

Islamic Academy of Coventry

A Practical Guide to

Funeral Rites

In Islam

Maulana Ebrahim Noor



Contents

Foreword	5	Ghusl of the Deceased	24
Introduction	6	Important Facts about the Ghusl	25
		Performing the Ghusl	25
Preparing a Will	8	Shrouding the Body	29
		Visiting the deceased before the Burial	30
What to do when a person is passing away	10	The Janaazah Prayer	31
Physical Signs of a person who is nearing death	12	How should the Janaazah Salaat be read?	32
– in the state of Sakaraat	13	Janaazah Prayer for a Child	34
How to perform the Talqeen	13	Moving the body to the Graveyard	35
What to do when the Muhtadhar passes away	14	The Islamic Burial Process	35
Legal Preparation	14	Laying the body in the Grave	36
Burial Times	14	Filling the Grave	38
Scenario 1 – Person passes away at home, expected death, cause of death is known, no post mortem needed.	15	Sprinkling Water on the Grave	39
Scenario 2 – Person passes away at home and cause of death is unknown.	17	Planting a Branch at the Head of the Grave	39
Post Mortem	17	Reading Opening & Closing Verses of Surah Al-Baqarah after burial	40
Inquest	18	Preparing Food for the Day of the Funeral	41
Scenario 3 – Person Passes away in Hospital and cause of death is known.	18	Building Structures on Graves	41
Scenario 4 – Person Passes away in Hospital and cause of death is unknown	18	Visiting the Graveyard	42
At the Cemetery - The Burial Process	18	Taaziyat - Visiting the House of the Deceased	42
Legal Process - Quick Lookup Chart	19	Preparing Food for the household of the deceased	43
Ghusl – Bathing the Deceased	20	Period of Mourning	44
What to do with the body before the Ghusl.	20	Preparation for Death	44
Where to keep the body between the time of passing away and performing Ghusl	21	Appendix A – First & Last Ruku's of Surah Al-Baqarah	46
Preparation for Ghusl & Shrouding	22	Glossary	47
Preparing the Shroud	22		
Preparing the Qamees (Shirt)	23		
Laying the Shroud	23		

Foreword

In the name of Allah, the beneficent, the merciful

All praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of the universe and Master of our fortunes. Peace and blessings upon the best of creation who illuminated the world, and upon his companions and all those who follow in his footsteps until the day of judgement.

Islam is a complete religion that provides guidance regarding all matters of life including for moments of happiness and grief. This guidance is underpinned with simplicity and a focus on following the Prophetic Sunnah. It is a sad fact that we have imposed certain cultural practices and innovations upon ourselves and complicated matters that were devised simple and easy. The way in which we conduct ourselves during marriages and deaths illustrate this. My respected father, Shaykhul Hadith Mufti Shabbir Ahmed Sahib mentions that even dying has become an expensive matter. By the grace of Almighty Allah, my respected colleague Moulana Ebrahim Noor Sahib has compiled this book trying to address this, by detailing the Prophetic Sunnah and guidance regarding the deceased. The book dispels many myths and is supplemented with references from the books of Hadith and jurisprudence.

Upon the death of a family member, most families in the UK struggle with understanding and managing the end to end process of burial. This book is unique in this regard as it provides a step by step guide for the end to end process in light of the legal framework of England. Thus, this book is extremely beneficial for Muslims across the UK. Whilst some aspects of the process are unique to Coventry, the book can be adapted by other towns and cities as most of the processes are the same.

I pray to Almighty Allah to make this book beneficial and a means of guidance, and grant us a good death in the state of faith.

Yusuf Shabbir

Blackburn, UK

www.nawadir.org

1 Dhul Qa'dah 1436 H.

Introduction

All Praise is to Allah the Lord of the Worlds, Master of the Creation, the Forgiving, and the Merciful. Birth, life and death, this is the circle of life. A person is born into this world, spends a little time and then passes away. Allah ﷻ mentions in the Quran:

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ

Each and every being will have a taste of death. The one thing we can all be sure about and cannot deny is the fact that one day we will all be leaving this earth. Our life on this earth is merely a journey to our real abode in the hereafter. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ mentions in a Hadith:

كُنْ فِي الدُّنْيَا كَأَنَّكَ غَرِيبٌ أَوْ عَابِرُ سَبِيلٍ¹

“Live in this world as if you are a traveller or a wayfarer”. There is another Hadith where the Messenger of Allah ﷺ mentions:

الْكَيِّسُ مَنْ دَانَ نَفْسَهُ وَعَمِلَ لِمَا بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ وَالْعَاجِزُ مَنْ
اتَّبَعَ نَفْسَهُ هَوَاهَا وَتَمَنَّى عَلَى اللَّهِ²

“The intelligent person is the one who controls his self-desires and performs deeds for after his death, and the helpless person is the one who follows his self-desires and relies on Allah ﷻ”.

This booklet/course does not go over all the preparations one must make before they pass away as our whole lives are a preparation for the hereafter, but we will cover the necessary steps we must take as Muslims when another Muslim is about to pass away or passes away. This is a time of great grief and sadness which can lead people to perform acts which are against Shariah and are classified as Bida'h or innovation. People sometimes spend lavishly on funerals in the same way as they spend at weddings. People become a burden on the family of the deceased expecting to be dined on several occasions and the atmosphere at the funeral house becomes anything other than that. Many actions are done with the thinking that there is a basis for it in our religion but the reality is that there is no evidence to support them.

Rather than go through all of the innovative practises, we have identified the actions for which there is sound evidence. We have provided references where required, so we can have peace of mind that we are carrying out all of the rituals correctly. We will comprehensively review the process which will enable the burial to take place quickly, easily and most importantly in the accordance with Shariah.

Some of the subjects we will cover are as follows:

- What do we do when we see someone passing away?
- What legal paperwork do we need to go through with the burial?
- How to prepare the Kafn (Shroud) and bathe the body
- The correct burial process
- How to mourn
- Etiquettes of visiting the house of the deceased
- What can we do for those who have passed away

Another major factor we must address is that each city in our country has different burial arrangements with their local councils with regard to the times of burials, all the way through to whether the burial has to take place with a coffin or not. We will cover the guidelines for the City of Coventry but it is advised that this be replaced with the guidelines for the particular city in which this workshop will take place. We would recommend that the organisers of this workshop invite members of their local burial committee to go through the legal process during the workshop.

For reference, we have extensively used various texts including compilations on Hadith, Fiqh, etc. all of which are referenced throughout the booklet: We have also used the booklet “What to do when a Muslim Dies” which is available on www.islamicbulletin.org.

May Allah ﷻ grant the compilers of all these resources and all other resources, success in both worlds. I would like to add special mention to all the Scholars and friends who have helped me in preparing and verifying this booklet. Finally, by going through this material, it will Insha'Allah remind us all of our final abode and help us prepare correctly for the hereafter.

Ebrahim Noor

Islamic Academy Coventry

1 Sunan Tirmidhi 2255

2 Sunan Tirmidhi 2383

Preparing a Will

A person cannot be sure of the time or place when they are going to pass away. As a Muslim it is our duty to fulfil the rights of other people, which they have over us. One of these main rights is the right of inheritance which leads to the preparation of a Will.

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عُمَرَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا
أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ مَا حَقُّ امْرِئٍ مُسْلِمٍ
لَهُ شَيْءٌ يُوصِي فِيهِ يَبِيتُ لَيْلَتَيْنِ إِلَّا وَوَصِيَّتُهُ مَكْتُوبَةٌ عِنْدَهُ³

“Ibn Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrates that the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, it is not worthy for any Muslim that he spends two nights and he possesses an item on which he should make a bequest, except that the bequest for that item should be written down and with him”

The Quran mentions in detail the proportion of a person's wealth which must go to the respective relation. There are also many Hadith which also state the importance of preparing our wills. Theoretically, if our wealth was easily identifiable and we lived in a country where it would automatically be distributed according to Islamic law, then we could be fairly confident that our estate would be divided correctly. However, the truth of the matter is that many of us have wealth which is not common knowledge, for example we might have multiple properties, different bank accounts, shared accounts and properties in different countries as well.

As well as having our own assets, many people nowadays also have mortgages, loans from banks, loans from people which are not common knowledge. Many people give money as Karz-e-Hasana (interest free loan for a good cause) as well. So you can see how important it is to identify what a person actually owns and what he owes, to establish the value of a person's estate.

Here are a few points to consider:

- If you do not leave a will behind, the inheritance laws of this land will not distribute your wealth according to Islamic Law.
- Not leaving a will can lead to internal family disputes during the distribution of wealth.
- Islam has set fixed proportions of a person's wealth for certain relatives after they pass away.
- You can use up to one third of your wealth of your estate to distribute as you wish.
- The rest of your wealth from the estate will be divided according to Islamic Law.
- You cannot make a bequest for anyone who will inherit from you.

So what do we need to do next?

- Work out the total value of our estate, which includes, properties, cash, gold, all assets however minute that are under sole ownership.
- Work out the amount of money or assets we owe to third parties which includes, loans, mortgages etc.
- Calculate the proportion owned in shared accounts, properties and assets.
- Identify any assets which have been borrowed or belong to another person.
- Identify any parties you would like to contribute to, from one third of your estate and how much you would like to contribute.
- Prepare your will, ensure it is legally binding and consult your local scholars if necessary.
- Ensure that a member of the family knows about all of your finances, direct debits, standing orders, bills which need to be paid regularly, from which accounts they get paid etc. This will ensure there is no added pressure on the family if you pass away and they are unaware of the household finances.

So you can see from the above that this could be a complicated exercise if you own a lot of assets, but it is a necessary exercise. It may also be very sensitive, as you may have to consult family members about assets, especially if you live in a household with an extended family.

There are many resources which offer services to help you complete a Will according to Islamic Law. 1st Ethical has a very good guide for preparing a will which can be found at the following location.

<http://www.1stethical.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/WillsGuide2014Online.pdf>

What to do when a person is passing away

We may at some time come across a situation where we witness another Muslim person passing away. It is necessary that we aid the person in making their last few moments correct, therefore there are certain guidelines we must follow.

The person who is about to pass away and on whom the signs of death can be clearly seen, is called a Muhtadhar. This is taken from the Arabic word 'Hadhara' which means to be present. The reason why he is called a Muhtadhar is because death is present or the Angels of Death are present.

