah

There are two views with the Salaf as regards making the dying person to face the Qiblah: the majority of the scholars say it is permissible to make the dying person to face it; others say it is not necessary. The latter view was traced to Saïd bn Al-Musayyab (may Allâh bestow mercy on him). He once rejected that from his nephew (who wanted to do it to him).

What is more correct is that the act is legislated. That it was done to Saïd Ibn Al-Musayyab (may Allâh bestow mercy on him) is an indication that the practice was common in his time.

The Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) had said:

" قِبْلَتِكُمْ أَحْيَاءٌ وَأَمْوَاتًا " رواه أبو داود

‘[That is] your Qiblah; dead or alive.’

As for when it is confirmed that death has occurred, there is a consensus that the corpse can be made to face the Qiblah. There is however two ways of doing this: that he should be made to face the Qiblah just as the lahd is made in the grave. That is, he should sleep over his right facing the Qiblah. That is the view of the majority of the scholars such as Mâlik and Abû Hanîfah; Ash-Shâfi’î also had a similar view.

Another way is for his chest to be raised up a bit while his two legs are made to face the Qiblah. In that position, it can be said he is facing the Qiblah with his chest and face.

3. Reciting Sûrah Yâsîn beside Him

As-Shaykh Ibn Uthaymeen (may Allâh bestow mercy on him) was asked: is the recitation of Sûrah Yâsîn beside a dying person established in the Sunnah or not?

‘He (may Allâh bestow mercy on him) replied: Recitation of Yâsîn beside a dying person is recommended according to the view of many of the scholars, the proof for that is the word of the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam):

" أَقْرَأُوا بِسْمِ عَلِيِّ مَوْتَاكُمْ " رواه أحمد

‘Recite [Sûrah] Yâsîn over your dying people.’

‘There are many things said about this hadith; some of the scholars held it to be weak. However in the sight of those who hold it to be authentic, recitation of Sûrah Yâsîn is recommended; but with those who hold it to be weak, the act is not recommended. Allâh knows better.’

Some say the wisdom behind the recitation of Yâsîn is because of what it contains of happenings of the Day of Resurrection such as its terror; so also is (its description of) the earth as something that will change and cease to be. There is also the bliss in Jannah and the torment of the Hell. The (dying) slave who hears those happenings might become more steadfast.

Some people of knowledge say: there is another benefit in the Sûrah which is the ease with which the soul will come out. Allâh said:

﴿ قِيلَ ادْخُلِ الْجَنَّةَ ۗ قَالَ يَلَيْتَ قَوْمِي يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾ بِمَا غَفَرَ لِي رَبِّي وَجَعَلَنِي مِنَ الْمُكْرَمِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾ ﴾

“It was said (to him when the disbelievers killed him): "Enter Paradise." He said: "Would that my people knew! That my Lord (Allâh) has forgiven me, and made me of the honoured ones!" [Yâsîn: 26-27]

As for the recitation of Yâsîn after the death, this is from the reprehensible innovations lacking textual support.

Ash-Shaykh Ibn Baaz (may Allâh bestow mercy on him) was asked about the ruling on recitation of Yâsîn over a dead person or over the grave, or in the house for a period of a week, or on a remembrance day – like after forty days of death.

He (may Allâh bestow mercy on him) replied: this as asked by the questioner is an innovated practice, it has no basis. It is not legislated to be recited over the dead person after his death, or in the house or the grave, not even after forty days of the death or any other day. Rather such practices are among the innovated ways of the people. What is correct in the Sunnah is to recite it beside him when he is about to die. The recitation of Sûrah Yâsîn for someone at the point of death to hear is good because there are some ahadith to buttress that.

4. Visiting A Non-Muslim At Point of Death

There is nothing wrong in a Muslim being with a dying disbeliever in order to present Islam to him with the intention that he may embrace it. The proof for that is the hadith of Anas (may Allâh bestow mercy on him); he said: a Jewish lad who used to serve the Prophet (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) fell sick. The Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) then visited him and sat by his head. He said to him: 'Accept Islam!' The boy looked at his father who was also with him and the father said to the son: 'Obey Abul-Qâsim.' The boy then embraced Islam. The Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) came out saying:

"حَمْدُ اللَّهِ الَّذِي أَنْقَذَهُ مِنَ النَّارِ" رواه البخاري

'Praise to Allâh Who has saved him from the Hell.'

In the narration of Ahmad after his death, the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

"صَلُّوا عَلَيَّ صَاحِبِكُمْ"

'Pray over your comrade'

5. Putting Some Water in His Mouth or Over His Face

The Prophet (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) used to do this. Aishah (may Allâh be pleased with her) said: 'The Prophet (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) was holding a container that had water in it; he would then put his hand into the water then rub it over his face saying:

"لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، إِنَّ لَمَوْتَ سَكْرَاتٍ" رواه البخاري

Lâ Ilâha illal-Laah; indeed death has throes.

[Chapter Three]

Signs and Causes of Good or Bad End

First: Good End

Good end is when the slave is granted the honour of not falling into what can anger the Lord, the Mighty, before he dies; and the honour of repenting from sins and tending to acts of obedience and goodness. That he therefore dies upon this good state.

One of the proofs indicating this is the authentic hadith recorded on the authority of Anas bn Mâlik (may Allâh be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

" إِذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِعَبْدِهِ خَيْرًا اسْتَعْمَلَهُ "

‘When Allâh intends good for His slave, he will employ him.’

The Sahâbah said: ‘How will He employ him?’ He (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

" يُؤَفِّقُهُ لِعَمَلٍ صَالِحٍ قَبْلَ مَوْتِهِ " رواه أحمد

‘He will facilitate good deeds for him before his death.’

There comes in the end of the hadith recorded by Al-Bukhârî; that the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

" وَإِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِنِهَايَتِهَا " رواه أحمد

‘Deeds are judged by their endpoints.’

Below are some of the indicators of good end:

1. Saying the Shahâdah at death. The Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

" مَنْ كَانَ آخِرُ قَوْلِهِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ " رواه أحمد

‘Whoever utters Lâ Ilâha Illa Allâh as his last word will enter the Jannah.’

2. **Dying with perspiration of the forehead.** This is due to what Buraydah bn Al-Husayb (may Allâh be pleased with him) reported that the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

"موتُ المؤمن بعرقٍ جبينٍ" رواه أحمد

‘A believer dies with perspiration of the forehead.’

3. **Dying in the night or day of Jum’ah.** The Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

" ما مِنْ مسلمٍ يموتُ يومَ جُمُعَةٍ أوْ ليلةِ جُمُعَةٍ إلاّ وقاهُ اللهُ فِتْنَةَ القَبْرِ " رواه ترمذي

‘No Muslim will die in the night or day of Jum’ah except that Allâh will protect him from the trials of the grave.’

4. **Martyrdom** in the battlefield of Islam, or a death in the path of fighting in the cause of Allâh, or a death due to an outbreak of disease or a disease of the stomach like dropsy or what is similar. Or if he drowns in water.

The proof for the foregoing is the statement of the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam);

مَا تَعُدُّونَ شَهِيدَ فِيكُمْ؟

‘What do you count as martyrdom among yourselves?’

They replied: ‘When a person is killed in the path of Allâh.’

" إِنَّ شُهَدَاءَ أُمَّتِي إِذًا قَلِيلٌ "

He (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) replied: ‘Then martyrs will be little in my Ummah.’

They asked again: ‘Who then, O Messenger of Allâh?’

He said:

" مَنْ قُتِلَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللهِ فَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ وَمَنْ مَاتَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللهِ فَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ وَمَنْ مَاتَ فِي طَاعُونٍ فَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ وَمَنْ مَاتَ فِي بَطْنٍ فَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ وَغَرِيقٌ شَهِيدٌ " رواه مسلم

‘Whoever is killed in the path of Allâh is a martyr, whoever dies in the path of Allâh is a martyr, whoever dies in an epidemic is a martyr, whoever dies as a result of dropsy is a martyr; the drowned person is also a martyr.’

5. Death caused by devastation (accident).

The Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

"شُهَدَاءُ خَمْسَةٌ: الْمَطْعُونُ وَالْمَبْطُونُ وَالْغَرِقُ وَصَاحِبُ الْهَدْمِ وَالشَّهِيدُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ " رواه البخاري

‘The martyrs are five: a person that dies in an epidemic, a person that dies from stomach-related diseases, drowning, a victim of devastation and a person that becomes a martyr in the path of Allâh.’

6. Death in Post-Partum or During Pregnancy.

Al-Imaam Ahmad, and others, recorded with an authentic chain on the authority of ‘Ubâdah bn As-Sâmit (may Allâh be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) informed about the martyrs and he (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) mentioned:

"... وَالْمَرْأَةُ يَقْتُلُهَا وَذُهَا جَمْعَاءَ شَهَادَةٌ، يَجْرُهَا وَذُهَا بِسُرْرِهِ إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ " صحيح الترغيب والترهيب

‘...a woman whose death is caused by her child is a martyr; her child will pull her along into Jannah with his umbilical cord.’

7. Death Caused by Fire.

The Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

" وَصَاحِبُ الْخَرِيقِ شَهِيدٌ " رواه أبو داود

"... the one who is burned to death is a martyr "

8. Whoever is killed while defending his wealth or honour

The Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

" مَنْ قُتِلَ دُونَ مَالِهِ فَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ، وَمَنْ قُتِلَ دُونَ دِينِهِ فَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ ، وَمَنْ قُتِلَ دُونَ دَمِهِ فَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ " رواه ترمذي

‘Whoever is killed defending his wealth is a martyr; whoever is killed defending his religion is a martyr; whoever is killed defending his blood is a martyr.’

9. Death as a Guard in the Path of Allâh

The Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said in a hadith recorded in Sahîh Muslim:

" رَبَّاطُ يَوْمٍ وَبَيْتَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِنْ صِيَامِ شَهْرٍ وَقِيَامِهِ وَإِنْ مَاتَ جَرَى عَلَيْهِ عَمَلُهُ الَّذِي كَانَ يَعْمَلُهُ وَأَجْرِي عَلَيْهِ رِزْقُهُ وَأَمِنْ أَقْنَانٌ " رواه مسلم

‘Standing guard for a day and night is better than fasting for a month and standing for (optional) prayers therein. If he were to die (mounting guard), his deed will be continuously recorded for him, his sustenance shall be provided for him and shall be safe from trials (in the grave).’

