

## Purification

The shari'ah has divided water into four kinds:

- I. Mutlaq water,
- II. Used water (for purification),
- III. Water mixed with pure elements and
- IV. Water mixed with impure elements. We shall discuss each of them separately.

**I- Mutlaq water:** This kind of water is considered pure because of its inherent purity and as such, it can be used by an individual to purify him or herself. It consists of the following categories:

**1- Rain water, snow, and hail:** These substances are pure because Allah says so: "And sent down water from the sky upon you, that thereby He might purify you..." (al-Anfal 1), and "We send down purifying water from the sky" (al-Furqan 48). This is also supported by the following hadith: Abu Hurairah reported that the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, used to be silent between the (opening) takbir of the prayer and the verbal Qur'anic recitation. Abu Hurairah asked him, "O Messenger of Allah, may my father and mother be sacrificed for you, why do you remain silent between the takbir and the recital? What do you say (silently during that time)?" He said, "I say, 'O Allah, make a distance between me and my sins similar to the distance you have made between the East and the West. O Allah, cleanse me of my sins in the manner that a white garment (is cleansed) from dirt. O Allah, wash my sins from me with snow, water, and hail.'" This hadith is related by the "group", except for at-Tirmizhi.

**2- Sea water:** Sea water's purity is based on the following hadith: Abu Hurairah related that a man asked the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, "O Messenger of Allah, we sail on the ocean and we carry only a little water. If we use it for ablution, we will have to go thirsty. May we use sea water for ablution?" Said the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, "Its (the sea) water is pure and its dead (animals) are lawful (i.e., they can be eaten without any prescribed slaughtering)." This hadith is related by "the five." At-Tirmizhi calls it hassan sahih, and al-Bukhari says it is sahih.

**3- Water from the well of Zamzam:** 'Ali narrated that the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, called for a bucket that contained water from the well of Zamzam. He drank from the bucket, then made ablution (with its water). This hadith is related by Ahmad.

**4- Altered water:** This involves water whose form has been altered because of its being in a place for a long period of time, or because of the place in which it is located, or because of its being mixed with a substance that cannot be completely removed from it (i.e., water mixed with algae, tree leaves, and so on). The scholars agree that this type of water falls under the heading of mutlaq water. The rationale is simple: everything that falls under the general term of water, without any further qualifications, is considered pure, for the Qur'an says, "...and if you find not water, then go to clean, high ground..." (al-Ma'idah 6).

**II- Used water:** This category refers to water which drips from the person after he performs ablution or ghusl. It is considered pure because it was pure before its use for ablution, and there is no basis to think that it has lost its purity. This statement is supported by the hadith of Rab'i bint Mu'wazh which describes the ablution of the Messenger of Allah. She states, "He wiped his head with (the water) remaining on his hands from his ablution." This hadith is related by Ahmad and Abu Dawud. Abu Dawud's version is, "The Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, wiped his head with the extra water that was in his hand." Abu Hurairah also reported that the Messenger of Allah met him alone in the streets of Madinah while he was in post-sex impurity. He therefore slipped away, made ghusl and returned. The Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, asked him "Where have you been, Abu Hurairah?" He answered, "I was in post-sex impurity and did not want to sit with you while I was in that condition." The Prophet replied, "Glory be to Allah. The believer does not become impure." This is related by "the group." This is based on the rationale that since a believer never becomes impure, the water he uses for purification also does not become impure. Thus, a pure object touching a pure object cannot result in one's becoming impure. Ibn al-Munzhir said that it is related that 'Ali, Ibn 'Umar, Abu Umamah, 'Ata, al-Hassan, Makhul and anNakha'i said that if a person forgot to wipe his head while making ablution, it is sufficient for him to wipe his head with any water remaining in his beard. Ibn al-Munzhir stated that this proves that they took "used water" as pure. This opinion comes from one of the narrations attributed to Malik and ash-Shafi'. Ibn Hazm ascribes it to Sufyan al-Thauri, Abu Thaur, and all scholars of the Zahiri school of thought.

**III- Water mixed with pure elements:** This category includes water that has been mixed with substances like soap, saffron, flowers, and so on, that is, objects considered pure by the shari'ah. Such water is considered pure as long as it has not been so mixed with other substances that one can no longer call it water. If this is the case, the water is still considered pure, but it cannot be used for purification. Umm 'Atiyah narrated that the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, entered her house after the death of his daughter Zainab and said, "Wash her three or five or more times--if you see fit to do so--with water and dry tree leaves. For the final washing, use some kafoor or something from kafoor. When you are finished, inform me." She did so, after which he gave the women his outer garment and told them to wrap Zainab in it. This was related by "the group." The deceased should be washed with something that may purify a live person. Ahmad, an-Nasa'i and Ibn Khuzaimah record from Umm Hani that the Messenger of Allah and Maimunah washed themselves from one (water) container that had a trace of dough in it. In both of these hadith, we find that the water was mixed with another substance, but since the other substance was not substantial enough to alter its nature, it remained fit for consumption.