Question: In which position should we lay the person before they pass away?

Answer: Firstly, if moving the Muhtadhar causes discomfort then it is best to leave them as they are. If we can move them, then we should lie them on their right side facing the Qiblah, as this is the way they will be laid in the grave. In the grave the whole body should be tilted towards the right hand side (Qiblah), so try putting pillows under the left side of the Muhtadhar so the whole body is resting towards the right and Qiblah.

The evidence for this turning a person towards the Qiblah can be found in the following hadith:

عن يحيى بن عبد الله بن أبي قتادة عن أبيه : أن النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم حين قدم المدينة سأل عن البراء بن معرور فقالوا توفي و أوصى بثلثه لك يا رسول الله و أوصى أو يوجه إلى القبلة لما احتضر فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم : أصاب الفطرة

Abu Qatadah رضي الله عنه narrates from his father that when the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم came to Medinah he asked about Baraa ibn Ma'roor رضي الله عنه. They said that he had passed away and made a bequest of one third of his wealth for you oh Prophet of Allah and also made a bequest that he should be faced towards the Qiblah when he is close to death. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then said "He has attained fitrah", which means pure nature i.e. he has passed away on the natural disposition - Islam.

The evidence for turning a person on the right side can be found in the following Hadith:

عَنْ الْبَرَاءِ بْنِ عَازِبٍ قَالَ
قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا أَتَيْتَ مَضْجَعَكَ فَتَوَضَّأْ وَضُوءَكَ
لِلصَّلَاةِ ثُمَّ اضْطَجِعْ عَلَى شِقِّكَ الْأَيْمَنِ ثُمَّ قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ أَسْلَمْتُ وَجْهِي إِلَيْكَ
وَفَوَّضْتُ أَمْرِي إِلَيْكَ وَأَجَلْتُ ظَهْرِي إِلَيْكَ رَغْبَةً وَرَهْبَةً إِلَيْكَ لَا مَلْجَأَ وَلَا
مَنْجَا مِنْكَ إِلَّا إِلَيْكَ اللَّهُمَّ آمَنْتُ بِكِتَابِكَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلْتَ وَبِنَبِيِّكَ الَّذِي
أَرْسَلْتَ فَإِنْ مِتُّ مِنْ لَيْلَتِكَ فَأَنْتَ عَلَى الْفِطْرَةِ⁵

In the above Hadith narrated by Baraa ibn Aa'zib رضي الله عنه, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentions a number of actions a person should do before they go to sleep, one of which is to lay on the right hand side. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم further mentions that if you pass away that night, you have passed away on fitrah.

So from the above two hadith, we can determine that the Muhtadhar should be laid on their right hand side facing the Qiblah

Question: What should we pray near the dying person?

Answer: As per the Hadith below, it is recommended that Surah Yaseen be read in their presence.

عَنْ مَعْقِلِ بْنِ يَسَارٍ قَالَ
قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ اقْرَءُوا يَسَ عَلَى مَوْتَاكُمْ⁶

Ma'qal bin Yasaar رضي الله عنه narrates that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said "Recite Yaseen over your Dying"

The other opinion for this Hadith is that the word 'Mawtakum' is taken as the literal meaning, so it means "Recite Yaseen over your dead".

Question: Who is allowed to be present when the person is passing away?

Answer: We should allow the close family members to be present and people who would know what to do whilst the Muhtadhar is passing away. Any person who is in the state of ritual impurity (Janaabat) should not be present. If they would like to be present then they should perform Ghusl as soon as possible.

Question: What is Talqeen?

Answer: As per the Hadith below, Talqeen is the action to remind the person who is passing away of the kalimah.

عَنْ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ
عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ لَقِّنُوا مَوْتَاكُمْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ⁷

Abu Saaeed رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrates that the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said “Perform the Talqeen for your dead with La ilaha Ilallah”

In this Hadith the meaning of the word “your dead” are the people who are in the state of ‘Sakaraat’ i.e. about to die in a short while and the signs of death have become apparent

Physical Signs of a person who is nearing death – in the state of Sakaraat

A person may have been ill for some time, so it may be difficult to determine if their actual time of passing away has arrived. Some of the signs of a person who is approaching death are as follows:

- The quickening of the breath
- Nose becomes bent
- Temples subside
- Body becomes cold
- Body becomes weak

It is important that we recognize these signs so that we know we now need to make the correct preparations including calling close family and performing the Talqeen.

⁷ Sunan Tirmidhi 898

How to perform the Talqeen

A person should sit near the Muhtadhar and read the kalimah in a voice loud enough so that they can hear. When the Muhtadhar hears the kalimah, Insha Allah they will also pray it.

We should not instruct the Muhtadhar to read it, but keep on reciting it until the Muhtadhar recites the kalimah as well. Sometimes the Muhtadhar could be going through extreme pain so they may refuse to recite the kalimah if we keep on forcing them. Once the Muhtadhar has recited the kalimah, the people reciting the Talqeen should remain silent. This is to ensure that the last words the Muhtadhar recites are the kalimah.

If we start to discuss worldly matters and the Muhtadhar gets drawn into the conversation, the Talqeen will have to be repeated. Also if the Muhtadhar themselves start to talk about any worldly matters, we should repeat the Talqeen again.

Note: If the Muhtadhar recites any Zikr or says any religious thing after reciting the kalimah, the Talqeen does not have to be recited.

What to do when the Muhtadhar passes away

When the person has passed away, if the eyes are still open, they should be closed as per the actions of the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

عَنْ أُمِّ سَلَمَةَ قَالَتْ
دَخَلَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَلَى أَبِي سَلَمَةَ وَقَدْ شَقَّ بَصَرُهُ فَأَغْمَضَهُ⁸

“Umme Salamah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا narrates that the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ entered when Abi Salamah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ had passed away and his eyes were open, so he closed them.”

After closing the eyes, close the jaw gently and keep it in place by tying a strip of cloth around the head and tie it firmly at the top.

Straighten all of the limbs gently but do not force them. Sometimes if the body has been through certain conditions, the limbs will not straighten and forcing them could cause them to fracture or break. Place the legs together and tie the ankles together with a strip of cloth so they stay in place.

Remove all jewellery from the body, especially for women such as rings, necklaces, earring's, nose piercings etc.

⁸ Sahih Muslim 2711

Legal Preparation

Before the body can be buried, there are a number of documents a person will require before they can get permission for the burial. The person will have either passed away at home or at a hospital. There will be different scenarios as to whether the person will need to have a post mortem or not.

Sometimes, in trying to get the body buried as soon as possible we can cause inconvenience to the various associations which are aiding us in the burial, like the Doctors, Undertakers, Registrar's Office etc. We have to understand that they have a protocol they need to work under and standard procedures they need to follow. We have to try our best to get the burial done as soon as possible but under no circumstances should we expect any of them to break protocol and assist us at the first instance.

Note: For Coventry, a "Bereavement Service Protocol" has been agreed for our Community with the local Council. A Summary of this Information can be found in the following section. Each community should have their own arrangements with their respective councils.

Burial Times

This will vary for different cities depending on what arrangements the community has with the local councils. We have to remember when organizing the bathing (Ghusl) and the Janaazah Salaat, the time it will take to move the body to the cemetery and complete the burial process. Each burial will be given a fixed time slot so it is necessary that we arrive on time and complete the process within the allotted time frame.

The times for Burial in Coventry are as follows:

Monday to Friday:	The latest time for a funeral will be 2:30 pm
Saturdays:	If the death certificate has been obtained and the death registered between 8:30 and 10:30, permission may be obtained for a same day funeral.
Sundays:	There is currently no provision in Coventry for Burials on Sunday.
Bank Holidays:	There is currently no provision in Coventry for Burials on Bank Holidays.

Scenario 1 – Person passes away at home, expected death, cause of death is known, no post mortem needed.

1. Contact the family doctor. If this is out of hours then it might be difficult. Ensure you have the number of the surgery at hand and get in touch with them as soon as they open. If the doctor had visited the person in his final illness and had seen the deceased AFTER death or within 14 days of the death, they may issue a death certificate. The death certificate will contain the cause of death and is necessary. If for any reason the Doctor cannot issue the certificate then the death will be reported to the Duty Coroner and no paperwork is issued until at least the next normal working day.

Question: What if we can't get hold of the family doctor?

Answer: If we cannot get hold of the family doctor then we should inform the doctor's practise that we require a death certificate; they will then inform us of what we need to do.

2. Contact a member of the Local Muslim Burial Committee. They will help you with your preparations and answer any queries you may have. Their names can be obtained from your local Masjid.
3. Contact the local Bereavement Services (Details for Coventry Office are shown below). Once the death certificate has been obtained from the doctor, you will need to contact our local Bereavement Services to Arrange the Burial. The Burial will depend on obtaining the Certificate of Disposal from the Register Office. There will also be a cost involved for the burial. For latest costs please check with the Bereavement Services.

If for any reason the burial is delayed then there is also a surcharge. We must allow enough time to obtain the relevant documentation before we bury the deceased, so keep this in mind.

Note: To ensure that the grave is prepared to the correct size, we will need to supply them with the correct measurements. This will be the size of the coffin being used for the burial. Even if a coffin is not being used, we will need to supply them with details of the size of the casket which we will be using to transport the deceased. Please consult the Local Funeral Committee to obtain this information.

Coventry Bereavement Service

The Lodge
Cannon Hill Road
Coventry
CV4 7DF

Telephone: 024 7678 5486 | Email: bereavement.services@coventry.gov.uk

4. The next stage is to register the death, contact the Register Office by telephone and arrange an appointment to register the death (address and phone details are below). If there is not much time then it would be better if we attended the Register Office in person and see if we can obtain the relevant documentation as soon as they have time to see us. Only the following people are allowed to register the death:

- A relative of the deceased
- Someone present at the death
- The occupier of the house, or hospital, if he or she knew of the death
- Another person living at the house if he or she knew of the death
- The person making the arrangements with the funeral directors

The death must be registered within 5 days. The death Certificate should then be taken to the Register Office along with the following documents/information.