10. Dying Upon A Good Deed.

The Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

" مَنْ قَالَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ ابْتِغَاءً وَجْهَ اللَّهِ خُتِمَ لَهُ بِهَا دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ ، وَمَنْ صَلَّى صَلَاةً ابْتِغَاءً وَجْهَ اللَّهِ خُتِمَ لَهُ بِهَا دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ ، وَمَنْ صَامَ يَوْمًا ابْتِغَاءً وَجْهَ اللَّهِ خُتِمَ لَهُ بِهَا دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ ، وَمَنْ تَصَدَّقَ بِصَدَقَةٍ ابْتِغَاءً وَجْهَ اللَّهِ خُتِمَ لَهُ بِهَا دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ " .

‘Whoever says Lâ Ilâha Illa Allâh desiring the Face of Allâh with it, and he says it as his last word; he shall enter Jannah. Whoever also gives charity and dies upon that shall enter Jannah.’

11. It is also a sign of good end for a Muslim, when a group of truthful Muslims, even if it consists of only two persons, says good things about him. They could be his righteous and knowledgeable neighbours who know him.

There are many ahadith in this respect:

Anas bn Mâlik (may Allâh be pleased with him) said: 'A funeral procession passed by and people began to praise him (the dead person) to which the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

‘Certainly! Certainly! Certainly!’ وَجَبَّتْ، وَجَبَّتْ، وَجَبَّتْ

Another funeral passed by and people began to dispraise him, the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) also said: “Certainly! Certainly! Certainly!”

‘Umar (may Allâh be pleased with him) said: ‘May my parents be ransomed for you; a funeral passed by and people said praised him and you said: “Certainly! Certainly! Certainly!” another funeral passed by and people dispraised him and you said: “Certainly! Certainly! Certainly!”

The Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) then said:

" مَنْ أَتَيْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ خَيْرًا وَجَبَّتْ لَهُ الْجَنَّةُ ، وَمَنْ أَتَيْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ شَرًّا وَجَبَّتْ لَهُ النَّارُ ، أَنْتُمْ شُهَدَاءُ اللَّهِ فِي الْأَرْضِ ، أَنْتُمْ شُهَدَاءُ اللَّهِ فِي الْأَرْضِ ، أَنْتُمْ شُهَدَاءُ اللَّهِ فِي الْأَرْضِ " رواه مسلم

‘The one which you praised will certainly enter the Jannah. As for the one you dispraised will certainly enter the Hell. You are the witnesses of Allâh on earth! You are the witnesses of Allâh on earth!’

The Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) also said:

" إِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَلَائِكَةً فِي الْأَرْضِ ، تَنْطِقُ عَلَى سِنَةِ بَنِي آدَمَ ، بِمَا فِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْ خَيْرٍ وَشَرٍّ " رواه الحاكم

‘Verily Allâh has angels who say what the children of Adam say about anybody (that dies), of good and bad.’

As for what some people say after funerals such as, ‘What can you say about him? Do you testify he was righteous?’ and the people will reply, ‘he was righteous!’ or ‘he was among the pious,’ or what is similar to that; none of that is intended in the above hadeeth in the least. Such is no more than reprehensible innovation in the religion because the righteous predecessors never did it.

This is also because most people that bear testimony for the dead person do not know him; their testimony might be falsities with the intention of bringing good to the dead person. They think that their testimonies will bring some benefits to the dead person. How ignorant they are of the fact that a beneficial

testimony must go in line with what is in the reality as regard the person on behalf of whom it is made, as indicated in the hadith earlier mentioned!

Be aware, O my noble brother, that the presence of one of these signs or their occurrence to the dead person does not clearly mean that whoever possesses the sign is from among the people of Jannah. Rather, with the occurrence of the sign, we will be hopeful for him. Likewise, if none of the signs occurred to a dead person, this does not mean that such a person is unrighteous. For this is of the knowledge of Unseen.

Causes of Good End

1. That one should hold to acts of obedience and piety. The peak and bedrock of that is establishment of Tawheed, and shunning all prohibitions.
2. That one should be persistent in making supplications to Allâh for steadfastness on faith and piety.
3. That one should try the utmost to rectify one's open and hidden; that his intention and aim should be geared towards actualization of that fact. Allâh indeed guides to the truth he that quests for it; He will make him be firm on it until he will die.

﴿ يُثَبِّتُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا بِالْقَوْلِ الثَّابِتِ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ ﴾

“Allâh will keep firm those who believe, with the word that stands firm in this world, and in the Hereafter.” [Ibrâhim: 27].

Second: Bad End

As for the bad end this is when a man dies upon a state of turning away from his Lord, the Mighty and Most sublime; when he remains under His anger, such as failing to carry out what Allâh has made obligatory upon him. There is no doubt that that is, indeed, a miserable end. A sad end that the pious dread so much so that they hasten up to their Lord that He should protect them from it.

Many signs, or conditions, often appear on some dying persons that indicate they are departing this world tragically. An example of that is the inability to utter *Lâ Ilâha Illa-Allâh*; or refraining from saying it. Some people utter statement of sins and transgression, and other related words, when they are dying. There are many other examples of what people say or do when dying which indicates that they have turned away from the Deen of Allâh, the Mighty, and have failed to stay within His decree.

The great scholar, Ibn Rajab (may Allâh bestow mercy on him) said on the authority of ‘Abdul’Azîz bn Abî Rawwâd that he said: ‘I was present when a man was to die; he was asked to pronounce *Lâ Ilâha Illa Allâh*; he said to the person prompting him: I do not believe in what you are saying.’ The man died thereafter. Ibn Abî Rawwâd said: I asked who the man was. People said he was a hard drinker. Thereafter ‘Abdul’Azîz used to say: ‘Be wary of sins; it was his sins that made him fall into what he fell into.’

Ibn Al-Qayyim (may Allâh bestow mercy on him) said: ‘Sub’hânaLlâh! How many times have people witnessed things like this? Yet there a lot of things that many do not know about the dying people. It may occur that a man, at death, may be in his full mental state yet the devil will affect and direct him to what he wants to use him for, that is, to disobey Allah. His heart might have been away from the remembrance of Allâh, his tongue might have ceased from His remembrance and his limbs from acts of obedience to Him, so what will be of him when he becomes powerless at death? Or when he feels all pains and agonies which the devil has unleashed on him with all his power and might to mislead him and set all his traps for him? That is his last deed! But how dangerous is the devil for him at that stage – when he [the dying person] is the weakest of men! Where will he find solace?’

There [however]:

"Allâh will keep firm those who believe, with the word that stands firm in this world, and in the Hereafter. And Allâh will cause to go astray those who are wrong-doers, and Allâh does what He wills.

‘How will a neglectful person attain a good end? A person that obeys his desires and his matter is an embodiment of lassitude. He is far away from his heart as his whole self is far away from Allâh. He worships his desires and has become a captive to his lusts.. His tongue is always dry from the remembrance of Allâh while his

limbs are not obedient to Him rather are steeped in acts of disobedience; he will never have a good end.’ End of quote.

A sad end is of two levels – we seek refuge in Allâh from both:

1. Doubt or denial; such that the soul is taken in that state thus become screened from Allâh’s mercy which is tantamount to eternal estrangement and perpetual torment.
2. That love of a worldly matter or an aspect of prohibited cravings dominates his heart at death, such that his heart is filled with it. There is a saying that a man will die upon what he is accustomed to, if he used to engage in usury that is what he will finish on, and if it were other prohibitions such as (use of) narcotics, music, smoking, watching obscene pictures and oppressing people; the same ruling goes. That is, he will die upon what will show a sad end.

Causes of Bad End

1. Corrupt creed. If a man is on a faulty creed it will have an effect on him when the time comes to seek help and aid from Allâh the Mighty.
2. Turning and holding unto the world.
3. Turning away from (acts of) steadfastness, (acts of) goodness and guidance.
4. Being obstinate upon acts of disobedience and getting engrossed in them. This is because when a person gets accustomed to something in his life time, and he loves that thing, he will hold unto it. He will remember it even at time of death, and repeatedly mention it on many cases.

The great scholar, Ibn Kathîr (may Allâh bestow mercy on him) said: “Bad end – may Allah protect me and you against it – is a situation from which no one who is always conscious of Allah in public and secret, and is truthful in his words and actions, will ever fall into. This is unheard of. Bad end only happens to someone who corrupt his private with unhealthy doctrine and his public with unwholesome acts, someone who audaciously commit major sins and other iniquities. Such a condition may so much dominate him until his death without repenting.”

Al-Imaam Ahmad (may Allâh bestow mercy on him) used to say to the people of heresies:

'The difference between us and you is at funeral.'

O Allâh! Make the best of deeds our last deeds, the best part of our lives our last moments and the best of our days the day we shall meet You. O Allâh, guide all of us to righteous acts and save us from evil acts.

May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon our Prophet, Muhammad; his family and Companions.

[Chapter Four] Calamity of Death

Allâh the Mighty and Majestic says death is a calamity:

﴿ فَأَصَابَتْكُمْ مُصِيبَةُ الْمَوْتِ ﴾

“...the calamity of death befalls you.” [Al-Mâidah:106]

Yes, death is a calamity that shakes the hearts and makes the eyes to shed tears. To exercise patience over it has some great rewards so also are the profound lessons in pondering over it; lessons that can make one remain on the good path because the world is not everlasting – nobody will stay there forever. This, thus make a discerning Muslim yearn for an everlasting abode.

Indicators of Death

1. Stillness of the sight. It comes in the hadith of Umm Salamah (may Allâh be pleased with her) that the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) entered upon Abû Salamah (may Allâh be pleased with him) while his eyes was wide open and not moving (as a result of his death). The Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) then closed it and said:

"...إنَّ أرواحَ إذا قُبِضَ تَبِعَهُ بَصَرُ"

‘When the soul leaves the body, the sight follows it...’

2. The nose tilting right or left.
3. Slackness of the lower jaw due to the general slackness in the body.
4. Heart stop working; no more pumping of blood.
5. The entire body becoming cold.