#### **IV- Water mixed with impure elements**

We can divide this category into two sub-categories:

- 1- The impure substance alters the taste, colour or odour of the water. In this case, it can not be used for purification. According to Ibn al-Munzhir and Ibn al-Mulaqqin, there is a consensus on this point.
- 2- The liquid is still considered water, meaning that the impure substance has not altered its taste, colour or odour. Such water is considered pure and may be used for

purification. This is based upon the following hadith: Abu Hurairah reported that a bedouin urinated in the mosque. The people stood to get him (and stop him). The Prophet said, "Leave him and pour a bucket of water or a container of water over his urine. You have been raised to be easy on the people, not to be hard on them." This hadith is narrated by "the group," except for Muslim. Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri asked the Prophet, "Can we make ablution from the well of Buda'ah (i.e., a well in Madinah)?" The Prophet, upon whom be peace, told him, "Water is pure and nothing makes it impure." This hadith is related by Ahmad, ash-Shafi, Abu Dawud, anNasa'i and at-Tirmizhi, who classified it as hassan. Ahmad said, "This hadith is sahih and Yahya ibn Ma'een and Muhammad ibn Hazm classified it as such." This is also the opinion of Ibn 'Abbas, Abu Hurairah, al-Hassan al-Basri, Ibn al-Musayyab, 'Ikrimah, Ibn Abu Laila, al-Thauri, Dawud azh-Zhahiri, an-Nakha'i, Malik and others. Says al-Ghazzali, "I wish ash-Shafi's opinion was like Malik's." There is also a hadith from 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar in which the Messenger of Allah is reported to have said, "If there are at least two buckets of water, it will not carry any impurity." This hadith is related by the "five." However, this hadith is muzhtarab in its chain of narrators and text. Ibn 'Abdul-Barr said in at-Tamheed, "As to the opinion of ash-Shafi which is based on this hadith, it is weak on scrutiny and is not confirmed by historical reports."

## Leftover water

Leftover water is what remains in a pot after some has been drunk. There are five different types of leftover water.

**1- Water leftover after people have drunk from the pot:** According to the shari'ah, such water is considered pure regardless of whether the one who drank from the pot was a Muslim, an unbeliever, a person in post-sex impurity or a menstruating woman. Although Allah says in the Qur'an, "Verily, the idol worshippers are impure" (at-Taubah) this is a reference not to their physical state, but to their false beliefs and creed. They may come into contact with dirt or impurities, but this does not mean that their possessions or bodies are impure. In fact, they used to mix with the Muslims. Their emissaries and delegations used to visit the Messenger of Allah and enter his mosque. The Prophet, upon whom be peace, did not order that the objects they touched be cleansed. As for menstruating women, 'Aishah said, "I used to drink (from a container) while I was menstruating. I would then pass it to the Messenger of Allah and he would drink from the same spot where I had put my lips." (Related by Muslim.)

**2- Water left in a container after an allowable animal has drunk from it:** Such water is considered pure. Since the animal qualifies for consumption, its saliva is also pure. Abu Bakr ibn al-Munzhir said, "The scholars are agreed that such water is permissible to drink or use for ablution."

**3- Water remaining in a pot after it has been drunk by a donkey, mule, beasts of birds of prey:** Such water is also considered pure, based on the hadith of Jabir in which the Messenger of Allah was asked about making ablution with drinking water left by donkeys. The Prophet, upon whom be peace, answered, "Yes, and from the drinking water left by any of the beasts of prey." This hadith was related by ash-Shaifi, ad-Daraqutni and al-Baihaqi who said, "When its different chains are put together they become strong." It has also been related from Ibn 'Umar

that the Messenger of Allah went out at night while he was on a journey. He passed by a man who was sitting by a pond. Said 'Umar, "Did a beast of prey drink from your pond tonight?" The Messenger of Allah told him, "O owner of the pond, do not inform him. It is not necessary, for him (the beast of prey) is what he carried in his stomach and for us is what he left, water to be used for drinking and purifying." This is related by ad-Daraqutni. Yahya ibn Sa'eed reported that once 'Umar was among a group that included 'Amr ibn al-'Aas and, when they came upon a pond, 'Amr said, "O owner of the pond, have the beasts of prey discovered your pond?" 'Umar said, "Do not inform us, since the people drink after the wild beasts and the wild beasts after the people." This is related by Malik in al-Muwatta.