- Date and place of death
- The Medical Card of the deceased if available
- Name and surname of the deceased
- Maiden surname, if the deceased was a woman who had married
- Date and place of birth
- Occupation
- Name and occupation of spouse/civil partner, where the deceased was married or had a civil partnership.
- Usual address
- Whether the deceased was in receipt of a pension or allowance from public funds
- If the deceased was married or had a civil partner, the date of birth of the surviving widow, widower or civil partner.

Coventry Register Office
Cheylesmore Manor House
Manor House Drive
Coventry
CV1 2ND

Tel: 024 7683 3141 | Fax: 024 7683 3110
Email: registeroffice@coventry.gov.uk

Monday – Friday: Appointments can be made by phone between 8:00 and 20:00
Saturday: 9:00 – 13:00
Sundays & Bank Holidays: 10:00 - 11:00 (02476 832222)

The Registrar will then issue 2 Certificates

Certificate of Registration of Death (Death Certificate)

This certificate may take longer to process so may be posted. This certificate will be issued to the deceased person's next of kin to process any necessary claims and close down any bank accounts etc.

Certificate for Burial (Certificate of Disposal)

This is a Green Certificate and has to be handed to the Undertaker so he can give authorisation to proceed with the burial.

Out of Hours

If the person has passed away during the weekend or holiday period when the Register Office is closed, then certain provisions may be in place depending on your arrangement with the local authority. For people in Coventry, as mentioned earlier, we do have provision to bury on a Saturday providing we can make an appointment with the Register Office.

Scenario 2 – Person passes away at home and cause of Death is unknown

If a person passes away suddenly at home, in this instance an ambulance should be called to confirm that the person has indeed passed away. A local doctor can also be called if they are available. If the doctor can determine the cause of death then he may issue a certificate however further investigation may be needed to determine the cause of death. On this instance, the doctor will inform the police services who in turn will inform the Coroner. The Coroner is normally only needed for the following:

- The deceased was not visited by a doctor or had not seen a doctor in the last 14 days
- The cause of death cannot be determined
- Death was sudden, violent or caused by an accident

Post Mortem

A post-mortem examination, also known as an autopsy, is the examination of a body after death. The aim of a post-mortem is to determine the cause of death.

Post-mortems are carried out by pathologists (doctors who specialize in understanding the nature and causes of disease).

Once the Coroner gets the case, he can decide if a post-mortem is needed or not, to help determine the cause of death. The normal procedure for a post mortem is to perform a physical dissection of the body. This can then cause problems when we are performing the Ghusl of the deceased.

In some areas there may be an option to have an MRA Scan as an alternative. If it is determined that a post-mortem is necessary then please check with the Coroner if we can exercise our right to have the MRA alternative.

Please remember that the Coroner does not need the permission of the family in order to carry out the procedure. There also maybe delays in performing the procedure. At this time we can inform them that our religious obligations require us to bury the person as soon as possible, so they can try and get it done as soon as they can. The Coroners in our country are familiar with our requirements and are very accommodating, so they will try their best. Sometimes there will be delays, so we just have to exercise patience and let the process complete.

Once the Coroner has determined the cause of death then they will issue a certificate which we need to take with us to the Registrar's Office. This certificate will allow us to obtain the necessary documentation which we need for the burial.

The Green certificate – Certificate of Disposal will be given to the undertaker as mentioned before and the Certificate of Registration of Death which will be needed for other purposes.

Inquest

If the Coroner decides that there is still further investigation needed to determine the cause of death or if there were other factors involved like violence or an accident then an inquest will be held. This should not delay the burial process unless further examination of the body is required.

Scenario 3 – Person Passes away in Hospital and cause of death is known

1. The Doctor will issue the death certificate if the cause of death is known. There should be no need to perform the post mortem however if the Doctor wishes to perform a hospital post- mortem, they must obtain permission from the nearest relative if the dying person did not give consent prior to their death.
2. Follow the same steps as in Scenario 1

Scenario 4 – Person Passes away in Hospital and cause of death is unknown

The doctor will refer the case to the Coroner. The steps will be the same as in Scenario 2

At the Cemetery - The Burial Process

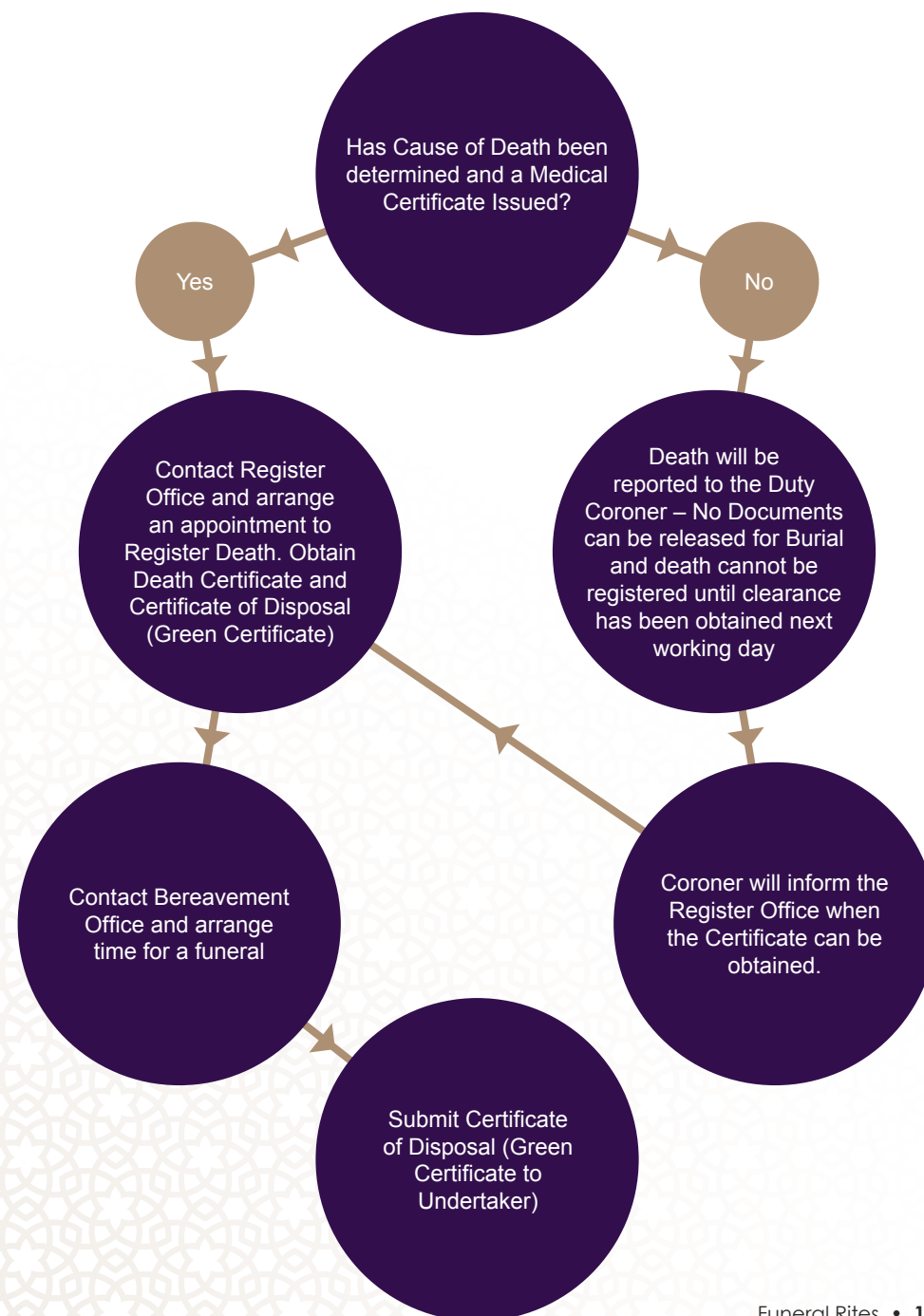
The Supervisor at the Cemetery will meet the procession at the gate and inform them where the grave is and where to park.

The Certificate of Disposal or the Green Certificate should be given to the Undertaker at the Cemetery so we can get permission to proceed with the Burial.

The burial will then commence, the grave will be filled by the mourners as per our Islamic Practice. There may be a need for the Undertaker to remove the Shoring's of the Grave. Once they have been removed the grave can then be filled.

Once the grave has been filled, the mourners will leave.

Legal Process - Quick Lookup Chart



Ghusl – Bathing the Deceased

Question: Why is Ghusl needed for the Deceased?

Answer: The wisdom behind bathing the deceased is that, Allah's servant who is leaving this world and going to the afterlife, Shariah has given the command that the body should be sent with honour and respect. There is no better way for the deceased to be sent with respect than to bathe them, make them clean and clothe them in clean sheets.

What to do with the body before the Ghusl.

Once the person has passed away, the body parts have been tied up and all jewellery removed, the next stage would be to prepare for the Ghusl. Whilst the preparation is going on, who is allowed to stay with the body? Are we allowed to touch it? What do we pray? These are just some of the questions which crop up time and time again.

Question: Can a woman sit near the body if she is on her menstrual cycle (haydh) or she is still experiencing post natal bleeding (nifaas)?

Answer: It is advisable that a woman who is in any of these states does not sit near the body.

Question: Are we allowed to read the Quran next to the body before it has had Ghusl?

Answer: It is disliked to recite Quran in the presence of the deceased until they have had the Ghusl.

Question: Are close family allowed to touch the body? Is there any sin in kissing the body of the deceased?

Answer: There is no harm in touching the body of the deceased, also there is no harm in kissing the deceased (both only for those who are allowed). When a person passes away, the body becomes unclean and Ghusl is necessary, without the Ghusl, the Janaazah Salat is not permissible. The uncleanliness is Hukmi (Unseen Uncleanliness) not Haqeeqi (Visible Uncleanliness) therefore the visible part of the body is clean.

The Hadith on the following page shows one occasion when the Prophet ﷺ kissed the head of one of his companions.

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَبَّلَ عُثْمَانَ بْنَ مَطْعُونٍ وَهُوَ مَيِّتٌ وَهُوَ يَبْكِي أَوْ قَالَ عَيْنَاهُ تَذْرِفَانِ ۝

“Aisha رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا narrates that the Prophet ﷺ kissed Uthman bin Mazoon رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and he had passed away and the Prophet ﷺ was crying or said that his eyes were flowing”

Question: Is a non-mahram male or female allowed to see the deceased?