What We Must Do for the Dead

When a person dies and surrenders his soul, those around him must carry out the following:

1. They should close his eyes and make supplications for him and for themselves. The proof for this is the hadith of Umm Salamah (may Allâh be pleased with her) that the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) entered upon Abû Salamah (may Allâh be pleased with him) while his eyes was wide open and not moving. The Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) then closed it and said:

"...إنَّ رُوحَ إِذَا فُيْضَ تَبِعَهُ بَصَرٌ"

‘When the soul leaves the body, the sight follows it...’

When he (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said that, the people around him sighed. He (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) then said:

" لَا تَدْعُوا عَلَى أَنْفُسِكُمْ إِلَّا بِخَيْرٍ ، فَإِنَّ مَلَائِكَةَ يُؤْمِنُونَ عَلَى مَا تَقُولُونَ "

‘Do not curse yourselves; say what is good because the angels say Aamîn over what you say.’

Then the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) supplicated thus:

" اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِأَبِي سَلَمَةَ ، وَارْفَعْ دَرَجَتَهُ فِي مَهْدِيَّيْنِ ، وَاخْلُقْهُ فِي عَقِبِهِ فِي غَابِرِينَ ، وَاغْفِرْ لَنَا وَهِيَ يَا رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ ، وَافْسَحْ لَهُ فِي قَبْرِهِ ، وَتَوَرَّعْهُ فِيهِ " رواه مسلم

‘O Allâh! Forgive Abû Salamah, raise him in status among the guided, replace him for his successors, forgive us and him O Lord of the worlds; widen his grave for him and give light there.’

2. Biding the lowerjaw with a bandage to be tied on the top of the head. The reason for this is reasonable; if the jaws are not tied together it will seem as if the jaws are falling, that will therefore make the dead look awful.

3. Removing all his cloths. On the authority of Aisha (may Allâh be pleased with her) who said: when they wanted to wash the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi

wa sallam), they differed as to how to carry it out. Some said: By Allâh, we do not know whether we should remove the cloths from the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) as we do for our dead or we wash him with his cloth on him! Aisha (may Allâh be pleased with her) said when the differing went on, Allâh caused them to fall into a sleep such that every man of them had his chin over his chest then a voice spoke to them from the side of the house, they could not figure out whom it could be. But he said: 'Wash the Prophet while his cloths are over him.' She said: Then they all rose up to the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam), washed him while his cloak was over him. They would pour water over him via the cloak and rub their hands over it.'

That therefore indicates that other than the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) is to be stripped of his cloths.

Meanwhile the nakedness of the dead person must be covered; that is what is between the navel and the knee. This situation must maintained until all the stages in washing and shrouding are complete.

Al-'Aurah (nakedness; which literarily means defect) is so called because it is not supposed to be looked at; it is therefore something one feels ashamed of having others see.

In the Sharî'ah, it is everything that must be covered in the body of a human.

Indeed the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

لا ينظرُ الرَّجُلُ إِلَى عَوْرَةِ الرَّجُلِ، وَلَا امْرَأَةٌ إِلَى عَوْرَةِ امْرَأَةٍ " رواه مسلم

'No man should look at the nakedness of another man, nor a woman at another woman's.'

'Alee (may Allâh bestow mercy on him) said the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

لا تُبْرِزْ فَخْذَكَ وَلَا تَنْظُرْ إِلَى فَخْذِ حَيٍّ وَلَا مَيِّتٍ " أخرجه شيخان

'Do not expose your thigh nor look at the thigh of a dead or living man.'

4. Relaxing the joints to ease the washing.

5. It is permissible to kiss the dead person. An example of this is when Abû Bakr As-Siddîq (may Allâh be pleased with him) entered upon his beloved friend (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) and found him covered, he removed the cover from his face and kissed what is between forehead. He then said: 'You are nice both alive and dead, O Messenger of Allâh; as for the death which Allâh has decreed for you, you have got a taste of it. From today on, you will never suffer any pain again.'

In another version declared hasan by ash-Shaykh Al-Albânî (may Allâh bestow mercy on him) in Mukhtasar Ash-Shamâil; As-Siddîq called out upon the Prophet (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam): 'My prophet! My friend! My loved one! As for the death Allâh has decreed upon you, you have tasted it, From today on, you will never suffer any pain again.'

6. They should cover all his body with a wide cloth. It is from the Sunnah to do that. Aisha (may Allâh be pleased with her) said the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) was covered with a Yemeni cloak when he died; that is, all his body was covered.

The above condition will however not apply if the dead person were a pilgrim at Hajj or 'Umrah, if so, his head or face will not be covered due to the hadith of Ibn 'Abbâs (may Allâh be pleased with him); he said: 'A man was standing at 'Arafah wearing the Ihram when he fell down from his mount and was trampled upon by his beast so he died with the ihram on him. The Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) then said:

" اغْسِلُوهُ بِمَاءٍ وَسِدْرٍ ، وَكَفِّتُوهُ فِي ثَوْبَيْهِ – أَي الْإِزَارِ وَالرِّدَاءِ - وَلَا تُحَنِّطُوهُ " رواه البخاري

'Wash him with water and shroud him in his two cloths – that is, his loin cloth and the over garment – but do not apply perfume on him.'

In another narration,

" وَلَا تُطَيِّبُوهُ ، وَلَا تُخَمِّرُوا رَأْسَهُ وَلَا وَجْهَهُ - أَي: لَا تُعْطُوا رَأْسَهُ وَلَا وَجْهَهُ - فَإِنَّهُ يُبْعَثُ يَوْمَ قِيَامَةِ مُلَيَّبًا . " رواه البخاري ومسلم

'Do not perfume him or cover his head or face; he shall be raised on the Day of Resurrection in a state of Ihram.'

7. They should hasten to prepare him for burial when his death is confirmed. The proof for that is the hadith of Abû Hurairah (may Allâh be pleased with him):

"أَسْرِعُوا بِأَجْنَازَةٍ ، فَإِنْ تَكُ صَالِحَةً فَخَيْرٌ تُقَدِّمُونَهَا لِأَبِيهِ ، وَإِنْ تَكُ غَيْرَ ذَلِكَ فَشَرٌّ تَضَعُونَهُ عَنْ رِقَابِكُمْ"

رواه البخاري ومسلم

‘Hasten the burial process; if he were a righteous man, you are sending him to good; if he were unrighteous, you are taking off evil from your necks.’

8. They should bury him in the city where he had died; they should not transport him about because that will undermine the command to hasten with the burial process. The proof for this is the above hadith. Though the explicit purport of the hadith is to hasten the burial of a dead Muslim, hastening to prepare it for burial is implied with a greater reason.

It is in the tradition of the Prophets; Abû Bakr (may Allâh be pleased with him) said: I heard the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) saying:

" مَا دُفِنَ نَبِيٌّ قَطُّ إِلَّا فِي مَكَانِهِ الَّذِي تُؤَفِّي فِيهِ " رواه مالك في الموطأ

‘No Prophet was ever buried except in the place of his death.’

‘So the grave of the Prophet (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) was made where he died but when they wanted to wash him and they attempted to remove his cloths, they heard a voice saying: ‘Do not remove the cloths.’ Thus the cloths were not removed; he was rather washed with his cloths on him.’

The Permanent Committee issued the following verdict:

‘The established practice from the time of the Prophet (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) and his Companions is that the dead should be buried in the cemetery of the town they died at, As for the martyrs, they should be buried at the place where they had died. There is no authentic report or narration that any of the Companions was buried in other than the cemetery of the town where they died, or on its outskirts or a closer place.

‘Thus it is the view of the majority of the jurists that it is not permissible to transport a dead person, before his burial, to any other town beside

where he died except if there is a cogent reason for that such as the fear that his remains might be tampered with if he is buried in the place due to some aggression, conflict or disdain. In that case, it will be imperative to transport him to a safe place. Another reason that might necessitate the transfer to his hometown is when there is a need to appease his family and in order to make it easy for them to visit his grave. In that case, it will be permissible.

‘Beside the above and similar reasons, permissibility to transport the dead is also conditioned upon absence of fear of decomposition resulting from the delay, or fear that its honor might be violated. Then, the corpse should not be transported.’

Therefore, it is the view of the Permanent Committee that dead persons should be buried in the cemetery of the town where they died, and that they should not be moved to another town except for a valid and acceptable reason, in line with the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) and in following the examples of the righteous predecessors. It is by this that harm will be avoided, that what the Shari’ah enjoins of hastening the burial will be actualized, that the dead person will be preserved from having to undergo embalment, that unnecessary waste of money to keep the dead in mortuary will be avoided. In addition to this, hastening the burial will also help in preserving the rights of heirs and the money that would otherwise be spent on those useless procedures could be used on Shari’ah-sanctioned things such as charity and the like.

However, it is permissible to move the corpse from the place of death to another place for a proper burial in such a way that his honor will not be violated, where there is no fear of the corpse being burst. Moving the corpse is equally permissible if it is for a valid reason such as when the town it is being moved to is better or safer in that it is not near a sea the overflow of which may sweep the grave away, or it is being moved from a place the inhabitants of which are not Muslims or where there are Muslims but they do not have a cemetery of their own. In all these situations, there is nothing wrong in moving the corpse.

9. His debt should be settled quickly; it should be paid from his wealth even if that will mean that all his wealth will be expended on the debt, if he does not have enough wealth to set off the debt then it is recommended that someone pays it on his behalf.

On the authority of Sa'd bin Al-Atwal (may Allâh be pleased with him) that a brother of his died and left three hundred dirham behind with some family. I tried to spend the money on his family but the Prophet (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said to me:

"إِنَّ أَخَاكَ مُحْتَبَسٌ بِدَيْنِهِ. فَأَقْضِ عَنْهُ."

'Your brother has been detained due to debt, go and settle it on his behalf.'

I went, settled it and came back to him, I said: 'O Messenger of Allâh, I have offset the debt except two dirham being claimed by a woman without proofs.' The Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

"فَأَعْطَهَا فَإِنَّهَا مُجَقَّةٌ" رواه أحمد

" Give it to her, She is truthful."