**4- Water left in a pot after a cat has drunk from it:** Such water is also considered pure. This is proven by the hadith of Kabshah bint Ka'b who, when she was under the care of Abu Qatadah, entered the room to pour some water for him. A cat came, drank some of the water, and Qatadah proceeded to tilt the container so the cat could drink more. Kabshah said, "He noticed that I was watching him." He asked, "Are you surprised, O niece?" I answered, "Yes." He said, "The Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, said, 'It (the cat) is not impure. They intermingle with you.'"

**5- Water left in a pot after a pig or dog has drunk from it:** Such water is considered impure and must be avoided. Al-Bukhari and Muslim have recorded, on the authority of Abu Hurairah, that the messenger of Allah said, "If a dog drinks from one of your containers, wash it seven times." Ahmad and Muslim also have this addition, "Cleanse one of your containers if a dog licks it by washing it seven times, the first washing being with dirt." As for the leftover water of a pig, it is clearly considered filth and impure.

## Impurity (Najasah)

**N**ajasah refers to impure substances that the Muslim must avoid and wash off if they should happen to contaminate his clothes, body and so on. Says Allah in the Qur'an, "Purify your raiment" (alMudathar 4); and, "Allah loves those who repent and who purify themselves" (al-Baqarah 222). The Messenger of Allah also said, "Purity is half of the faith."

### Types of impurities

**1- Dead animals:** This refers to animals which die from "natural causes," that is, without the proper Islamic way of slaughtering. It also includes anything that is cut off of a live animal. Abu Waqid al-Laithy reported that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, "What is cut off of a live animal is considered dead," i.e., it is considered like an animal that has not been properly slaughtered. This is related by Abu Dawud and by at-Tirmizhi, who classifies it as hassan and says that the scholars act according to this hadith.

**A- Dead animals of the sea and dead locusts:** Ibn 'Umar reported that the Messenger of Allah said, "Two types of dead animals and two types of blood have been made lawful for us. The types of dead animals are seafood and locusts. The two types of blood are the (blood of the) liver and the spleen." This is related by Ahmad, ash-Shafi'i, al-Baihaqi and adDaraqutni. The hadith is weak, but Imam Ahmad says that it is authentic in mauqoof form. Abu Zar'ah and Abu Hatim have said the same. Such a report has the implication of a marfu' hadith because a companion saying, "This was allowed for us" or "This was

forbidden for us" is like one of them saying, "We were ordered to do this," or "We were forbidden to do this," and so on. (Such statements are considered marfu' with respect to their regulations). And we have already mentioned the Prophet's statement concerning the ocean, "Its water is pure and its 'dead animals' are allowable (to eat)."

**B- Dead animals that have no running blood :** (That is) bees, ants, and so on. They are considered pure. If they fall into some substance and die, the substance will not become impure. Ibn al-Munzhir said, "I do not know of any disagreement concerning the purity of such water save what has been related from ash-Shafi'. It is well-known that he views them as being impure. Nevertheless, it does not bother him if the object falling into a substance does not alter it (in any way)."

**C- Bones, horns, claws, fur, feathers, and skin and so on of dead animals:** All of these are considered pure. Concerning the bones of dead animals, az-Zuhri said, "I have met some scholars of the preceding generations who used such objects for combs and pots for oil, and they did not see anything wrong in that." This is related by al-Bukhari. Said Ibn 'Abbas, "The client of Maimunah was given a sheep as charity, and it died. The Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, passed by it and said, 'Why do you not remove its skin, treat it and put it to use?' She said, 'It is dead' (i.e., it has not been slaughtered properly). He said to her, 'Only eating it is forbidden.'" This is related by the group. Ibn Majah attributes the incident to Maimunah and her client. Al-Bukhari and an-Nasa'i do not mention treating the skin. It is reported from Ibn 'Abbas that he recited: "Say (O Muhammad): "In all that has been revealed to me, I do not find anything forbidden to eat; if one wants to eat thereof, unless it be carrion, or blood poured forth, or swine flesh..." (al-An'am 145). Then he said, "What is forbidden is its meat. As for its skin, skin used for waterskins, teeth, bones, fur and wool, they are permissible." This is narrated by Ibn Munzhir and Ibn Hatim. Similarly, its rennet and milk are considered pure. This is supported by the fact that when the companions conquered Iraq, they ate the cheese of the Magians which was made from rennet, although their slaughtered animals were considered the same as 'dead animals.' It is confirmed from Salman al-Farsi that when he was asked about cheese, clarified butter and pelts, he said, "What is permissible is what Allah made permissible in His book. What is forbidden is what Allah made forbidden in His book. What he omits, He has pardoned for you." It is well-known that he was being asked about the cheese of the Magians, as Salman was 'Umar's deputy in Mada'in, Iraq.