Answer: Just like whilst the person was living, purdah was observed, it should be observed in the same manner after the person passes away. Therefore any males should not see the face or body of a non mahram female and vice versa.

Where to keep the body between the time of passing away and performing Ghusl

If there is going to be no delay in performing the burial and the Ghusl then it is recommended that the body be moved to the place of the Ghusl at the correct time. If there is a risk that the funeral could get delayed for any reason then it is recommended that the body be moved to a Mortuary. Nowadays many Masaajid have mortuary facilities including cold rooms where the bodies can be stored.

The reason for moving the body is that after a short while Rigor Mortis starts to set in on the body of the deceased person. Rigor Mortis means literally 'stiffness of death'. The limbs of the deceased become stiff and hard to move. There will also be other signs of decay and decomposition if the body is left in state for a while and this can cause distress to the family. Therefore if there is going to be significant delay then it would be best if the body is left in the mortuary until the time of the Ghusl.

Preparation for Ghusl & Shrouding

Before a person is buried in Islam, they should be bathed and shrouded according to the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ. The Shroud should be prepared before the Ghusl, so as soon as the body is ready there is no delay in putting on its shroud.

Preparing the Shroud

You can use any clean material, preferably white for the kafn or Shroud. You will need approximately 15 yards of material. The local Masjid will normally have a stock of this and there should be an aalim (scholar) or Burial Committee representative to aid in the shrouding and the Ghusl process of the deceased.

The Basic Rule of the kafn is that a person can wear as a kafn any cloth which was permissible for them in their lifetime.

Note: It is not permissible to use a shroud made out of silk for men or women as it is considered extravagance. The kafn should not be too extravagant i.e. made from expensive material and of a larger size or too miserly where the cloth is ripped and torn or is of a smaller size than recommended.

Note: The cost of the shroud should come from the wealth of the deceased however it is permissible for the relatives to also pay for it. If the deceased did not have enough money to pay for the shroud then responsibility will fall on the guardian. There may be some situations where the guardian cannot also afford it in which case the responsibility would go to the baitul maal and thereafter the family of the deceased

Note: It is permissible to have one's own shroud prepared before they pass away.

The Shroud for the Male and Female are different. The size of the shroud will depend on the size of the person but some average sizes have been given below.

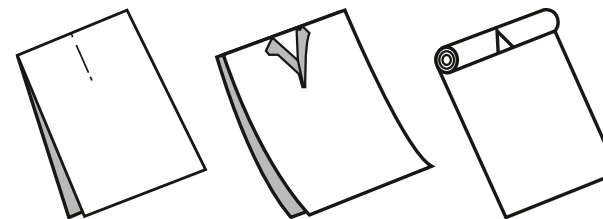
	Male	Female
Lifafah	8ft x 5ft	8ft x 5ft
Sina'Band	Not Needed	7ft by 5ft
Izaar (Loin Cloth)	7ft by 5ft	7ft by 5ft
Qamees (Shirt)	5ft by 4/5ft	5ft by 4/5ft
Orhni (Scarf)	Not Needed	4ft by 2ft

Three Strips of cloth will also be needed to tie the Shroud Afterwards.

Preparing the Qamees (Shirt)

All of the Shrouds will be cut as rectangles; however the sheet for the Qamees will have to have an extra cut to allow it to be put on the body of the deceased. The sheet for the Qamees should be folded in two from the top down and then a cut made at the top in the same of a T. This will allow the sheet to be folded over the body of the deceased.

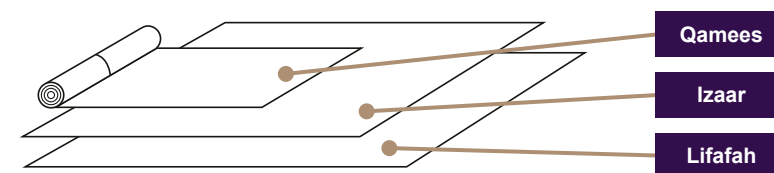
A diagram of how the Qamees should be cut can be seen below:



Laying the Shroud

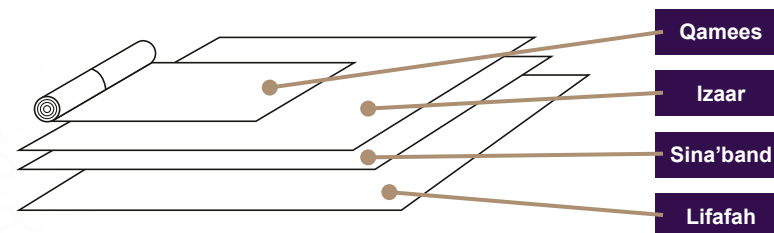
Once all of the Sheets have been cut to size, they should be laid in the correct order so the body can be placed on the Kafn right after the Ghusl.

For a Male, the 3 strips of cloth will be laid first then the Lifafah, then the Izaar, then the Qamees as shown below



The Qamees will be folded up at the top so it can be put over the body of the deceased.

For a Female, the 3 strips of cloth will be laid first, then the Lifafah, Sina'band, Izaar, and Qamees. The Orhni will be put on later



Again, the Qamees will be folded up at the top so it can be put over the body of the deceased.

Ghusl of the Deceased

Once the above has been prepared we need to perform the Ghusl, for this we will need the following:

- 2 Large Sheets to cover the body whilst washing, they should be thick enough so they are not see through and also of a dark colour so when they get wet they do not become transparent.
- 2 Large Towels to dry the body
- 2 pairs of Strong Rubber Gloves
- Normal disposable surgical gloves
- Cotton wool and shampoo
- Soap
- Jugs and Bucket
- Bin Bags for disposing of Rubbish
- Nail Polish Remover (if required)

Ghusl

Alhamdulillah nowadays many Masaajid have special facilities to perform the Ghusl and Shrouding of the Deceased. They will also have mortuaries where the body can be kept. As the Ghusl of the Deceased is not something which is done very often it is recommended that a local Aalim be consulted or member of the Burial committee to assist in the Ghusl if needed. The method of performing the Ghusl of the deceased is very similar to the Ghusl of a living person, however there are a few differences and precautions one must take.

Before we go into the method of actual Ghusl itself, there are a few Masail (rulings) which need to be clarified.

- Only females should wash the body of a female
- Only males should wash the body of a male
- A woman who is on her menstrual cycle or post natal bleeding may not wash the body, as the Ghusl is an act of worship. However she is allowed to assist without touching the body.
- A female may wash the body of a minor child.
- If there are no males around to perform the Ghusl for a man or females to give the Ghusl to a woman, then please consult your local Aalim (scholar) on the permissibility of which people are allowed to carry out the Ghusl.

Important Facts about the Ghusl

Whilst we are performing the Ghusl, we must take great care in handling the body of the deceased. If the body has undergone a Post Mortem then there will be a chance that blood will flow from the wounds so extra towels may be needed.

For bathing a male, it is recommended that at least 4 people be present to help bathe and carry the body of the deceased. Depending on the size of the person, more may be needed. In case of a female, it is recommended that at least 6 women aid in the process.

If a person is not familiar with the procedure then this booklet will Insha'Allah have sufficient information for them to be able to carry out the Ghusl. They can get the help of the local Aalim or brothers/sisters who are familiar with performing Ghusl of the deceased if needed.

To put it simply, the Ghusl will be given in the same method as one takes a bath when becoming pure from Janaabat (ritual impurity). Some people are under the false impression that only certain people can give the deceased a bath, this is incorrect as people in the villages and women are also able to give the Ghusl.

The only difference between the Ghusl of the living and the deceased will be whether the mouth is open or closed. If it is closed then the lips will be cleaned with wet cotton wool with the intention of gargling, if the mouth is open then the inside will be also cleaned with cotton wool. We must take great care not to pour water into the mouth. In the same way the nose will be cleaned carefully with wet cotton wool with the intentioned of istinshaaq (the action of cleaning the nose in Wudhu).

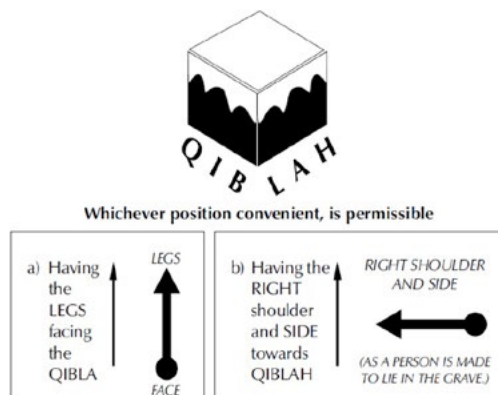
The method described below is a practical and easy way in which people will be able to perform the Ghusl of the deceased. One must remember that the faraa'idh, sunnah and mustahab acts of the Ghusl will be the same for the deceased as it is for the living person.

Performing the Ghusl

Instruct all people who are handling the body and bathing it to be extra careful and to not rub the body very hard.

Positioning of the Body during Ghusl

It is permissible that the body be positioned with its legs facing towards the Qiblah or the right hand side of the body positioned towards Qiblah



It is recommended that all people who are performing the Ghusl put on the disposable gloves.

One person should be the main person giving the Ghusl (bath). This should preferably be a close relative. The Aalim or person instructing the Ghusl should also remain close enough to the body to enable them to communicate properly. All other people who are present should aid only when they are asked. The instructions should be left to one person to avoid confusion.

We should also not rush this procedure but take our time and do it properly. Do not leave the Ghusl too late just before the burial so one has to rush it.

The body should be moved carefully and gently onto the washing table.

One person should be nominated to hold the head of the body in place whilst the Ghusl is taking place.

One of the thick covering sheets should then be taken out and 4 people at each corner should hold the sheet just above the body below the head and until the ankles. The sheet should not be raised too high so that the body becomes visible whilst the Ghusl is being carried out but not too low so the washer cannot perform their actions properly.

Note: Remember to use a thick sheet which is not transparent and will not become transparent when water falls on it.

Once the sheet is in place, the next step would be to remove any clothes which are on the body. If they cannot be removed easily then carefully use some scissors to cut away the clothing.

If there are any drips or catheters then remove these as well. If they cannot be removed, then cut them off as close to the skin as possible. When they are removed, it is possible that this might cause bleeding so use some cotton wool to stop the bleeding. If bleeding doesn't stop then secure the wool in place with some masking tape or plaster.