On the authority of Samurah bn Jundub (may Allâh be pleased with him), the Prophet (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) prayed over a corpse – in a narration, he (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) observed the early morning-prayer, so when he finished he said:

" هَاهُنَا أَحَدٌ مِنْ بَنِي فُلَانٍ "

'Are the family members of so-and-so here?' People remained quiet because it was in their habit that whenever the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) introduced any matter to them they will remain quiet. He repeated the question in a number of times – like three times – nobody answered him until a man pointed at another man. Then a man dragging his loin-cloth then stood up from the end of the rows. The Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said;

مَا مَنَعَكَ أَنْ تُجِيبَنِي فِي مَرَّتَيْنِ الْأَوَّلَيْنِ أَمَا إِنِّي لَمْ أَنْوِّهْ بِكُمْ إِلَّا خَيْرًا: إِنَّ صَاحِبَكُمْ -أَيُّ ذِي تَوْفِي قَرِيبًا- مَأْسُورٌ بِدَيْنِهِ فَلَقَدْ رَأَيْتُهُ أَدِي عَنْهُ حَتَّى مَا بَقِيَ أَحَدٌ يَطْلُبُهُ بِشَيْءٍ.. رواه أبو داود و[[نسائي

'why didn't you answer me the two times I asked? I never had any ill-thought for you except that so-and-so (that had died) is prevented from entering the Jannah because of his debt. If you like pay the debt on his behalf and if you like leave him to Allâh's punishment.' You have to see what his family and kith later did to salvage him such that no debt of his was left unpaid.

[Chapter Five]

The Legal Cerements

The imperative thing as regard the shroud is that it should cover all the body, the proof for that is what Al-Bukhârî recorded on the authority of Khabbâb (may Allâh be pleased with him) who said: ‘We carried out the Hijrah with the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) hopeful of Allâh’s Face, we got our rewards from Allâh but there were some of us who died without achieving anything (in life). Examples of such were Mus’ab bn ‘Umayr who was killed on the day of Battle of Uhud and we could not get what we could shroud him with (from his property) except a cloak which if we covered his head with it, his legs would be exposed, and if we covered his legs his head would be exposed. The Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) then commanded us to use the lemon grass to cover his legs.’

1. It should be nice, clean and able to cover all the body. On the authority of Jâbir (may Allâh be pleased with him), the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

" إِذَا كَفَّنَ أَحَدُكُمْ أَخَاهُ فَلْيُحْسِنْ كَفَنَهُ " رواه مسلم

‘When any of you shrouds his brother, let him do it well.’

2. That it should be white in colour. On the authority of Ibn ‘Abbâs (may Allâh be pleased with him) the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

" [بَسُّوا مِنْ ثِيَابِكُمْ] بَيَاضَ فَإِنَّهَا مِنْ خَيْرِ ثِيَابِكُمْ، وَكَفَّنُوا فِيهَا مَوْتَاكُمْ " رواه أبو داود

‘Wear your white cloths, it is your best; shroud your dead in it.’

3. The shroud should be perfumed. On the authority of Jâbir (may Allâh be pleased with him) the Prophet (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

" إِذَا أَجْمَرْتُمْ [مَيِّتَ] فَأَجْمِرُوهُ ثَلَاثًا " رواه أحمد

‘When you perfume a dead person, do it three times.’

What is intended here is perfuming the shroud.

4. It should be three sheets for men, and five for women. Aa’ishah (may Allâh be pleased with her) said: ‘The Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) was shrouded in three new white sheets that had neither cloak nor turban.’

A single sheet can be done with if it is difficult to get two; and two will be sufficient, but three sheets is better, for whoever can get them.

5. There should be no wastefulness in it. This is what the Sunnah stipulates, and that was what the Companions and the pious generations were upon – may Allâh be pleased with all of them.

When Abu Bakr was to die (may Allâh be pleased with him), he said to the people that were with him: ‘Wash my cloth and add two more to it, prepare my shroud with them.’ Aisha (may Allâh be pleased with her) said: ‘The one you are putting on is old.’ He (may Allâh be pleased with him) replied: ‘The living is more entitled to the new one than the dead; it is for the dead person’s vomit.’

6. If the shrouds are not sufficient to cover the dead persons, it is permissible to cover a group of them under one shroud. The person to stay closer to the Qiblah is he that has memorized the Qur’ân more than the others. The proof for that is what Al-Bukhârî recorded on the authority of Jâbir (may Allâh be pleased with him) that the Prophet (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) would collect two men – among those killed at Uhud – under a sheet.

7. That a martyr should be shrouded in the cloth in which he is killed. It is however recommended that a cloth or two beside the one he is killed with can be used to shroud him.

8. So also is a pilgrim (at Hajj or ‘Umrah); he should be shrouded in the Ihram (of a loin-cloth and over garment) on him when he died.

Who Should Pay for the Shroud?

If the dead person has the money with which the payment for the shroud can be settled then the money should be taken from him, and this takes precedence over settlement of his debt and the implementation of his wasiyyah (voluntary will) if he made any, in fact, it will come before the sharing of inheritance. The proof for that is the statement of the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) about the man who died at ‘Arafah:

وَكَفَّنُوهُ فِي ثَوْبَيْهِ

‘Shroud him in his two cloths.’

Ibn Al-Qayyim (may Allâh be pleased with him) said in Zaad Al-Ma'aad regarding rulings that can be derived from the above hadith: 'Shrouding the dead person takes precedence before sharing his estate. It should also be given preference over payment of his debt because the Messenger of Allâh (salaLLâhu alayhi wa sallam) first commanded that the dead person be shrouded in two cloths, he did not ask if he had any heir (to inherit him) or any debt to pay. If the condition had been different he would have asked.'

The majority of the scholars say: This is just the way his being clothed precedes paying his debt when he was alive, so also it is when he is dead.

But if the dead person has no wealth, those who must take care for him, such as his father, mother, son or daughter, must pay for the shroud. If none of this is available, then the public treasury should be responsible for that. Otherwise, it becomes the responsibility of all Muslims.

But if there is an organization responsible for providing the shrouds then there is no problem if we shroud him from the organization's finance except if the dead person had stated in his wasiyyah that he should be shrouded from his own wealth then it will not be permissible to shroud him from the public fund be it governmental or private.

The husband has the duty to take care of his wife while alive, therefore, when she dies he must pay for her shroud. That is the view of Abû Hanîfah, Ash-Shâfi'î and Mâlik (may Allâh bestow mercy on them). Ahmad said: It must be paid for from her wealth. Ash-Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen (may Allâh be pleased with him) said in Ash-Sharh Al-Mumti' while commenting on the view of the majority of the scholars: That is the best view, provided the man is rich.

Shroud of a Dead Woman

Schools of thought are unanimous that it is recommended that the woman should be shrouded in five sheets.

Ibn Al-Mundhir (may Allâh bestow mercy on him) said: The bottomline of what we have learnt from the people of knowledge is that the shroud of a woman should be five sheets.

The majority of the scholars explain the details of these five sheets as follows: loin-cloth, head cover, gown and two other sheets. That is also the view of the Mâlikîs, Shâfi'îs and the Hanbalis. They cite proof for that in what Abû Dâwud recorded on the authority of Laylâ bint Qânif of Tha'qîf Clan who said: I was one of those who washed Umm Khulthûm the daughter of the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) when she died; the first thing the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) gave us was a loin-cloth then a gown, an head cover then a wide sheet and another one with which we wrapped her. The Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) was sitting by the door; he had her shrouds with him giving us one after the other.

There is a supportive hadith for the hadith above as recorded by al-Jauzaqî on the authority of Umm 'Atiyyah (may Allâh be pleased with her) that she said: 'We shrouded her in five cloths.'

Ibn Qudâmah (may Allâh bestow mercy on him) said: 'It is recommended to shroud a woman in such a number of cloths because a woman while alive needs to conceal herself more from men because her nakedness is more profound than his, so also is the case after her death.'

Ash-Shaykh Ibn Baaz (may Allâh be pleased with him) was asked: How do we shroud a man from a woman?

He replied: 'What is best is that a man should be shrouded in three white cloths without a cloak or a turban. As for the woman, in five cloths cut into a loin-cloth, gown, head cover and two sheets. If the dead person – whether a male or a female – is shrouded in a very wide sheet that covers all the body, it is permissible. The matter is easy.'

It has also come in the verdict of the Permanent Committee (3/363): 'The shrouding of a woman starts from the loin-cloth to cover the nakedness and what is around there then a gown is worn over the body then a cover to cover the head and what is around it then two sheets.' End of quote.