**2- Blood:** This includes blood that pours forth from an animal's body, such as blood from a slaughtered animal, or from menstruation, except for what small amounts are overlooked. Ibn Juraj said about the Qur'anic verse "...or blood poured forth..." (al-An'am 145), that this is the blood that flows out. The blood that does not flow out, but remains in the veins, is permissible. This is related by Ibn al-Munzhir. And it is also related from Abu Majlizn in his discourse on blood that he was asked, "What about the blood that remains in the slaughtered sheep or at the top of the cooking pot?" He answered, "There is no problem with it. What is forbidden is the blood that flows out (of the animal at the time of slaughtering)." This was recorded by 'Abd ibn Hameed and by Abu ash-Shaikh. It is also related from 'Aishah that she said, "We used to eat the meat when the blood was streaking the pot." Al-Hassan said, "The Muslims always prayed, even while they were bleeding." This was mentioned by al-Bukhari. It is confirmed that 'Umar

prayed while his wound was bleeding. Elucidating the point, Ibn Hajr says in Fath al-Bari (a commentary on Sahih al-Bukhari): "Abu Hurairah did not see anything wrong in a drop or two of blood during the prayers. Based on this report from Abu Hurairah, the blood of a flea or the blood that comes from a pimple are to be overlooked. Abu Majlizn was asked about pus that gets on the body or the clothes. He said, 'There is nothing wrong with them. Allah mentions only the blood, not the pus.'" Commenting on the subject, Ibn Taimiyyah says, "It is obligatory to clean the clothes from pus, purulent matter or similar fluids." He also says, "There is no proof concerning its impurity." It is preferred for the person to avoid contact as much as possible with these substances.

**3- Pig's meat:** According to the verse (al-An'am 145) quoted earlier, items mentioned therein are impure. The pronoun 'they' refers to all three of the mentioned items. It is, however, allowed to knit with the hair of a pig according to most of the scholars.

**4,5 & 6- Vomiting of a person, urine, and excrement:** There is agreement among the scholars that these objects are impure. But, a slight amount of vomit (commonly understood as a small amount of liquid) and the urine of an unweaned male baby are overlooked and pardoned. It is sufficient just to sprinkle water over the urine of an unweaned male baby. This is based on the hadith of Umm Qais. She came to the Messenger of Allah with her unweaned son. After a while, the baby urinated in the Prophet's lap. The Prophet, upon whom be peace, called for some water, which he sprinkled over his clothes, and did not give them a complete washing. This is related by al-Bukhari and Muslim. 'Ali narrated that the Messenger of Allah said, "The urine of a baby boy should have water sprinkled upon it. The urine of a baby girl is to be washed off." Says Qatadah, "This refers to a male baby that has not yet begun to eat. If he already eats, then the garment is to be washed." This hadith is related by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, at-Tirmizhi and Ibn Majah. In al-Fath, Ibn Hajr says its chain is sahih. Sprinkling is sufficient as long as the boy is still nursing. If he eats solid food, his urine must be washed from the clothes and body. There is no disagreement on this latter point. Perhaps the reason for this exemption to the male baby's urine is that people have a tendency to carry their male babies around, and it would have been difficult to clean the clothes after their frequent urinations.

**7- Al-Wadi:** Wadi is a thick white secretion discharged (by some people) after urination. It is considered impure. 'Aishah said, "Wadi comes out after urination. The person should wash the private parts and perform ablution. It is not necessary to perform ghusl. This is related by Ibn al-Munzhir. Ibn 'Abbas related that "mani (sperm) requires ghusl. As for mazhi (semen) and wadi they require a complete purification." This is related by al-Athram. Al-Baihaqi has it with the wording, "Concerning mazhi (prostatic fluid) and wadi, he said, 'Wash your sexual organs and perform the same type of ablution as you perform for prayer.'"