- Remove any dentures and any jewellery which is still on the body.
- If there is nail polish on the body, remove this as well using nail polish remover.

Once the clothes and any other items have been removed off the body, the body will be ready for the Ghusl.

Prepare the water, if this is done using a shower, check the temperature is not too warm or too cold. If a bucket is being used, ensure that the correct amount of hot and cold water has been mixed. You will also now need a jug if using a bucket.

- Before we wash the body, we must remove any waste from the body. In order to do this, the person washing the body should gently but firmly press the stomach. The body should then be tilted to the left side and the waste should then be washed away with the shower. Use cotton wool to clean the back passage and dispose of the cotton wool in the dustbin bags.

If the person has died recently then the head and shoulders of the body could be raised slightly to try and help clear the waste. If the person has been in cold storage for some time then this procedure may not be helpful.

Note: If the person died during child birth, or during an operation, or just had a post mortem, then this procedure could cause excessive bleeding.

- Wudhu should then be performed on the body
- Wash the right hand 3 times then then left hand 3 times.
- Wipe the mouth with cotton wool 3 times. If the mouth is open then clean the inside with wet cotton wool as well not going too far inside.
- Wipe the inside of the nose with cotton wool 3 times
- Wash the face 3 times
- Wash the right arm, up to and including the elbow 3 times, then the left arm
- Perform Masah of the head from the forehead backwards. So the person at the head will place his hands on the forehead of the deceased and wipe them back towards himself.
- Wash the right foot 3 times up to and including the ankles then the left foot.

Note: If the person was in the state of ritual impurity (in need of Ghusl) then the washing of the mouth and nose would be obligatory.

The Wudhu is now complete.

- The next stage is to wash the hair with shampoo. This is done by one person holding the head in place whilst another washes it. If a woman has her hair in plaits or braids then it should be undone and parted in two from the middle. The hair should then be placed forward, one part on the right and one part on the left. Once the hair has been shampooed, wash away the shampoo and clean the hair.
- Wet the rest of the body and gently rub soap over the body. Be careful when passing any parts of the body which are wounded or have been bleeding. Start off with the front upper side of the body then tilt the body on the left hand side so the right hand side of the body can be washed underneath. Once this has been cleaned then tilt the body to the right so the left hand side of the body can be washed underneath. Again make sure if there are any signs of waste, then wash these away.
- If there are any wound dressings which are soiled, then remove these, wash the area carefully if possible and then redress if needed.
- The body should then be rinsed 3 times ensuring that all soap, shampoo and waste have been washed away. On the last washing, use camphor mixed with water.

Note: The body can be washed an odd number of times. There is a Hadith in Sahih Muslim where the Prophet ﷺ instructed the women bathing his daughter Zaynab رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا to wash her an odd number of times, 3 times, 5 times or however many times they deem it necessary. The Hadith also mentions to perform the last washing with Camphor mixed in the water.

عَنْ أُمِّ عَطِيَّةَ قَالَتْ لَمَّا مَاتَ زَيْنَبُ بِنْتُ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى
اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ لَنَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ
اغْسِلْنَهَا وَتَرَا ثَلَاثًا أَوْ خَمْسًا وَاجْعَلْنَ فِي الْحَامِسَةِ كَافُورًا أَوْ
شَيْئًا مِنْ كَافُورٍ فَإِذَا غَسَلْتُنَّهَا فَأَعْلِمْنِي قَالَتْ فَأَعْلَمْنَاهُ
فَأَعْطَانَا حَقُّهُ وَقَالَ أَشْعِرْنَاهَا إِيَّاهُ¹⁰

Question: Why is camphor used?

Answer: It helps to preserve the body

Insects and other animals which can harm the body do not come close due to the strong smell.

10 Sahih Muslim 1559

Camphor is an inexpensive item which can be used to scent the body

Camphor has a very potent smell so if for any reason the body could not be cleaned properly, the camphor would hide the smell.

Once the Ghusl has finished, gently dry the body with the towels, ensuring that the body is not uncovered. Keep the covering sheet over the body at all times.

After drying the body, apply camphor and perfume on the body. It is better to put on Musk as this is the best perfume.

Question: Do people who have given the deceased Ghusl need to also perform Ghusl themselves?

Answer: According to the majority opinion of Jurists, it is Mustahab (desirable) for the people who have bathed the deceased to perform Ghusl themselves. There are 2 advantages in this, firstly there is a possibility that specks of water have touched the body and clothes of the bather which cannot be seen and these may be unclean. By performing Ghusl, the bather will become clean. Secondly, for people who are not used to bathing the deceased, they could become frightened or get into a state of tension, by taking a bath, it will help them to relax and return to a normal state.

Shrouding the Body

The next stage is to put the Kafn (shroud) on the body. The Shroud should already have been prepared as shown earlier with the 3 binding strips of cloth underneath all of the sheets in reverse order so the Lifafah (outer covering) is at the bottom.

Note: Do not put anything inside the Kafn, whether it any duas or any verses from the Holy Quran. Also do not write anything on the Kafn either.

The shroud can either be laid out in the coffin, on the floor or on a table, wherever it is easiest at the moment. Many cities now have provision to bury the body without a casket however for transportation it is still placed inside temporary casket. Once the shroud has been put on, the body can then be put inside the casket if needed.

- Once the body has been dried, wrap the covering sheet around the body so when it is moved it does not become exposed.
- Once wrapped, move the body and lay it on top of the shroud ensuring it does not become uncovered.
- Carefully move the Qamees (shirt) from behind the head and over it so it now covers the body.
- Once the Qamees has been put on, remove the covering sheet making sure that the body is not exposed.
- Rub some of the Camphor mixture onto the place of the body which touch the ground during sijdah, the forehead, nose, both palms, knees and forefeet.

- If it is a female, then part her hair in two from the middle and place a part on either side at the front, so there will be one part on the right shoulder and one part on the left shoulder.
- If it is a female, now put on her orhni, the scarf around her hair and head. Do not fasten it but tuck it in.
- The next sheet is the izaar or lower cloth. Fold the left side first and tuck it over the qamis, then fold the right hand side over.
- It if is a female. Wrap the Sina'band, the chest cloth in the same way, first fold the left side and then the right.
- The final sheet is now the lifafah, again wrap the left side first and then the right.
- The 3 binding strips at the bottom can now be used to tighten the shroud. Do not make them so tight that they can't be opened as the knots will need to be opened again.

Visiting the deceased before the Burial.

Once the body has been shrouded there is normally a short while before the burial takes place. The usual custom is to take the body of the deceased back to the house or leave them in another area where people can come to pay their respects. We must take great care that we do not laugh and joke, talk about worldly affairs etc. when we are in the presence of the deceased.

Question: Who is allowed to see the body of the deceased?

Answer: We must take great care in ensuring only the people who are allowed by Shariah can view the body of the deceased. If the deceased is female, then only members who were her mahram during her life time are allowed to see the body. No males who are not mahram should be allowed to view the body. If the deceased is a male, then again only females from his family should be allowed to view him.

There may be instances where the family do not wish for the face to be uncovered. We must respect their wishes and not demand that we see it.

Question: How should the body be carried?

Answer: There is a Hadith in Sunan Tirmidhi where Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه narrates that he heard the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم say "Whoever follows a Janaazah and carries it 3 times then indeed he has fulfilled its rights over him."

أَبَا الْمُهَزِّمِ قَالَ صَحِبْتُ أَبَا هُرَيْرَةَ عَشْرَ سِنِينَ سَمِعْتُهُ يَقُولُ
سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ مَنْ تَبَعَ جَنَازَةً وَحَمَلَهَا
ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ فَقَدْ قَضَى مَا عَلَيْهِ مِنْ حَقِّهَا¹¹

The above Hadith has been classified as weak due to the narrator Abul Muhazzim. There is no specific way in which the Janaazah should be carried. As long as the body is carried carefully and swiftly. Each person if possible should try and help. Care must be taken if it is the Janaazah of a female and is being carried without a casket just in the shroud, that only her mahrams carry her.

If the deceased is a child, then it should be carried by one person at a time.

Question: What should we pray when we are sat neat the body?

Answer: We should read the Quran, especially Surah Yaasin. We can busy ourselves in any zikr and also perform dua for oneself and for the deceased. Do not engage in worldly talk.

Question: Does crying cause the deceased person punishment?

Answer: If the dead person has left a bequest for women to come and mourn for him then this will be a means of punishment for the deceased. Natural crying does not cause punishment for the deceased however we must refrain from overdoing it or crying on purpose when we visit the house or family of the deceased.

The Janaazah Prayer

Once the Ghusl has been completed, the body is ready for the Janaazah Prayer. The Janaazah Prayer is not only performed for the forgiveness of the deceased but also out of respect for the deceased. In the same way the Janaazah prayer is also performed for innocent children.

The Janaazah Prayer is Fardh Kifaayah. This means that from the locality at least one person should attend and the obligation will be fulfilled on behalf of the whole community, however if no one attends, then all will be sinful.

¹¹ Sunan Tirmidhi 962

For the person reading the prayer, there is great reward.

Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said “The person who reads the Janaazah Prayer will get the reward of one Qiraat and the one who follows the Janaazah until its burial has finished for him there are 2 Qiraats, one of them or the smaller of them is equivalent to Uhud”.

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَنْ صَلَّى
عَلَى جَنَازَةٍ فَلَهُ قِيرَاطٌ وَمَنْ تَبِعَهَا حَتَّى يُقْضَى دَفْنُهَا فَلَهُ قِيرَاطَانِ
أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ أَصْغَرُهُمَا مِثْلُ أَحَدٍ¹²

The location of the Prayer could vary. It is normally performed at the Graveyard just prior to the Burial however there are instances where the Janaazah Prayer is also now carried out after a prescribed prayer in the Masjid Car Park. There are also instances where the body is left outside the Masjid and the prayer is done inside the Masjid if there are adverse weather conditions. The Salaat is allowed in the Masajid under other extreme conditions like curfews, or permission is not allowed to read the Salaat outside or in the graveyard.

How should the Janaazah Salaat be read?

The Body will be placed at the head of the congregation. As per normal Salaat, everyone will be facing in the Direction of Qiblah.

The Imam will try and organize the congregation into an odd number of lines. If there is a small congregation then a minimum of three lines should be formed.