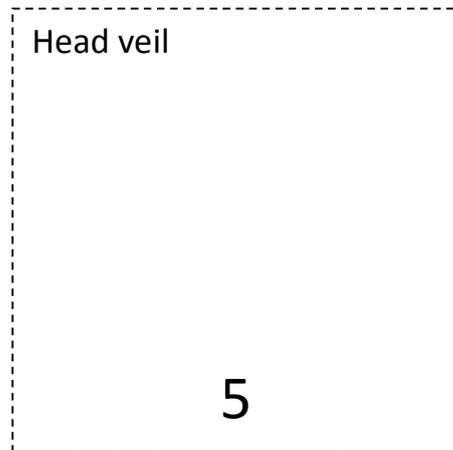
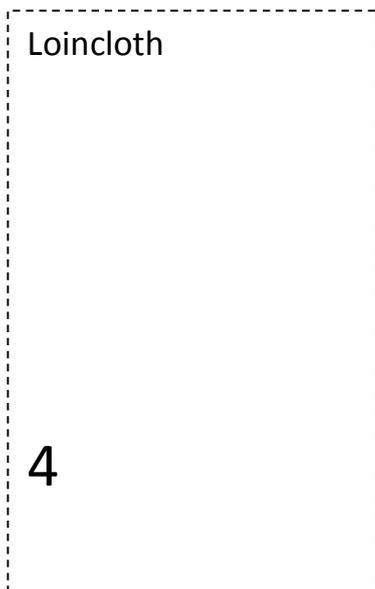
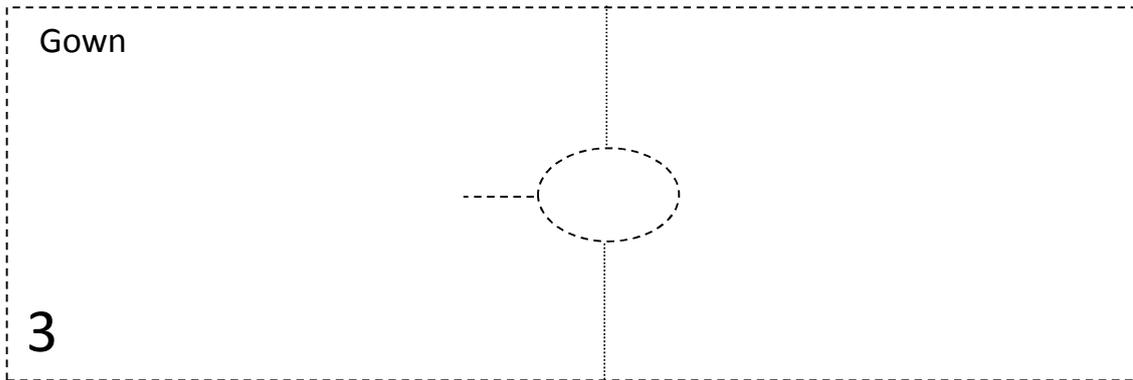
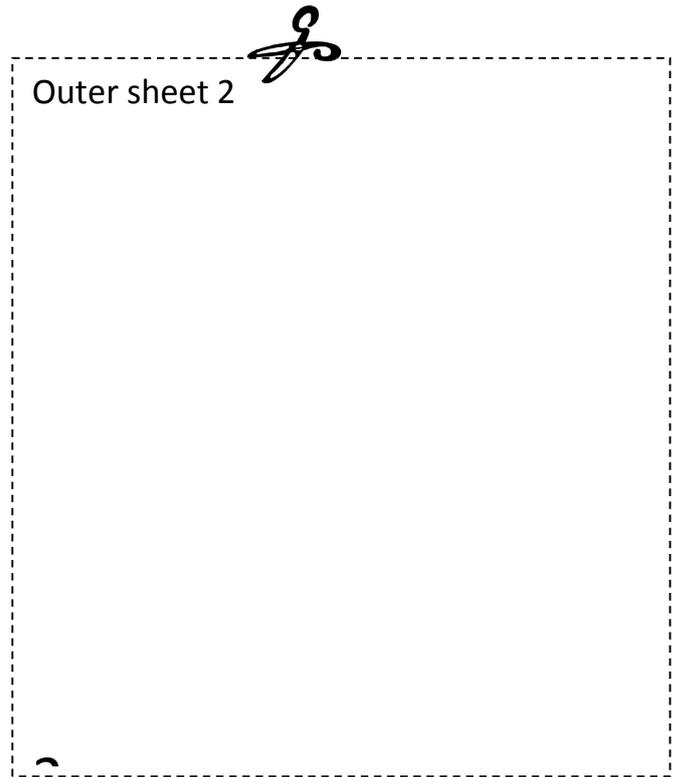
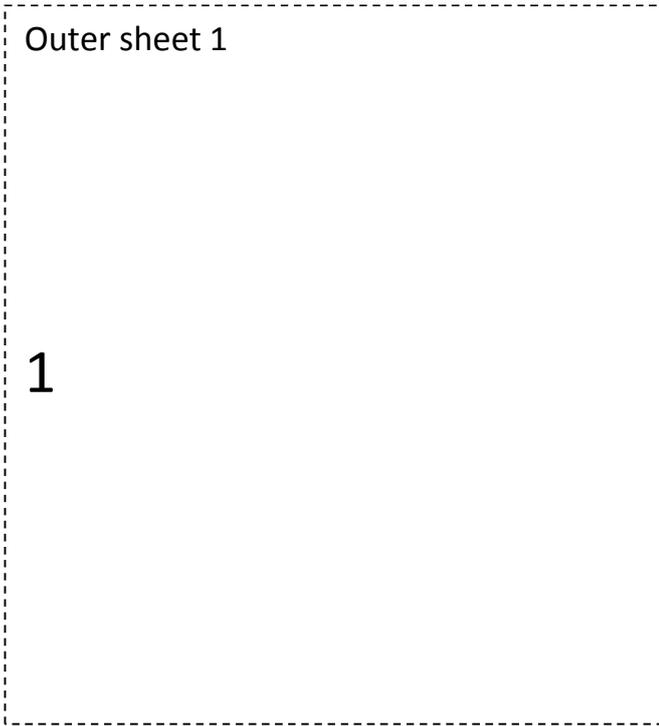
Ash-Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen (may Allâh bestow mercy on him) said in Ash-Shar'h Al-Mumti': 'There is a Prophetic hadith that puts the number of a woman's shrouds at five, but there is some weakness in the chain of the hadith due to an unknown narrator this is why some of the scholars have said the woman can be shrouded in what number of shrouds the man is shrouded in, that is, three cloths that are placed over one another.'

If the hadith on the matter is not authentic, the view above is more correct because the basic rule of the Sharī'ah is that men and women are equal with respect to the commandments of the Sharī'ah except when a proof says otherwise. Thus when a proof says a particular ruling is for a particular gender then that will be upheld, otherwise the ruling will be regarded as applying to both.

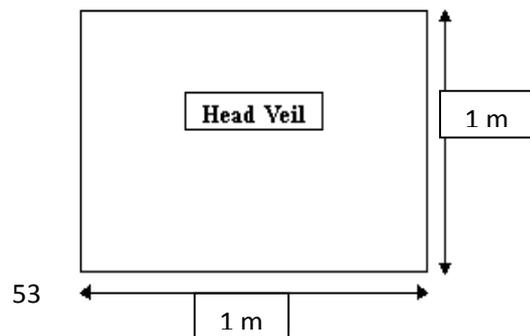
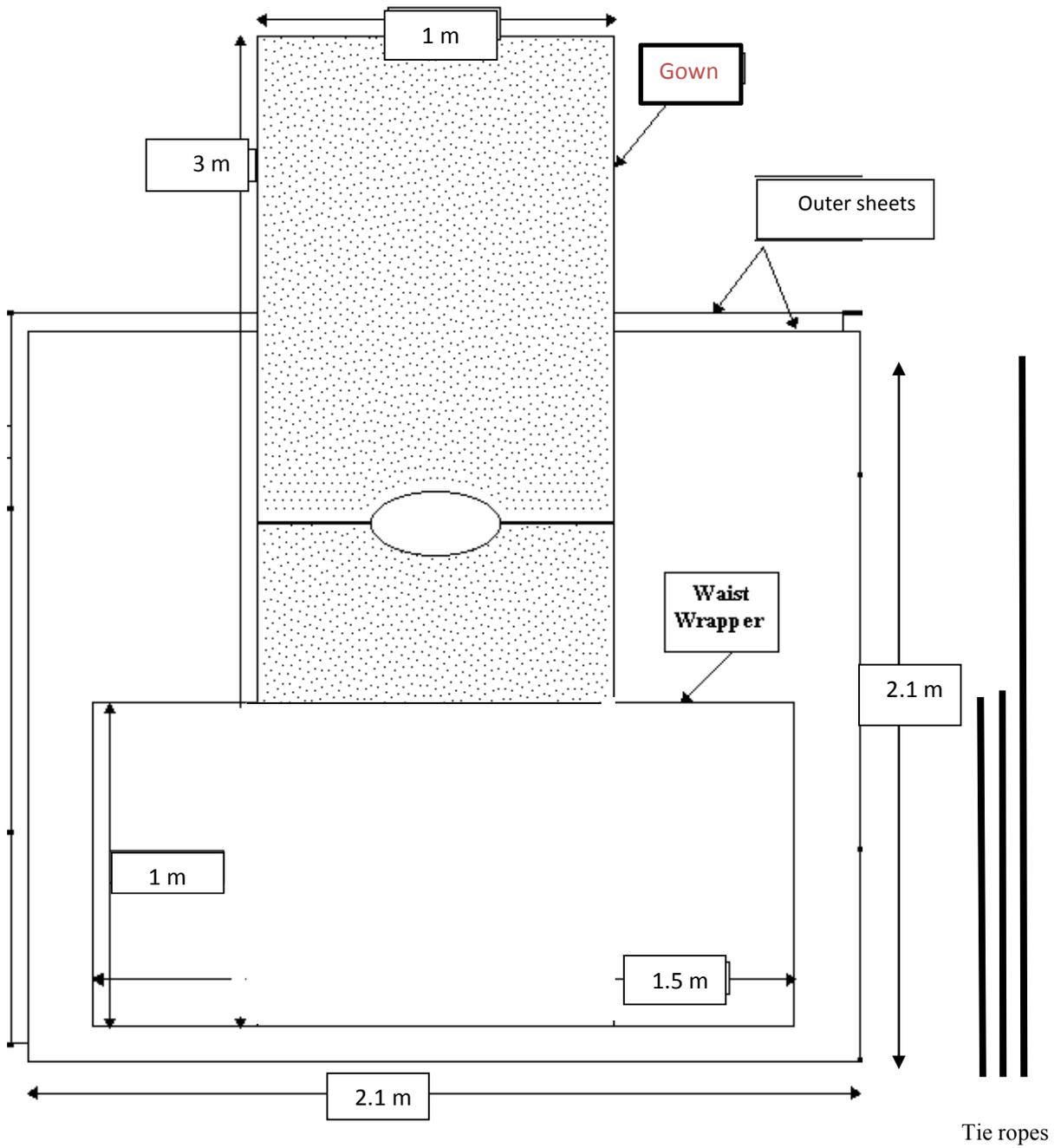
On the basis of the above, if the hadith stating that women should be shrouded in five sheets is authentic, then that is the ruling, otherwise the presumption is that the same rulings apply to men and women except what is exempted by the proof.' End of quote.

Contents of A Woman's Shroud

1. Two outer sheets.
2. A loincloth to cover the lower region of the body.
3. A woman's gown (it is like a cloth only that its two sides are open).
4. A square-sized head cover for women.
5. Bands.



Female Kafan



[Chapter Six]

Washing and Shrouding

Washing the dead as well as shrouding, praying and burying him are all communal duties which when some Muslims carry them out the obligation is removed from the rest hence there is no sin upon them.

What is obligatory with respect to washing the dead person is ensuring that water touches all his body.