**8- Al-Mazhi or prostatic fluid:** This is a white sticky fluid that flows from the sexual organs because of thinking about sexual intercourse or foreplay, and so on. The person is usually not aware of when exactly it is secreted. It comes from both the male and the female sexual organs, although the amount from the latter is usually more than the former's. Scholars are agreed that it is impure. If it gets on the body, it is obligatory to wash it off. If it gets on the clothes, it suffices to sprinkle the area with water, as it is very hard to be completely protected from this impurity, especially for the young, single person. 'Ali said, "I used to excrete mazhi, so

I asked a man to ask the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, about it. I was shy to do so because of my position with respect to his daughter ('Ali was the Prophet's son-in-law). He said, 'Make ablution and wash your penis.' This is related by al-Bukhari and others. Sahl ibn Hanif said, 'I used to suffer from excessive amounts of mazhi. I used to make lots of ghusl because of it. So I mentioned this to the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, and he said, 'It is sufficient to take a handful of water and sprinkle it over your clothes wherever the fluid appears.' The hadith is related by Abu Dawud, Ibn Majah, and at-Tirmizhi. The latter says, 'The hadith is hassan sahih. In the chain is Muhammad ibn Ishaq, who is considered weak when he relates in mu'an'an (handed-down) form because of his reputation as one who committed tadrīs. But in this narration, he makes it clear that he heard the hadith directly.' Al-Athram narrated the same hadith with the wording, 'I was bothered by a great deal of mazhi, so I went to the Prophet, upon whom be peace, and informed him of this. He said 'It is sufficient for you to take a handful of water and sprinkle it over (the mazhi).''

**9- Sperm, Al-Mani:** Some scholars say that sperm is impure, but apparently it is pure, for it is only recommended to wash it off if it is still wet, and to scratch it off if it is dry. Said 'Aishah, 'I used to scratch the sperm off the Messenger of Allah's clothes if it was dry, and wash it off if it was still wet.' (This is related by ad-Daraqutni, Abu 'Awanah and al-Bazzar). It is also related that Ibn 'Abbas said, 'I asked the Messenger of Allah about sperm on clothes. He said, 'It is the same as mucus and spittle. It is sufficient to rub the area with a rag or cloth.' The hadith was related by ad-Daraqutni, al-Baihaqi and atTahawi. There is a difference in the narration over whether it should be in marfu'or mauqoof form.

**10- The urine and stools of animals that are permissible to eat:** Both of these are considered impure. Ibn Mas'ud related that the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, went to answer the call of nature. He asked 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud to bring three stones. 'Abdullah said, 'I could not find three stones, so I found two stones and animal dung and brought them to him. He took the two stones and threw away the dung saying, 'It is impure.' The hadith is related by al-Bukhari, Ibn Majah, and Ibn Khuzaimah. In one narration it states, 'It is impure. It is the stool of a donkey.' A little amount of it is pardoned though, as it is very difficult to completely protect one's self from it. Al-Waleed ibn Muslim says, 'I said to al-Auza'i, 'What about the urine of animals whose meat is not eaten, like the mule, donkey and horse?' He said that they used to come into contact with these during their battles, and that they did not wash it off their bodies or clothes. As for the urine and stools of animals whose meat is permissible, Malik, Ahmad and a group of the Shaifiyyah says that it is pure. Commenting on the subject, Ibn Taimiyyah says, 'None of the companions held that it is impure. In fact, the statement that it is impure is of recent origin and not from the early generations of the companions.' Said Anas, 'A group of people from the tribes of Ukul or 'Uraina came to Madinah and became ill in their stomach. The Prophet ordered them to get a milking she-camel and drink a mixture of its milk and urine.' This hadith is related by Ahmad, al-Bukhari and Muslim and points to a camel's urine as being pure. Therefore, by analogy, other permissible animals' urine may also be considered pure. Says Ibn al-Munzhir, 'Those who claim that that was permissible only for those people are incorrect. Specification is only confirmed by some specific proof.' He also says, 'The scholars permit, without any objection, the sale of sheep's stools and the use of camel's urine in their medicine, both in the past and in the present, again without any objection. This shows that they are considered pure.' Says ash-Shaukani,

"Apparently, the urine and stools of every living animal permissible to eat is pure." There is nothing to prove otherwise.

**11- Jallalah:** Jallalah refers to an animal that eats the waste or flesh of other animals, such as camels, cows, sheep, chickens, geese, and so on. Ibn 'Abbas reported that the Messenger of Allah forbade the drinking of such animals' milk. This hadith is related by "the five," except for Ibn Majah. At-Tirmizhi grades it as sahih. In one narration it states, "It is also prohibited to ride upon a jallalah. (Related by Abu Dawud.) 'Amr ibn Shu'aib related on the authority of his father, from his grandfather, that the Messenger of Allah prohibited the meat of domestic donkeys. As for the jallalah, he prohibited riding or eating them." (Related by Ahamad, an-Nasa'i and Abu Dawud.) If the jallalah animal is kept away from the other animals for some time and is given clean food to eat, then it becomes pure and is no longer called jallalah. If this is the case, it becomes permissible to eat, as the reason for its prohibition was the change it underwent due to eating filth, a state which would no longer be present.