عَنْ مَرْثَدِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ الْيَزِيدِيِّ قَالَ
كَانَ مَالِكُ بْنُ هُبَيْرَةَ إِذَا صَلَّى عَلَى جَنَازَةٍ فَتَقَالَ النَّاسُ
عَلَيْهَا جَزَائُهُمْ ثَلَاثَةَ أَجْزَاءٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ
عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَنْ صَلَّى عَلَيْهِ ثَلَاثَةَ صُفُوفٍ فَقَدْ أُوجِبَ¹³

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said “Whosoever has the Salaat of Janaazah prayed on him in 3 lines, Jannat will be waajib on him”

12 Sunan Tirmidhi 961

13 Sunan Tirmidhi 949

The meaning of this Hadith is that the person who's Salaat of Janaazah has a large congregation, he will be forgiven.

Note: We must not raise the level of forming an odd number of rows up to an obligatory Status (Wujoob). If possible then do so but if it is a large congregation and it becomes difficult then there is no harm in having either an odd or even amount of rows.

Note: It is Makrooh (undesirable) to read the Salaat of the Janaazah at Sunrise, Midnoon (zawaal) and Sunset. However if the Janaazah arrives at that time then it will be permissible to read the Salaat. If the Janaazah had arrived before the Makrooh time and the Salaah was delayed until that time then it will be Makrooh. It would be better to wait until after the Makrooh time has elapsed.

Question: Where will the Imam stand in the Janaazah Prayer?

Answer: There is a difference of opinion as to where the Imam will stand however these differences are only on which is the most preferred method. The Imam will stand level with the chest of the deceased, however for a female, this will only be done if the body has been covered properly. If it has not then the Imam should stand level with the abdomen.

If the congregation is large then a few people should be nominated to repeat the Takbeers of the Imam so the whole congregation can hear.

If the ground is muddy then it is permissible to leave the shoes on for the Janaazah Salaat as long as one is sure there is no uncleanness on them.

The Imam will read the first takbeer and fold his hands. The congregation will also do the same.

According to Imam Abu Hanifah and Imam Malik, Thanaa will be read. According to Imam Shafi and Imam Ahmed ibn Hambal, Surah Fatiha will be read.

The Thanaa is as follows:

سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَبِحَمْدِكَ وَتَبَارَكَ اسْمُكَ وَتَعَالَى جَدُّكَ وَلَا إِلَهَ غَيْرُكَ.

Note: In some kitaabs the additional words, “Wa Jalla Thana’uka” is mentioned as part of the thanaa. No Hadith was found stating that those words were also read specifically for the Thana in Janaazah Salat.

The Imam will then read the second takbeer loudly, the congregation will also read the takbeer but quietly. No one will raise their hands to their ears when they recite the takbeer,

After the second takbeer read Durood Shareef. The best Durood to read is Durood Ibraaheem as shown below.

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ كَمَا صَلَّيْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَعَلَى آلِ
إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ. اللَّهُمَّ بَارِكْ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ كَمَا بَارَكْتَ عَلَى
إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ.

The Imam will then read the 3rd takbeer loudly. The congregation will also read the takbeer but quietly. Again no one will lift their hand to their ears when reciting the takbeer.

After the 3rd takbeer, there are various Hadith as to which dua was prayed by the Prophet ﷺ. Any Dua can be read, we just have to make sure that we invoke forgiveness for the deceased in the Dua. In a Hadith narrated by Abu Hurayrah (Sunan Tirmidhi 945), the following dua was recited

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِحَيِّنَا وَمَيِّتِنَا، وَشَاهِدِنَا وَغَائِبِنَا، وَصَغِيرِنَا وَكَبِيرِنَا، وَذَكَرْنَا وَ
أُنْثَانَا. اللَّهُمَّ مَنْ أَحْيَيْتَهُ مِنَّا فَأَحْيِهِ عَلَى الْإِسْلَامِ . وَ مَنْ تَوَفَّيْتَهُ مِنَّا فَتَوَفَّهُ عَلَى
الْإِيمَانِ.

The meaning of the above dua is “Oh Allah forgive the people who are living and those who are dead, the ones who are present and the ones who are absent, the young from amongst us and the old from amongst us, the males and the females. Oh Allah, the one who you wish to keep alive from us, make him live according to Islam, and the one whom you wish to die from amongst us, make him die on imaan”.

The Imam will then read the 4th and final Takbeer. The congregation will follow again, reading it quietly and no one raising their hands.

Janaazah Prayer for a Child

The Janaazah Prayer will be read on all children who have been born alive. If any child has been still born then they will be wrapped in a clean sheet and buried without the Janaazah Prayer.

The method of the Janaazah prayer will be exactly the same as an adult however the dua recited after the 3rd Takbeer will be different. Again any dua can be read, the one below has been taken from a Narration in Mustadrak Haakim.

For a Male Child

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْهُ لَنَا فَرَطًا وَاجْعَلْهُ لَنَا أَجْرًا وَذُخْرًا وَاجْعَلْهُ لَنَا شَافِعًا وَمُشَفَّعًا¹⁴

For a Female Child

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْهَا لَنَا فَرَطًا وَاجْعَلْهَا لَنَا أَجْرًا وَذُخْرًا وَاجْعَلْهَا لَنَا شَافِعَةً وَمُشَفَّعَةً¹⁵

The Imam will conclude the Salaat by reciting Salaams twice.

Moving the body to the Graveyard

The body should be put in a suitable vehicle to allow transportation to the Graveyard. The local Masjid will have the appropriate vehicle, if not arrange a suitable vehicle. Do not spend excessive amounts in hiring hearses to transport the body and the family to go to the graveyard.

Once the body arrives at the Graveyard, preparations should be made for the Janaazah Prayer if they have not already been done so. Please refer to the section above for the procedure on how to read the Janaazah Salaat.

The Undertaker will need a copy of the registration form (certificate of disposal) in order to give us permission to proceed with the burial. Once the copy has been given we can proceed.

The Islamic Burial Process

Items needed for burial:

- Spades for filling in grave
- Wooden Planks cut to size if body is being buried without Casket
- Unbaked Bricks if necessary
- Large Covering Sheet if female

The grave will have already been dug. Depending on the cemetery and the arrangement with the local authority, the graves will be dug differently. The main two types of graves are Shaq and Lahd. In this country, due to the soft ground we use the Shaq type of grave.

Question: How should the body be carried?

Answer: The body should be carried swiftly, not slowly or running.

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ يَبْلُغُ بِهِ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ أَسْرِعُوا بِالْجَنَازَةِ فَإِنْ
يَكُنْ خَيْرًا تَقْدِمُوهَا إِلَيْهِ وَإِنْ يَكُنْ شَرًّا تَضَعُوهُ عَنْ رِقَابِكُمْ¹⁶

Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه narrates that the Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said “Walk swiftly with the Janaazah, if the deceased is a good person then you are sending them towards good and if he is a bad person then you are putting down the bad from your shoulders.”

Question: Should we walk in front of the Janaazah or behind it?

Answer: According to the Jurists, it is permissible to walk in front of the janaazah, behind it, or to the side, the only difference of opinion is in what is most Afzal (preferential). According to the Hanafi School of thought, it is better to walk behind the janaazah.

We must ensure that only the close family are around the grave, especially if the deceased is a female.

Laying the body in the Grave

The body should be carried to the grave and placed on the side of the grave towards Qiblah. The grave will have been dug so the right hand side of it will be facing Qiblah.

Once the body has been laid on the side of the grave, depending on the size of the deceased, a few people should lower themselves in the grave; if it is a woman then it should be her mahram's only.

We must ensure that there are not lots of people shouting out instructions at this point, it should only be the people who know what needs to be done. Before the people lower themselves inside the grave, it must be explained to them what needs to be done rather than instruct them whilst they are inside the grave. This would best be done by a local scholar.

Note: When the body is being lowered into the grave, the Hadith below informs us of what dua should be prayed.

عَنْ ابْنِ عُمَرَ قَالَ كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا أُدْخِلَ
الْمَيِّتُ الْقَبْرَ قَالَ بِسْمِ اللَّهِ وَعَلَى مِلَّةِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ¹⁷

Ibn Umar رضي الله عنه narrates that the Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم, whenever he would put the deceased in the grave, he would say:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ وَعَلَى مِلَّةِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ

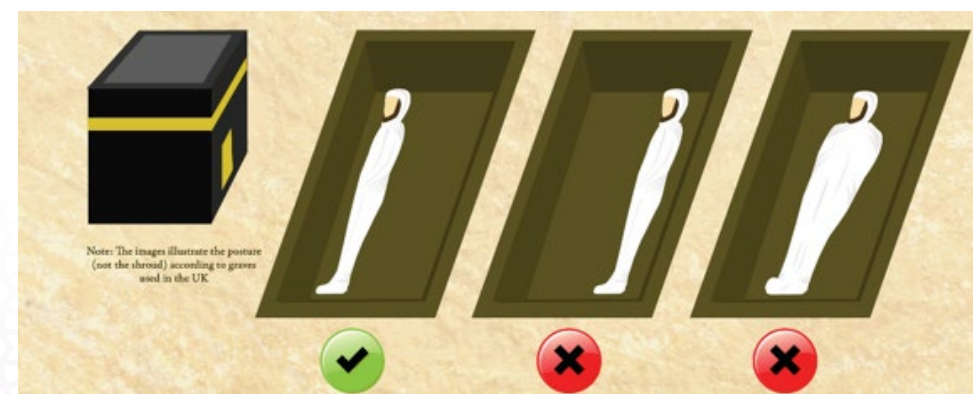
Note: if it is a female, then a sheet should be used to cover the grave while the procedure is taking place. The sheet should be held by her mahram's as well if possible. In the situation where there are not enough, then close family members should hold the sheet. Any males that are not mahram should move back whilst the body is being laid inside the grave. Once the body is covered by the bricks, wooden planks, the casket cover or soil, it will be ok for them to return to help fill the grave.

The procedure will be that the body will be passed to them while they are inside the grave, they will lower the body into the grave and place it on the right hand side of the grave slowly. The Procedure of laying the body inside the grave has been explained in detail in a ruling written by Moulana Yusuf Shabbir and approved by Mufti Shabbir Sahib of Darul Uloom Bury. It can be found on the following link.