The Virtues of Washing, Shrouding and Burying the Dead

The Messenger of Allâh (salaLLâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

" مَنْ غَسَلَ مُسْلِمًا فَكَتَمَ عَلَيْهِ غَفَرَ اللَّهُ لَهُ أَرْبَعِينَ مَرَّةً ، وَمَنْ حَفَرَ لَهُ فَأَجَنَّهُ أُجْرِي عَلَيْهِ كَأَجْرِ مَنْسَكِنٍ أَسْكَنَهُ إِيَّاهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ، وَمَنْ كَفَّنَهُ كَسَاهُ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ مِنْ سُندُسٍ وَإِسْتَبْرَقٍ الْجَنَّةِ " رواه [طبراني]

‘Whoever washes a Muslim and conceals (his faults), Allâh will forgive him forty times. Whoever digs a Muslim’s grave for him, he will be rewarded as if he has built a house for him until the Day of Resurrection. Whoever also shrouds him Allâh will clothe him from silk and velvet on the Day of Resurrection.’

The washer should only intend the Face of Allâh with his action, not any reward or a word of praise in life, this is so because it is well established in the Sharî’ah that Allâh the Majestic and Most High will never accept acts of worship except when they are solely carried out to seek His Generous Face.

In the same vein, he should conceal whatever fault he sees in the body of the dead person such as some black dots on the face or some horrid signs on his body. Whoever divulges such secrets will be prevented from earning great rewards that come with the act of washing, shrouding, etc.

Who Should Wash the Dead?

He should be a Muslim of sound mind and intellect.

He should be considered to possess the following qualities:

One, the knowledge as to how to carry out the washing; even if he were from the general populace, he should be preferred.

Two, a person may have the requisite knowledge of how to carry out the washing but he is a transgressor – we seek refuge in Allâh – who freely goes beyond the limits set by Allâh, such a person can deny the dead person the right of concealment of faults, or carry out other blameworthy acts towards the dead person. This is the reason it is said: ‘Only trustworthy and honest persons should carry out the washing of the dead.’

Third, he must be trustworthy such that he will carry out the washing in the most correct manner.

The best person to wash a dead person is the one mentioned by the former in his wasiyyah before his death.

If that is not the case, then the duty falls on his father because he is the one believed would be more merciful to him, of course, he will have more knowledge about his son. The next person after him is the grandfather then other close relatives – in the order of their closeness.

If it were a female dead, the person mentioned by her in her wasiyyah has more right; this is then followed by her mother, her daughter, then those after them in the order of closeness.

The husband can wash her wife due to the statement of the Messenger of Allâh (salaLLâhu alayhi wa sallam) to Aisha:

"وَمَا ضَرَّكَ أَوْ مَتَّ قَبْلِي فَعَسَّأُنْكَ وَكَفَّنْتُكَ وَصَلَّيْتُ عَلَيْكَ وَدَفَنْتُكَ؟" رواه أحمد

‘No offence, if I wash, shroud, pray on and bury you if you were to die before me.’

Also, It was ‘Alee that washed Fâtimah – may Allâh be pleased with both of them.

The wife too can wash her husband. Abû Bakr stated in his wasiyyah that his wife should wash him.

Any man or woman can wash a dead person that is less than seven years in age, whether he is a male or female, because no significance should attached to the nakedness of a kid of such age.

If an adult man should die in the midst of adult women and his wife or mother is not among them, what they should do – according to the view of the majority of the scholars – is that they cannot wash him. Rather, they will only perform

tayamum (dry ablution) for him, they will rub sand over his two palms then use them to wipe his face and two palms. The same ruling applies if it were a woman that dies in the midst of men.

Some scholars are of the opinion that they (a group of women among whom a male dies) can wash him with his cloth on; that is, they will just pour water over all his body without touching him. Some other people of knowledge say he should just be buried without being washed; the latter view is weak.

It is not permissible for a Muslim to wash a disbeliever or bury him.

Only those who need to be with the washer should be with him, to assist him in the washing. [Two other persons are enough with the washer].

Preparation for the Washing

1. Materials needed:

i. A table that the dead person could be placed on. The best is to tilt the table a bit to ease the passage of water.

ii. Cool water.

iii. Sidr leaves (lotus jujube); they serve the same purpose as toilet soap. The soap can also be used when the Sidr is not enough or not available.

The quantity of Sidr needed is a cup mixed in a gallon of water.

iv. Camphor. Square whitish substances that have a particular scent that drives away rodents, and soothes the body. Besides that, it serves other medicinal values.

Quantity needed is two cubes grinded and mixed in a gallon of water.

v. A censer (perfume-like). To be placed beside the dead person, it gives some incense for the dead and the shrouds when washed three times.

vi. Cotton.

vii. Hand gloves – if available, otherwise a piece of cloth, to be worn over the hand of the washer to prevent touching the nakedness of the dead person directly with the hand.

The Washing Steps

In the hadith of Umm ‘Atiyyah (may Allâh be pleased with her) she said: ‘The Messenger of Allâh (salaLLâhu alayhi wa sallam) entered upon us while we were washing his daughter, and said:

" اغسِلْنَهَا ثَلَاثًا أَوْ خَمْسًا أَوْ أَكْثَرَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ بِمَاءٍ وَسِدْرٍ، وَاجْعَلْنَ فِي الْأَخْرَةِ كَأْفُورًا، فَإِذَا فَرَغْتُنَّ فَأَذِنِّي "

‘Wash her three or five times or more with water and Sidr. Make the last washing with camphor. When you are through let me know.’

‘So when we finished we informed him, then he sent a loin-cloth to us and said:

" أَشْعِرْنَهَا إِيَّاهُ " رواه مسلم

‘Cover her body (lower region) with it.’

Ayyûb (may Allâh bestow mercy on him) said: Hafsa (may Allâh be pleased with her) narrated the like of hadith of Muhammad to me. There is statement that appears in the hadith of Hafsa:

" اغْسِلْنَهَا وَثَرًا "

‘Wash her in an odd number of times.’

It is also mentioned therein:

" ثَلَاثًا أَوْ خَمْسًا أَوْ سَبْعًا "

‘... Three, five or seven times.’

It also contains this:

" اِبْدَأَنَّ بِمَيَامِنِهَا وَمَوَاضِعِ الْوُضُوءِ مِنْهَا "

‘Start from her right and points of ablution.’

It is also stated that Umm ‘Atiyyah (may Allâh be pleased with her) said:

" وَمَشَطْنَاهَا ثَلَاثَةَ قُرُونٍ " رواه البخاري

‘We coiffed her hair into three.’

It is recommended that the washing be carried out as stated below:

1. Removing all his cloths but that his nakedness should be covered – from the navel to the knee, at least. The best is to cover him from the chest to the knee.
2. Removing or reducing all ornament such as earring, ring or other things that might be on the dead person. Except if removing it will cause some difficulty upon the dead person, and then it should be left alone.
3. Loosening the braids, removing the nail polish or any other medical adhesives, or anything that will prevent the water from reaching all the parts of the body.
4. If the dead person is not stiff, he can be made to sit such that his stomach will eject some undesirable things in his bowel. This should be gently done three times. Then the washer can wear gloves or any piece of cloth on his left hand and use it to clean out whatever might have hanged in his anus. The cleaning can be repeated until it is certain that the region is clean. The front and back genitals

should be washed; someone can help pour water over the hand of the washer. If the dead person is however stiff or is just brought from the morgue (where he has been iced), his two legs might just be opened while the washer uses his left hand (with gloves or otherwise over it) to clean his private region. Water should be poured well over the dirty region yet the nakedness must not be exposed. If the washer observes that dirt still comes out from the anus, he can wash him one or two more times. If the dirt persists after that, a pad of cotton or cloth can be used to block the outlet.

The above is the view of the majority of the scholars. They have cited the following as their proof: 'Alee said: 'I washed the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) and was expecting to see what we see in the dead but I never saw anything, he was good looking both alive and dead.'

They also say doing so is the best way to protect the dead person during washing or when being taken to the grave; that he should end upon cleanness.

5. The washer should make an intention, say Bismillâh then begin to perform ablution for the dead person once. The Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) had said: 'Start from her right and points of ablution.' Meanwhile, the washer will not put water into his nostrils or mouth. He will rather put his wetted cloth on the lips, the teeth and nostrils of the dead person, to clean them.

6. He should wash the body of the dead person three times as illustrated below:

The First Wash: With water and Sidr (or soap) with the use of a piece of cloth. He will first wash the body of the dead person with the Sidr froth, and then he will proceed to his right hand side from the upper part then the lower part. This is due to what the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said: 'Start from her right side.' Then he will proceed to the left while he rubs all the parts of the body with water. Each of that ends under the cover.

The Second Wash: Also with water and Sidr. Just like the first wash, no difference.

The Last Wash: This time around water and camphor. This is due to the statement of the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam): 'Make the last wash to be with camphor.'

The washer can add to that, even he can go as far as seven or more than; that when there is a necessity for it – such as if the body is still unclean.

7. The body should be dried very well and another dry cover should be used for that purpose.

8. If it is a woman, her hair can be braided into three and made to go backwards.

9. Cotton pads can be used to cover the orifices in the dead person to prevent the coming out of dirty things.

10. The dead person should be perfumed. Though camphor has been used in his wash – that is a form of perfuming – some other perfume can still be applied on him in parts of the body such as the ones he used in prostrating (to Allâh) or places that are suspected to retain impurities such as the stomach and (the hollows) of the knees. Musk perfume or similar substances could be used. There is nothing wrong if the perfume is applied to all his body.

Observations

1. If dirt such as urine or faeces or fart comes out of the dead person after he had been washed before the shrouding, the places of the dirt should be washed again and ablution is performed for him. Some other scholars are of the view that another full washing should take place in an odd number of times. When it gets to seven however, his private region should be covered with cotton pads, and if anything comes out after that, ablution alone should be made for him with no additional washing. But if any impurity comes out of the body after it has been shrouded, then shroud should not be opened neither should the washing repeated.

2. When a stillborn is four months old, it should be washed, prayed over and given name. this is due to what the Messenger of Allâh (salaLLâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

‘Verily the creation of any of you took place in the womb of your mother in forty days as a sperm drop then another forty days as a clot of blood then another forty days as a flesh, then an angel will be sent to him and breathe life into him...’

That is, after four months.

If it were before the fourth month, it is just a lump of flesh. It should be buried anywhere without washing or Salâh.