**12- Alcohol:** According to most scholars, alcohol is impure. Says Allah in the Qur'an, "Alcohol, games of chance, idols and divining arrows are only an infamy of Satan's handiwork." Some scholars say that it is pure, for they take the meaning of rajis in its abstract sense as describing alcohol and whatever is related to it. This is not labelled as impure in a definite, sensory way. Says Allah, "Stay away from the impurities of idols." Idols are impure in the abstract sense, and they are considered impure if one touches them. The explanation of the preceding verse is that they are a tool of Satan, for they cause enmity and hatred and keep people away from the remembrance of Allah and prayer. In Subul as-Salaam it says, "Their origin is pure and their being prohibited does not mean that the object itself is impure. For example, hashish is prohibited but it is pure. But, something impure is not necessarily prohibited. Every impure thing is prohibited, but not vice-versa. That is because of the ruling that something impure cannot be touched under any circumstances. If a ruling says that something is impure, it is also prohibited. This differs from a ruling that something is prohibited. For example, it is forbidden to wear silk and gold, but they are absolutely pure by consensus." If one understands that, then the prohibition of alcohol does not necessarily entail its also being considered impure: it needs some other evidence to prove that it is impure. If not, then we are left with the original position that it is pure. If one claims other than that, he must substantiate it.

**13- Dogs:** Dogs are considered impure. Any container that a dog has licked must be washed seven times, the first time with dirt. Abu Hurairah reported that the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, said, "Purifying a container that a dog has licked is done by washing it seven times, the first washing being with dirt (that is, water mixed with dirt until it becomes muddy)." This was related by Muslim, Ahmad, Abu Dawud, and al-Baihaqi. If a dog licks a pot that has dry food in it, what it touched and what surrounds it must be thrown away. The remainder may be kept, as it is still pure. As for a dog's fur, it is considered pure.

**Purifying the body and clothes:** If the clothes or body are contaminated with impurities, it is obligatory to wash them with water until they are cleansed of the impurities. This is especially the case if the impurity is visible, such as blood. If there are some stains that remain after washing which would be extremely difficult to remove, they can be overlooked. If the impurity is not visible, such as urine, it is sufficient to wash it one time. 'Asma bint Abu Bakr related that a



woman came to the Prophet, upon whom be peace, and said, "Our clothes are contaminated with menstrual blood. What should we do about this?" He said, "Scrape it, rub it with water, pour water over it and then pray in it." (This is related by al-Bukhari and Muslim) If impurities get on the lower portion of a woman's dress, it is purified by dust as she trails along. A woman said to Umm Salamah, "I have a long dress that drags on the ground, even when I walk through places that contain filth. What should I do about it?" Umm Salamah answered her, "The Messenger of Allah said, 'What comes after it purifies it.'" This is related by Ahmad and Abu Dawud.

**Purifying the ground:** If there are impurities on the ground, it is purified by pouring water over it. This is proven by Abu Hurairah's hadith, mentioned earlier, about the bedouin who urinated in the mosque. The Prophet, upon whom be peace, said all that needed to be done for purification was to pour water over it. Said Abu Qulabah, "The drying of the ground is its purification." 'Aishah said, "The purification of the ground is its becoming dry." (Related by Ibn Abi Shaibah.) This, of course, refers to the case where the impurity is a liquid. If the impurity is a solid, the ground will only become pure by its removal or decay.

**Purifying clarified butter and other similar substances:** Ibn 'Abbas relates from Maimunah that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, was asked about a mouse that fell into a pot of clarified butter. He said, "Take (the mouse) and what is around it out, and throw it away. Then eat (the rest of) your clarified butter." This is related by al-Bukhari. Commenting on the subject, al-Hafezh Ibn Hajr says, "Ibn 'Abdul Barr reported that there is agreement that if a dead animal falls into a solid matter, what the dead animal touches and what is around it must be thrown away, provided that one can make sure that the animal did not touch the remainder. As for a liquid substance, there is some difference of opinion. The majority say that the entire liquid becomes impure; az-Zuhri, al-Auza'i, and some others disagree with that opinion.

**Purifying the skin of dead animals:** Tanning purifies the skin and the fur of a dead animal. This is based on the hadith of Ibn 'Abbas, in which the Prophet said, "If the animal's skin is tanned, it is purified." (Related by al-Bukhari and Muslim.)