<https://nawaader.files.wordpress.com/2015/03/what-is-the-correct-method-of-burying-the-deceased-front.jpg>

Once the body has been laid down, if it is inside the coffin then the casket will be opened and the body will be shifted to the right hand side of the coffin, as close to the Qiblah as possible. Pieces of earth will then be used to tilt the body towards Qiblah. If the body is not in the casket then it should also be moved to the right hand side as close to the Qiblah as possible.

Note: The whole body should be turned towards the Qiblah and not just the head in a manner similar to the Sunnah method of sleeping as per the diagram below.



Once the body has been laid and turned, if it is inside a coffin, the knots should all be untied and the casket closed. If the body is not in a casket and is in a Lahd or Shaq grave, the knots should be untied then the planks of wood or bricks should now be laid.

Note: Once the body has been moved to face the Qiblah, no more than 2 people are needed inside the grave for the next stage. Any extra people should come out of the grave carefully.

If the burial is being done without a casket then starting from the head side for a female or the leg side for a male, lay the bricks or planks of wood close to each other ensuring there is no gap.

If the grave is a standard rectangular grave then the planks of wood should be wedged in at 45 degrees like the diagram shown on the following page (this would be for a male, for a female as mentioned you would start from the head side).

Once all of the wood or the bricks have been laid, large clumps of earth should be manually laid on the floor of the grave.



Filling the Grave

The people inside the grave should now come out. The grave should then be filled in a timely manner, not rushing it or doing it in a way by which the wood or bricks become dislodged.

Note: It is desirable to throw in 3 handfuls of dirt into the grave. The Hadith below from Daruqutni, mentions that 3 handfuls of dirt were thrown by the Prophet ﷺ whilst he was standing near the head of the body. If a person is able to do it easily then there is no issue but people should not be forced into doing this as sometimes is the case.

عن عبد الله بن عامر بن ربيعة عن أبيه قال : رأيت النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم حين دفن عثمان بن مظعون صلى عليه وكبر عليه أربعاً وحشي على قبره بيده ثلاث حثيات من التراب وهو قائم عند رأس¹⁸

There is a custom that a dua is read each time a handful of dust is put into the grave. The Hadith below shows the supplications but in no way specifies that they were read each time a handful of dust was put into the grave.

عَنْ أَبِي أُمَامَةَ قَالَ لَمَّا وُضِعَتْ أُمُّ كُثُؤُمِ ابْنَةُ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي الْقَبْرِ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ { مِنْهَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ وَفِيهَا نُعِيدُكُمْ وَمِنْهَا نُخْرِجُكُمْ تَارَةً أُخْرَى }¹⁹

Abi Umamata رضي الله عنه narrates that when Umme Kulthoom رضي الله عنها the daughter of the Prophet ﷺ was put into her grave the Prophet ﷺ said “From it we have created you and in it we return you and from it we will take you out once more”

18 Sunan Daruqutni Volume 2 – Page 76
19 Musnad Ahmed 21163

When filling the grave, ensure that it is not raised too high, it should be filled to a level where people can recognize that it is a grave so they don't walk over it, sit on it, throw there rubbish on it etc.

It should be shaped like a camels hump, like mentioned in the Hadith below:

عَنْ سُفْيَانَ التَّمَارِ أَنَّهُ حَدَّثَهُ
أَنَّهُ رَأَى قَبْرَ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مُسْتَمًا²⁰

Sufyaan Tamaar رضي الله عنه narrates that he saw the Grave of the Prophet ﷺ and it was shaped like a hump.

Sprinkling Water on the Grave

Once the grave has been filled, water can be sprinkled onto the grave.

عن ابن عمر ، عن أبيه ، أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم رش على قبر ابنه إبراهيم²¹

Ibn Umar رضي الله عنه narrates “The Prophet ﷺ sprinkled water on the grave of his son Ibraaheem”. There is further clarification on the actual procedure in the Hadith below.

عن جابر بن عبد الله قال : رش على قبر النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم الماء رشا قال وكان الذي رش الماء على قبره بلال بن رباح بقربة بدأ من قبل رأسه من شقه الأيمن حتى انتهى إلى رجله²²

Jabir رضي الله عنه narrates that water was sprinkled on the grave of our Prophet ﷺ and the one who sprinkled Water on the grave was Bilal ibn Ribah with a water skin, he started from the side of the head towards the right and finished towards the feet.

The wisdom behind sprinkling the water is to help settle the grave as mentioned in Durre-Mukhtar.

Planting a Branch at the Head of the Grave

Another action which is very common is that a branch is taken off a tree and planted at the head of the grave.

20 Sahih Al-Bukhari 1302
21 Abu Dawood – Maraaseel 399
22 Sunan Al-Bayhaqi Al-Kubra 6534

The basis for this action is taken from the Hadith below.

عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ قَالَ مَرَّ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بِقَبْرَيْنِ فَقَالَ
إِنَّهُمَا لَيُعَذَّبَانِ وَمَا يُعَذَّبَانِ فِي كَبِيرٍ أَمَّا أَحَدُهُمَا فَكَانَ لَا يَسْتَتِرُ مِنَ
الْبَوْلِ وَأَمَّا الْآخَرُ فَكَانَ يَمْشِي بِالنَّمِيمَةِ ثُمَّ أَخَذَ جَرِيدَةً رَطْبَةً فَشَقَّهَا
نِصْفَيْنِ فَعَرَزَ فِي كُلِّ قَبْرٍ وَاحِدَةً قَالُوا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ لِمَ فَعَلْتَ هَذَا
قَالَ لَعَلَّهُ يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمَا مَا لَمْ يَبْسَسَا²³

Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه narrates that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم passed by two graves and he said “Indeed both of them are being punished and they are not being punished for a great thing. As for one of them, he didn’t save himself from being soiled with his urine and as for the other, he used to walk around causing enmity between friends”. Then the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم took a fresh palm leaf and split it in half, and planted one on each grave. He was asked why you did this, he said “I hope that their torture might be lessened, till these get dried”

From the above hadith we can see that this action was specific for those two particular graves as the two people were being punished. Nowadays people cause more harm to the trees in the graveyard attempting to pull down branches. We must take great care in not causing damage to the graveyard itself and the trees. If a branch can be easily found then there is no harm in planting it. However, one should not spend any money on flowers and rather donate that amount in charity on behalf of the deceased. This will be more beneficial for the deceased.

Reading Opening & Closing Verses of Surah Al-Baqarah after burial

Once the grave has been filled, the usual practise is to read the first Ruku of Surah Al -Baqarah near the head of the grave and the last Ruku of Surah Al-Baqarah near the foot of the grave. The Hadith below shows that the reference Hadith for this action is Mawqoof on Ibn Umar رضي الله عنه. Therefore the action will be classed as desirable. Both of the ruku’s can be found in Appendix A.

عن عبد الله بن عمر سمعت النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول : إذا
مات أحدكم فلا تحسوه و أسرعوا به إلى قبره و ليقرأ عند رأسه
فاتحة الكتاب و عند رجليه بخاتمة البقرة في قبره
لم يكتب إلا بهذا الإسناد فيما أعلم و قد روينا القراءة المذكورة فيه
عن ابن عمر موقوفا عليه²⁴

After this, it is advisable to stay a while and supplicate for the deceased whilst facing the Qiblah as mentioned in the Hadith Below.

عَنْ عُثْمَانَ بْنِ عَفَّانَ قَالَ كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا فَرَغَ
مِنْ دَفْنِ الْمَيِّتِ وَقَفَ عَلَيْهِ فَقَالَ اسْتَغْفِرُوا لِأَخِيكُمْ وَسَلُّوا لَهُ
بِالتَّشْيِيتِ فَإِنَّهُ الْآنَ يُسْأَلُ²⁵

Uthman bin Affan رضي الله عنه narrates that when the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to finish burying the deceased he would stand over him and say “Seek forgiveness for your brother and ask steadfastness for him, for indeed he is being questioned now”.

Preparing Food for the Day of the Funeral

If any people are attending the funeral from far then they should make preparation for food themselves. If for any reason they have not made preparations and there is an excess of food at the household of the deceased then there is no issue in them eating, if invited to do so. Visitors cannot make any demands for food or drink.

If food is prepared for people coming from far away then it should not be done from the estate of the deceased. If the household has paid from their own money and you are invited then there is no issue but in no way should this be considered as an obligation on their behalf.

Building Structures on Graves

عَنْ جَابِرٍ قَالَ نَهَى النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَنْ تُجَصَّصَ الْقُبُورُ وَأَنْ يُكْتَبَ عَلَيْهَا
وَأَنْ يُبْنَى عَلَيْهَا وَأَنْ تُوْطَأَ²⁶

Jabir رضي الله عنه narrates that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told us not to make our graves built up, not to write on them, not to build on them and not to walk on them.

From this Hadith we can see that the graves should not be made into structures, we should not write any words on the grave stones, especially verses from the Quran and we should not spend excessive amounts decorating the graves. Another reason for this is that graves are used over and over again, so if they have large gravestones and built up structures, they will be difficult to remove and prevent others from also getting buried there. If we look at the example of the graveyards in Makkah and Medinah, they have the capability of buying thousands of people in the same graveyards again and again, this would not be possible if all of the graves were built up.

Note: There is no harm in having a small gravestone and writing the name of the deceased on it, so it can be marked and prevents it from being desecrated. The gravestone should be kept as simple as possible and placed at the head of the grave. The gravestone should not cover the whole grave and have extra stones and pebbles on it for ornamental value.

Visiting the Graveyard

When entering the graveyard, first face the graves and perform Salaam. Then after this do dua for yourself and for the deceased. People tend to forget to do dua for themselves as well at this point. The Hadith below shows the dua the Prophet ﷺ used to perform at this time.

عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ قَالَ مَرَّ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بِقُبُورِ الْمَدِينَةِ فَأَقْبَلَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِوَجْهِهِ فَقَالَ السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ يَا أَهْلَ الْقُبُورِ يَغْفِرُ اللَّهُ لَنَا وَلَكُمْ أَنْتُمْ سَلَفُنَا وَنَحْنُ بِالْأَثَرِ²⁷

Ibn Abbass رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrates that the Prophet ﷺ passed by the graveyard in Medinah Munawwarah, he faced the graves and said “Oh dwellers of the grave! Peace be upon you, may Allah forgive me and you, you are our predecessors and we are coming behind you”

A person can also read Surah Yaasin as well as other duas and surahs to send as Esale-Thawaab for the deceased.