The Shrouding Steps

1. The shroud should be placed under the woman after being arranged as illustrated in the previous page in order to make the entire procedure easy. She should firstly be wrapped with an open sheet of cloth; then the cloth used to cover the nakedness will be removed from the underneath. A gown is then worn for her and then the head cover. She is then wrapped in an open sheet in a way that the right edge of the sheet will cover her left side while the left edge will cover the right side. The same thing will be done with the second sheet.
2. The shrouds should be each wrapped around the dead person at three points: the top, middle and the lower region. It could be more than that but in an odd number provided there is a reason for it.

[Chapter Seven]

Death Announcement and Condolences

An-Na'y is informing the people about the death of a particular person. In short, it is permissible to announce the death of a person so far such is not accompanied with the practices of the Jâhiliyyah such as praise-singing, eulogies and praising him with attributes people know that he did not possess, or if the death announcement is accompanied with pride and showing-off.

Ibn Hajar (may Allâh bestow mercy on him) said: Not every death announced is prohibited. Rather, it is the like of the announcement of the people of Jâhiliyyah that is prohibited.

Sometimes death announcement can become obligatory, like if what is intended with it is to call the attention of those who will render the dead person's right to him, such as washing him, shrouding and performing funeral prayer on him.

Also, death announcement can be recommendable, for instance, if it is hoped that when the death is announced people will seek forgiveness for the deceased or perform prayer on him. There is a narration in Sahîh Al-Bukhârî and Muslim on the authority of Abû Hurairah (may Allâh be pleased with him) that the Prophet (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) announced the death of Negus of Abyssinia (An-Najjâshî) on the day of his death. The Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) went to the prayer-ground, arranged them in rows and said four Takbeers.

What the Family of the Deceased Must Do

The relatives of the deceased must be patient whenever the news of the death of their loved one reaches them.

Allâh the Most High said:

﴿ وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالشَّمَرَاتِ ۗ وَبَشِيرِ الصَّابِرِينَ ﴾
البقرة ١٥٥

“Be sure We shall test you with something of fear and hunger, some loss in goods or lives or the fruits (of your toil), but give glad tidings to those who patiently persevere.” [Al-Baqarah: 155]

They must also show pleasure with what Allâh has decreed; that everything He decrees for His slave – whether good or bad – is according to wisdom unknown to the slave. The Far-Reaching Wisdom is Allâh’s.

Showing sadness with the hearts, when it is accompanied with submission to Allâh’s decree without showing anger and despair, is not in conflict with the belief in Allâh’s preordainment. Rather that is considered as a part of patience over tribulation. Whoever feels the heat of a tribulation in his heart and is patient and hopeful of rewards from Allâh, it will indeed fetch such a person a great recompense from Allâh.

The Prophet (sallallaahu ‘alayhi wasallam) was reported to have said:

" إِنْ عَظُمَ الْجَزَاءُ مَعَ عَظِيمِ الْبَلَاءِ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ إِذَا أَحَبَّ قَوْمًا ابْتَلَاهُمْ فَمَنْ رَضِيَ فَلَهُ رِضَا وَمَنْ سَخِطَ فَلَهُ سَخَطٌ." رواه ترمذي

‘Indeed the enormousness of the reward comes with the severity of the tribulation. Whenever Allâh loves a people, He tries them. Whoever is pleased with Allah’s decision will earn the pleasure (of Allâh) and whoever is displeased will earn the displeasure (of Allâh).’

The family of the deceased must also make the statement of submission to Allâh. They should say: Innâ Lillâh wa Innâ Ilayhi Râji’ûn (‘We are from Allâh, and to Him we shall return’).

On the authority of Al-Husayn bn ‘Aliyy from the Prophet (sallaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) who said:

" مَا مِنْ مُسْلِمٍ وَلَا مُسْلِمَةٍ يُصَابُ بِمُصِيبَةٍ فَيَذْكُرُهَا وَإِنْ قَدَّمَ عَهْدَهَا فَيُحْدِثُكَ ذِكَّ اسْتَرْجَاعًا إِلَّا جَدَّدَ اللَّهُ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى لَهُ عِنْدَ ذِكِّكَ فَأَعْطَاهُ مِثْلَ أَجْرِهَا يَوْمَ أُصِيبَ " رواه أحمد

‘No Muslim man or woman will be afflicted with an affliction and mentions it even if it had occurred to him for long, and it made him say: Innâ Lillâh wa Innâ Ilayhi Râji’ûn (‘We are from Allâh, and to Him we shall return’), except that Allâh the Most High will renew it as a result of that and grant him the like of its reward the day of the affliction.’

He can add the following: Allahumma ajrnî fee museebatee wa akhlif lee khayran min-ha [O Allâh, reward me over my affliction and replace what is better than it for me]. Umm Salamah (may Allâh be pleased with her) said: I heard the Messenger of Allâh (sallaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) say:

" مَا مِنْ مُسْلِمٍ نُصِيبُهُ مُصِيبَةً فَيَقُولُ مَا أَمَرَهُ اللَّهُ إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ ۖ اللَّهُمَّ أَجْرِنِي فِي مُصِيبَتِي وَأَخْلِفْ لِي خَيْرًا مِنْهَا . إِلَّا أَخْلَفَ اللَّهُ لَهُ خَيْرًا مِنْهَا " . رواه مسلم

‘No Muslim will be afflicted by an affliction and say what Allâh has commanded: Innâ Lillâh wa Innâ Ilayhi Râji’ûn (‘We are from Allâh, and to Him we shall return’) Allahumma ajrnî fî musîbatî wa akhlif lî khayran min-ha [‘O Allâh, reward me over my affliction and replace what is better than it for me’] except that Allâh will do so.’

She (may Allâh be pleased with her) said: When Abû Salamah died (may Allâh be pleased with him) I said: who among the Muslims is better than Abû Salamah? His household was the first to migrate to the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam). But I said what he (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said we should say and Allâh substitute him with the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam).’

Wailing Over the Dead

Wailing over the dead (An-Niyâhah) is an exhibition of despair, anger and cry. It is usually done with a loud voice and lamentation.

Some scholars widened the meaning of wailing to include everything that can fire up in the afflicted feeling of affliction such as a sermon and presentation of poetry. That is the view of Shaykhul-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah (may Allâh bestow mercy on him).

On the authority of Abû Mâlik al-Ash’arî (may Allâh be pleased with him) the Prophet (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

"أَرْبَعٌ فِي أُمَّتِي مِنْ أَمْرِ ۖ جَاهِلِيَّةٍ لَا يَتْرُكُونَهُنَّ: ۖ فَخْرٌ فِي الْأَحْسَابِ ، وَطَعْنٌ فِي الْأَنْسَابِ ، وَالاسْتِسْقَاءُ بِالنُّجُومِ ، وَالنِّيَاحَةُ" رواه مسلم

‘Four practices in my Ummah are from the matters of Jâhiliyyah; they will not shun them: taking pride in one’s ancestry, vilifying people’s lineage, seeking rain with stars and wailing.’

On the authority of ‘Abdullâh bn Mas’ûd (may Allâh be pleased with him), he said the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

"يَسَّ مِنَّا مَنْ ضَرَبَ الْخُدُودَ وَشَقَّ الْجُيُوبَ وَدَعَا بِدَعْوَى الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ" رواه مسلم

‘He is not one of us, he who slaps the cheeks, tears the cloths and makes a cry like that of the time of ignorance.’

Islam prohibits wailing over the dead because it is tantamount to protesting against Allâh’s decree and preordainment. The Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) indeed described it as an act of Jâhiliyyah, and promised whoever is guilty of it a painful torment. The Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) would take oath of allegiance from the women as regard wailing, and would prohibit them from it. There is a report in the Sahîhayn (of Al-Bukhârî and Muslim) to that effect, on the authority of Umm ‘Atiyyah (may Allâh be pleased with her).

Indeed the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) had said:

"نَائِحَةٌ إِذَا مَاتَتْ قَبْلَ مَوْتِهَا تَقَامُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَعَلَيْهَا سُرْبَالٌ مِنْ قَطْرَانَ وَدَرَعٌ مِنْ جَرَبٍ." رواه مسلم

‘If the wailing woman does not repent before she dies, she will be raised on the Day of Resurrection wearing a cloak of tar and a gown of sack.’

As for shedding tears from the eyes and sadness in the heart, that is not prohibited.

Ibn ‘Abbâs reported – back to the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) – as thus:

"إِيَّاكُنَّ وَنَعِيْقَ الشَّيْطَانِ."

‘Be wary of the cawing of the devil.’

Then he (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

"إِنَّهُ مَهْمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْعَيْنِ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ وَمِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ، وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْيَدِ وَاللِّسَانِ فَمِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ" رواه أحمد

‘Whatever comes from the eyes and the heart is from Allâh the Mighty and the Most Sublime; but what the hand and the tongue do, is from the devil.’

Mourning

Al-Hidâd (mourning) linguistically means 'prevention.' Al-Hidâd prevents the woman in mourning from many things she used to do before.

In the Sharî'ah, Al-Hidâd is when the woman who is bereaved of her husband shuns all kinds of beautification such as the use of kohl, use of dye and makeup with which she beautify herself for her husband. Likewise are different kinds of (women) perfume, cologne, ornaments such as necklaces, rings, bracelets, earrings, bangles and other things which women used to wear for beautification.

Ruling of Mourning

It is obligatory upon a wife to mourn the death of her husband; the period of the mourning is four months and ten days, provided she is not pregnant. The proof for that is what is authentically reported in Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Umm Habîbah and Zaynab bint Jahsh – both of whom were wives of the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam), that he (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

" لَا يَحِلُّ لِمَرْأَةٍ تُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ أَنْ تُحَدِّثَ عَلَى مَيِّتٍ فَوْقَ ثَلَاثٍ، إِلَّا عَلَى زَوْجٍ أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ وَعَشْرًا " .
متفق عليه

‘It is not permissible for a woman who believes in Allâh and the Last Day to mourn over any death above three (that is, three nights) except if the deceased were to be her husband then she will have to mourn his death for four months and ten days.’

But if she is pregnant, her waiting period will end when she puts to bed.

The proof for the above is what has come authentically in Sunan An-Nasâ'î that Sabî'ah Al-Aslamiyyah (may Allâh be pleased with her) put to bed after the death of her husband, just half of the month after, then the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) told her:

" قَدْ حَلَّتِ فَأَنْكِحِي مَنْ شِئْتِ " رواه النسائي

‘You have become free; so get married to whomever you wish.’