**Purifying mirrors and similar objects:** Mirrors, knives, swords, nails, bones, glass, painted pots and other smooth surfaces that have no pores are purified by simply wiping them and removing any impure remains. The companions of the Prophet used to pray while wearing swords smeared with blood, and they used to just wipe the swords to purify them.

**Purifying shoes:** Shoes may be purified by rubbing them against the ground, as long as the remains of the impurity are removed. Abu Hurairah narrated that the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, said, "If one of you stepped in some filth, the dirt will purify his shoes." Related by Abu Dawud. In another narration it states, "If one of you steps in some filth with his shoes on, the dirt will purify them." Abu Sa'eed reported the Prophet, upon whom be peace, saying, "When a person comes to the mosque, he should look at his shoes. If he finds any filth on them, he should wipe them against the ground and pray in them." (Related by Ahmad and Abu Dawud.) Since shoes are repeatedly exposed to filth, it is sufficient just to wipe them against the ground. This is similar to the case of defecation. In fact, it is stronger than that case, as defecation usually occurs only two or three times a day.

### Useful points that are greatly needed concerning purification:

- 1- Rope used for hanging clothes with impurities on them may afterwards be used for hanging pure clothes.
- 2- If a liquid falls on a person and he does not know if it was water or urine, he need not inquire about it. If he does inquire, the one who is asked need not answer him even if he knows that the liquid is impure. In that case, the person need not wash his clothes.
- 3- If a person finds something moist on his body or clothes at night, and he does not know what it is, he need not smell it to discover what it might be. It is related that 'Umar passed by a gutter (and got wet). 'Umar's companion asked the owner of the gutter if the water was pure or impure. 'Umar told the owner not to answer the question, and went on his way.
- 4- Clothes that have street mud on them need not be washed. Reported Kamyal ibn Ziyad, "I saw 'Ali wading through the mud, after which he entered the mosque and prayed without washing his legs."
- 5- If a person finishes his prayer and sees some impurities on his clothes or body of which he was not previously aware, or he was aware of them but forgot about them, or he did not forget about them but he was not able to remove them, then his prayer is still valid and he need not repeat it. This opinion is supported by Allah's statement, "And there is no sin for you in the mistakes you make unintentionally." (al-Ahzab 5). Many of the companions and those of the following generation gave this legal verdict.
- 6- If a person can not determine what part of his clothes contain the impurity, he should wash the whole garment. This is based on the axiom, "If an obligation cannot be fulfilled except by performing another related act, then that act also becomes obligatory."
- 7- If a person mixes his pure clothes with his impure clothes (and gets confused between them), he should investigate the matter and pray once in one of the clothes. This is similar to the question of the exact direction of the qiblah. It does not matter if the proportion of pure clothes was large or small.

### Relieve Oneself

**T**here are some etiquettes for one who relives himself:

- 1- It is not proper for one to carry something that has Allah's name upon it (unless he is afraid of losing it or having it stolen), while he is going to the bathroom. Anas related that the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, had a ring engraved with Muhammad Rasool-ullah, (Muhammad the Messenger of Allah), which he would remove when he went to the bathroom. Ibn Hajr says that this hadith is malul (a type of weak hadith having a defect) and Abu Dawud says it is munkar, (singularly related by people who are not trustworthy). The first portion of the hadith is authentic, however.
- 2- He should move and hide himself from others while going to the bathroom This is especially true in the case of defecation, so others can not hear noxious sounds or smell bad odours. Said Jabir, "We were journeying with the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, and he would only relieve himself when he was out of sight." (This is related by Ibn Majah.) Abu Dawud records that, "When he wanted to relieve himself, he would go where no one could see him." He also related, "When the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, went out he would go very far away."
- 3- One should mention the name of Allah and seek refuge in Him when entering the privy or removing his clothes to relieve himself. Anas reported that when the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, entered the privy he would say, "In the name of Allah. O Allah! I