At all times be respectful, do not laugh and joke. It is a time for reflection and introspection as well as we could be the next person to be buried. The thought should be, have we prepared enough if we were to pass away now.

Note: It is not permissible to place flowers on a grave or cover graves with ‘chaadars’ (blankets) made of flowers. These do not benefit the deceased in any shape or form. Furthermore it will be a waste of money. It would be more beneficial if some money was given in charity with the intention of the reward going to the deceased.

Taaziyaat - Visiting the House of the Deceased

When someone passes away, the people who go for taaziyaat (visiting the deceased house to pay respects) or attend the Janaazah should only say good words for the deceased. They should also ask for forgiveness for themselves and for the deceased because at that time the Angels say Ameen to the duas. A common mistake is that people make dua for the deceased but forget themselves. The Prophet ﷺ taught Umme Salmata رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا the method of dua when her husband Abu Salmata رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ passed away. In that she was told to do dua for herself first and then for the deceased.

²⁷ Sunan Tirmidhi 893

عَنْ أُمِّ سَلَمَةَ قَالَتْ قَالَ لَنَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا حَضَرْتُمُ الْمَرِيضَ أَوْ الْمَيِّتَ فَقُولُوا خَيْرًا فَإِنَّ الْمَلَائِكَةَ يُؤْمِنُونَ عَلَى مَا تَقُولُونَ قَالَتْ فَلَمَّا مَاتَ أَبُو سَلَمَةَ أَتَيْتُ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ أَبَا سَلَمَةَ مَاتَ قَالَ فَقُولِي اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَلَهُ وَأَعْقِبْنِي مِنْهُ غُفِّي حَسَنَةً قَالَتْ فَقُلْتُ فَأَعْقِبْنِي اللَّهُ مِنْهُ مَنْ هُوَ خَيْرٌ مِنْهُ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ²⁸

Umme Salmata رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا says that the prophet ﷺ said to us whenever you visit the ill or the deceased then say good words, indeed the angels say ameen upon what it said. She said, When Abu Salmata رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ passed away I went to the Prophet ﷺ and I said, oh Messenger of Allah ﷺ, Abu Salmata رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ has passed away, he said to me, say “ Oh Allah forgive me and forgive him and give me a better return than I got from him”. Umme Salmata رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا says “when I said these words, Allah SWT gave me in return for Abu Salmata رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that person who was better than him - the Messenger of Allah ﷺ”

We should try and visit the house of the deceased within the three day mourning period if possible. There is no basis to the custom where upon arrival of new guests, incense sticks are lit and a group supplication takes place. There is no harm in doing dua, but considering it an obligation which every visitor must undertake is incorrect.

The visitors should busy themselves in praying and dua. They should console the members of the household and refrain from asking awkward questions relating to the deceased. We must remember it is a difficult time for them so keep the visit short. One should not make any demands for food and drink when visiting. If the members of the household find more consolation in you spending more time with them, then there is no harm staying for longer.

Preparing Food for the household of the deceased

When Jaafar Tiyaar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ passed away the Prophet ﷺ gave instruction to his household to send food to the household of the deceased.

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ جَعْفَرٍ قَالَ لَمَّا جَاءَ نَعْيُ جَعْفَرٍ قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ اصْنَعُوا لِأَهْلِ جَعْفَرٍ طَعَامًا فَإِنَّهُ قَدْ جَاءَهُمْ مَا يَشْغَلُهُمْ²⁹

²⁸ Sunan Tirmidhi 899

²⁹ Sunan Tirmidhi 919

It is Mustahab that food is sent to the household of the deceased which is sufficient for one day and one night. This food should be sent by the neighbours or the people close to the household. The reason for this is that during their mourning, the household does not have to worry about preparing food. The person who is sending the food should inform the household so if any other people decide to also cook, they can kindly refuse. The food should also just be sent, there is no evidence that the people sending the food should sit and partake of the food with the household of the deceased.

There is also no evidence that the food should be sent for more than one day and night, and that food should be prepared for visitors as well. The custom where groups of people get together and take turns in sending food for a number of days sharing the cost has no basis. Furthermore inviting people for food after a certain number of days also has no basis.

We have to be very careful that customs which have been passed down through generations are not prioritised in such a way that one believes it to be part of religion. We should not just take these customs on face value as part of Deen but ask for clear evidence from Quran and Hadith as proof. If in doubt consult the Scholars.

Period of Mourning

The period of mourning for a woman whose husband has passed away shall be 4 months and 10 days. For any other relative, the period of mourning shall be 3 days from the moment they passed away. This is to allow the family to try and return to some kind of normality. We should try and visit within these 3 days if possible.

If someone is from outside the city and could not make it within this time then there is no issue with them visiting the house of the deceased at a later time.

Preparation for Death

Our whole life is preparation for the hereafter. We have to continuously live our lives in such a way where even after our death there continues to be reward sent forward for us. After we pass away our children and maybe our grandchildren will pray for us and after that there will be no one else. We must use the advice of the Prophet ﷺ and do those things which he has recommended. The Prophet ﷺ mentions in a Hadith

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِنَّ مِمَّا يَلْحَقُ الْمُؤْمِنَ مِنْ عَمَلِهِ وَحَسَنَاتِهِ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهِ عِلْمًا عَلَّمَهُ وَنَشَرَهُ وَوَلَدًا صَالِحًا تَرَكَهُ وَمُصْحَفًا وَرَثَتُهُ أَوْ مَسْجِدًا بَنَاهُ أَوْ بَيْتًا لِابْنِ السَّبِيلِ بَنَاهُ أَوْ نَهْرًا أَجْرَاهُ أَوْ صَدَقَةً أَخْرَجَهَا مِنْ مَالِهِ فِي صِحَّتِهِ وَحَيَاتِهِ يَلْحَقُهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَوْتِهِ³⁰

Abu Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrates that the Prophet ﷺ said “Indeed the good actions and deeds that follow a believer are the knowledge he taught and spread, and the pious son he left, or the Quran he left in his inheritance, or the masjid he built, or the house that he built for the traveller, or that stream he made flow, or that charity he took out from his wealth when he was healthy in his life, it will follow him after his death”

So you can see from the above there are many steps we can take to increase our reward for the hereafter. We have to look at those which we are capable of and invest in them as soon as possible. It is advisable for the Scholars to ensure they teach the knowledge they learn and spread it far and wide, whether that is in the form of literature, talks or teaching.

All of us are capable of giving our children a good Islamic upbringing, so when they grow up and do good deeds we will also get a share of them. A simple thing like giving someone a Quran, or donating them to Masaajid where they will be used is also the source for a lot of reward. Imagine the reward of sponsoring a student to become a Hafiz or a Scholar, especially one who is an orphan or from a poor country.

For the wealthy amongst us, let us use our wealth to help in causes which will have double benefit, one for society and the other as reward for us. Building Masjids, donating to good causes, building housing for the poor and destitute, making wells and water supplies in places where water is scarce, so many opportunities for us to do good.

The things that we do for ourselves we can also do for our relatives who have passed away as they will not have a chance now. This is known as esale-thawaab. Sometimes we have relatives who we hardly knew or were our predecessors, we should even do things for them. Simple things like reading some Quran and sending them the thawaab, which is just in the intention, is easy to do. Reading 3 times Surah Ikhlās gives one the thawaab of reading a whole Quran, again very simple, not time consuming and extremely rewarding. We should try to do as much for them as we can. If any of our relatives passed away and Hajj was compulsory on them i.e. they could have afforded to go, then we should also try and get the Hajj Badal done for them.

We just have to think of ways which will attain the greatest amount of reward for the longest possible amount of time and invest in these for both ourselves and our relatives.

I will conclude with a famous Hadith:

عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ يَقُولُ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَتَّبِعُ الْمَيِّتَ ثَلَاثَةٌ أَهْلُهُ وَمَالُهُ وَعَمَلُهُ فَيَرْجِعُ اثْنَانِ أَهْلُهُ وَمَالُهُ وَيَبْقَى وَاحِدٌ عَمَلُهُ³¹

Anas bin Malik رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrates that The Prophet ﷺ said “Three things follow a person to the grave, his family, his wealth and his deeds, two return, his family and his wealth and one remains, his deeds.”

May Allah ﷻ give us all the ability to prepare for our death and make us pass away in the state of Imaan - Ameen.

Appendix A – First & Last Ruku's of Surah Al-Baqarah

First Ruku of Surah Al-Baqarah

الم (1) ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ (2) الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ
بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ (3) وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا
أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ وَبِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ (4) أُولَئِكَ عَلَى
هُدًى مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ (5)

Last Ruku of Surah Al-Baqarah

آمَنَ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ كُلٌّ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ
وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْ رُسُلِهِ وَقَالُوا سَمِعْنَا
وَأَطَعْنَا غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ (285) لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا
وُسْعَهَا لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَا إِنْ نَسِينَا
أَوْ أَخْطَاْنَا رَبَّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْنَا إَصْرًا كَمَا حَمَلْتَهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ
قَبْلِنَا رَبَّنَا وَلَا تُحَمِّلْنَا مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِ وَاعْفُ عَنَّا وَاعْفِرْ لَنَا وَارْحَمْنَا
أَنْتَ مَوْلَانَا فَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ (286)

Glossary

Ghusl	Ritual bath
Haydh	Menstruation
Izaar	The bottom part of the shroud which covers the lower part of the body
Janaabat	Ritual impurity
Janaazah	Term used to define the deceased or the prayer
Kafan	Shroud
Karze-Hasana	Interest free foan given for a good cause
Lahd	Type of grave
Lifaafah	The large shroud which covers the whole body
Muhtadar	Person upon whom signs of death are present
Nifaas	Post-Natal bleeding
Orhni	The scarf part of a females shroud
Qamees	The shirt part of the shroud
Sakaraat	The time when a person is nearing death
Shaq	Type of grave
Sina'band	Part of a females shroud which covers the chest
Taaziyaat	Visiting the house of the deceased

A Practical Guide to
Funeral Rites
In Islam

www.islamicacademycoventry.org
email: admin@islamicacademycoventry.org

83-87 Cambridge Street
Coventry CV1 5HU