‘Umar bn Al-Khattâb (may Allâh be pleased with him) used to say: ‘If the woman should be delivered of what is in her belly while her (dead) husband is still on the bed (where he died), not yet buried in his grave, the woman’s waiting period has ended.’

If it were for other than the husband then the mourning is recommended (not obligatory); and cannot exceed three days. On the authority of Umm ‘Atiyyah (may Allâh be pleased with her) the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

لَا تُجِدُّ امْرَأَةٌ عَلَى مَيِّتٍ فَوْقَ ثَلَاثٍ إِلَّا عَلَى زَوْجٍ أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ وَعَشْرًا وَلَا تَلْبَسُ ثَوْبًا مَصْبُوعًا إِلَّا تَوْبَ عَصَبٍ وَلَا تَكْتَجِلُ وَلَا تَمَسُّ طِيْبًا إِلَّا إِذَا طَهَّرَتْ نُبْدَةَ مِنْ قُسْطٍ أَوْ أَظْفَارٍ " رواه البخاري ومسلم

‘A woman should not mourn above three days except if the deceased is her husband then she can mourn for four months and ten days. At that, she should not put on a dyed cloth except a cloth of non-visible dye; she should not use the kohl nor wear perfume except when she is getting over from menstrual period; she can use some then.’

What the Woman in ‘Iddah (of A Husband’s Death) Must Do

She must remain in her house and shun perfume and cosmetics. Only necessities would make her leave the house; when there is no one else to assist her with them. Among such is the search for livelihood and a medical treatment.

Ibn Al-Qayyim (may Allâh bestow mercy on him) said about the mourning woman: ‘This is from the completeness and wisdom of this Sharî’ah, and the fact that it ensures what will benefit the slaves in the best of ways. That the dead should be mourned is aimed at exalting the affliction arising from the death which in the period of Jâhiliyyah was exaggerated beyond the bounds such that it would lead to tearing of cloths, beating of cheeks, shaving of heads, self-cursing and wailing. The woman would sit for a year in the innermost corner of her house; and she would not touch the perfume, apply oil on her body and not take a bath among other practices; acts that are indicative of showing anger with the Lord the Majestic, and His Decree. Thus Allâh the Most High and the Most Sublime, out of His mercy and love, declared null and void, the practice of Jâhiliyyah, and substituted it with patience, praise, saying Innâ Lillâh wa Innâ Ilayhi Râji’ûn which are better for the bereaved in life and the hereafter.

‘Since it is known that the occurrence of death often comes with some grief, despair and pains for the bereaved as humanly possible, Allâh the All-Wise and All-

Knowing permits it for the mourners to mourn just three days with which they can attain some rest. Thus any day above those three days will only cause more harm unlike if the three days had been adhered to; the benefits in the latter outweigh its possible harm this is because stopping people from mourning over the demise of their loved ones is indeed a difficult thing for them to bear. Therefore, some acts are permitted in mourning so that abstaining from other acts which are prohibited will not be hurtful. It is natural that when a soul is given some of what it desires, it will be satisfied with it. If it were asked with respect to other things it has been denied, its answer will be softer than if all those things were to be denied altogether.

Whoever ponders over some intricacies of the Sharī'ah and its wisdom will clearly see that there is fact in its commandments and prohibitions. The Sharī'ah is such that when it prohibits people from something, it gives them a better and more beneficial substitute, and makes permissible for them other things they might need to do so that it will be easy for them to drop the prohibited.

Excellence of Condolences

On the authority of Al-Aswad from 'Abdullâh from the Prophet (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) who said:

" مَنْ عَزَى مُصَابًا فَلَهُ مِثْلُ أَجْرِهِ " رواه [ترمذي]

‘Whoever consoles an afflicted person will have the like of his reward.’

How the Condolence is Carried Out

There is no specific supplication to be said during condolences to say others are not acceptable. Rather every statement of condolence is acceptable so far it does not contain anything prohibited under the Sharī'ah. But there is no doubt that the best of the supplications at condolences is what has come authentically in the Sahîhayn and others, that the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said to his daughter when a son of hers died:

" إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَا أَخَذَ قَوْلَهُ مَا أُعْطِيَ وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ عِنْدَهُ بِأَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى فَمُرْهَا فَلْتَصْبِرْ وَاتَّخِذِي سَبَبًا " متفق عليه

Innâ Lillâh mâ akhadha wa lahu ma a'tâ wa kullu sha'yn 'inda-hu bi'ajalin musamma, fal'tasbir wal-tahtasib [‘Allâh possess what He has re-taken, He still

possesses what He gives, but all things are with Him for an appointed time. [Tell her] to be patient and hope for rewards.’]

Other expressions could be made such as ‘may you be rewarded in manifolds,’ ‘may Allâh condole you in the best way and forgive your dead one.’

In reply the bereaved can say: ‘May Allâh reward you best,’ or what is similar. This is better.

Preparing Food for the Family of the Deceased

It is a way of showing condolence to prepare food for the family of the dead one and take it to them provided they are too busy with the affair of the death and cannot prepare the food themselves.

When the news of the death of Ja’far came, the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) said:

"اصْنَعُوا لآلِ جَعْفَرٍ طَعَامًا فَقَدْ أَتَاهُمْ مَا يُسْغِلُهُمْ" رواه أحمد

‘Prepare food for the family of Ja’far; they are preoccupied.’

When can condolences be given?

Condolence has no specific time in the Sharî’ah. As for the hadith: ‘No condolence is acceptable after three days,’ it is a weak hadith.

It is not after three or ten days the bereaved will forget the happening. If we say he will, then there is no necessity for condolences. Rather it is among the intent of condolences that the bereaved should have a feeling that people are with him. This is one of the greatest aims of the Sharî’ah because of what it contains of unity of hearts such that people will be like a single body which when a part of it aches the rest shares of the pain. Therefore condolence should be when we see anything that calls for it in the bereaved; whenever he is sad as a result of the death, we should condole him, whether it is within the three days or beyond.

The Permissible and Impermissible things During Condolences

Acts such as restricting the condolence to three days and throwing big gatherings for it in a special hall coupled with merriment and hiring of Qur'anic reciters (or singers) are a burden and innovation not sanctioned by Allâh. Muslims must shun such and warn against them.

Today, condolences have turned into feast rather a fanfare that has placed the family of the deceased in difficulties the extent of which is known to only Allâh. It is authentically reported from Jarîr bn 'Abdillâh Al-Bajalî (may Allâh be pleased with him) who was a Companion of the Messenger of Allâh (salaLLâhu alayhi wa sallam) that he said: 'We used to view people gathering for a condolence as well as preparing food (for that purpose) after the burial as Niyâhah (wailing).'

The Companion said it is Niyâhah when two things happen in a condolence: gathering in the house of the bereaved and persistent sitting with them; two, that food is prepared by the family of the deceased to honour the condolers, and to show that they are rich.

AS for gathering for condolence, I am not aware of any Salaf that calls that, in itself, an act of Niyâhah, or that it is prohibited.

On the authority of Aisha the wife of the Messenger of Allâh (salaLLâhu alayhi wa sallam) she said whenever anybody died in her family and women sit together and later leave except her family and some close friends, she would command that a pot be brought and Talbînah (a kind of food made from milk, flour and honey) should be prepared in the pot then Tharîd (loaves roasted with stew) should be prepared while the Talbînah will be poured over it. She would say to the people: 'Eat; I heard the Messenger of Allâh (salaLLâhu alayhi wa sallam) say:

تَلْبِينَةُ مَجْمَعَةٌ فَوَادٍ مَرِيضٍ، تَذَهَبُ بِبَعْضِ حُزْنٍ " رواه البخاري

'Talbînah soothes the heart of a sick person and removes some sadness.'

The version is according to the report of Al-Bukhârî.

[Chapter Eight]

Innovations in Funerals

Al-Bid'ah is linguistically what is invented without a prior example.

In the Sharī'ah however, it is an invented matter in the Deen that has no authority of the Qur'ân or the hadith.

Examples of innovations prevalent in funerals:

When death approaches:

- Placing a copy of the Qur'ân by the head of the dying person.

After the death:

- Sending women in menstrual periods away from the room where the death has occurred; as well as sending women in post-partum away and anyone who is the state of sexual impurity.
- The belief that the soul of the deceased person still roams in the place where he has died.
- Reciting Qur'ân beside the dead person until his washing begins.
- Putting a green tree branch in the room where the death has occurred.
- Cutting the fingernails of the deceased as well as shaving his pubic hair.
- Showing grief over the death for a full year such that women will not apply henna on their palms neither will they put on any good cloths or wear cosmetics.
- Folding the rugs, covering the mirrors and the likes.
- Announcing the death over pulpits or megaphones; and mentioning his virtues impacts.
- What people say when they are told of a person's death: 'Let us recite Faatihah for the departed soul.'

During Washing:

- Putting cotton in his anus, throats and nose.
- Switching on a lamp at the place where the washing has taken place, for a period of three nights – from sunset to sunrise. Some people make it seven days while some others add to that. They also used to do the same where he has died.
- The washer making particular supplications at every limb of the dead person when washing him.
- Using clysters to clean the stomach of the dead person.
- Pouring water of Zamzam over him at the end of the washing.
- Making loud supplication when washing the corpse, and when taking him away.
- Packing the hair of a dead woman to fall between her breasts.

During Condolences:

- Preparing large tents (to receive guests).
- Restricting condolences to three days.
- Restricting giving alms on behalf of the dead soul to the three months of Rajab, Sha'bân and Ramadan.
- Reciting the Qur'ân for him and completing the recitation (of the whole Qur'ân) during the period of condolence.
- Staging remembrance service after forty days, or every passing year.
- Hiring a professional reciter of the Qur'ân who will do so musically. There is no report from the Messenger of Allâh (salaLlâhu alayhi wa sallam) or the Salaf regarding recitation of the Qur'ân at condolences.
- Staging a feast as if it were a marriage ceremony.

"أَحْمَدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي بِنِعْمَتِهِ تَتِمُّوا صَالِحَاتُ"

All praise is to Allah where by his grace good deeds are performed

For any corrections or comments contact us on

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