- seek refuge in you from male and female noxious beings (devils)." This is related by "the group."
- 4- One should not talk when going to the bathroom One should not respond to a greeting or repeat what the caller to prayer is saying. He may speak if there is some necessity (i.e., to guide a blind man who fears he may be harmed). If he sneezes, he should praise Allah to himself and simply move his lips (without making a sound). Ibn 'Umar related that a man passed by the Prophet, upon whom be peace, and greeted him while he (the Prophet) was urinating. The Prophet did not return his greeting. (This is related by "the group," except for al-Bukhari.) Abu Sa'eed reported that he heard the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, say, "Isn't it true that Allah detests those who converse while they relieve themselves?" This was related by Ahmad, Abu Dawud and Ibn Majah. This hadith seems to support the position that it is forbidden to talk. Many scholars, however, say that it is only disliked, not forbidden.
  - 5- One should neither face nor turn his back on the qiblah while relieving himself Abu Hurairah reported that the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, said, "When one of you relieves himself, he should neither face the qiblah nor turn his back on it." This was related by Ahmad and Muslim. The prohibition implies that it is only disliked. As Ibn 'Umar related that he once went to Hafsa's home, where he saw the Messenger of Allah relieving himself while facing Syria with his back to the Ka'bah. This is related by "the group." Some reconcile these hadith by saying that in the desert it is forbidden to face or turn one's back on the Ka'bah, while it is permitted in buildings. Said Marwan al-Asghar, "I saw 'Umar sitting on his she-camel and facing the qiblah while urinating. I said, 'O father of 'Abdurahman ... is this not forbidden?' He said, 'Certainly not ... This has been prohibited only in open areas. If there is a barricade (or separator) between you and the qiblah, there is nothing wrong with it." This is related by Abu Dawud, Ibn Khuzaimah and al-Hakim. Its chain is hassan as Ibn Hajr said in Fath al-Bari.
  - 6- One should seek a soft and low piece of ground to protect himself from impurities Abu Musa related that the Messenger of Allah came to a low and soft part of the ground and urinated. He then said, "When one of you urinates, he should choose the proper place to do so." This is related by Ahmad and Abu Dawud. One of its narrators is unknown, but its meaning is sound.
  - 7- One should not use a hole in the ground Qatadah related from 'Abdullah ibn Sarjas who said, "The Messenger of Allah forbade urination into a hole." Said Qatadah, "What is disliked about urinating into a hole?" Said he, "It is the residence of the jinn." This hadith is related by Ahmad, an-Nasa'i, Abu Dawud, al-Hakim and al-Baihaqi. Ibn Khuzaimah and Ibn as-Sakin classified it as sahih.
  - 8- One should avoid shaded places and those places where people walk and gather Abu Hurairah reported that the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, said, "Beware of those acts which cause others to curse." They asked, "What are those acts?" He said, "Relieving yourself in the people's walkways or in their shade." This hadith is related by Ahmad, Muslim and Abu Dawud.
  - 9- One should not urinate in bathing places or in still or running water 'Abdullah ibn Mughaffal narrated that the Prophet said, "None of you should urinate in a bathing place and then make ablution in the water. The majority of waswas comes from that." This is related by "the five," but the statement, "and then make ablution in it" was only related by Ahmad and Abu Dawud. Jabir said the Prophet forbade urinating in still as well as

- running water. (Related by Ahmad, an-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah.) In Majma az-Zuwa'id it states, "This was related by at-Tabarani, and its narrators are trustworthy. "If there is a drain in the bathing place, it is permissible to urinate into it.
- 10- One may not urinate while standing If a person can guarantee that no impurities will touch his clothes, it is permissible to urinate while standing. Said 'Aishah, "If someone relates to you that the Messenger of Allah urinated while standing, do not believe him. He only urinated while sitting." This hadith is related by "the five," except for Abu Dawud. At-Tirmizhi's comment is, "It is the best thing related on this point, and it is the most authentic." One should not forget that what 'Aishah said is based on the knowledge that she had. Huzhaifah relates that the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, went to a public garbage dump and urinated while standing. Huzhaifah went away, and the Prophet then called him over. The Prophet made ablution and wiped over his shoes. This is related by "the group." Commenting upon the issue, an-Nawawi says, " To urinate while sitting is most desirable in my opinion, but to do so standing is permissible. Both acts are confirmed by the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace.
  - 11- One must remove any impurities from his clothes and body To do so, he can use a rock, stone or any other pure matter. One may use only water to clean the area, or any combinations of purifying agents. 'Aishah reported that the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, said, "When one of you goes to relieve himself, he should clean himself with three stones." (Related by Ahmad, an-Nasa'i, Abu Dawud and ad-Daraqutni). Anas related that the Messenger of Allah would enter the privy, and that Anas and another boy would carry the water container and spear for him. The Prophet would clean himself with water." (Related by al-Bukhari and Muslim.) Ibn 'Abbas related that the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, passed by two graves and said, "They are being punished. But they are not being punished for a great matter (on their part). One of them did not clean himself from urine and the other used to spread slander." (Related by "the group.") Anas also related the Prophet as saying, "Purify yourselves from urine, as most punishment in the grave is due to it."
  - 12- One should not clean himself with his right hand 'Abdurahman ibn Zaid related that Salman was asked, "Your Prophet teaches you everything, even how to relieve yourselves?" Salman said, "Certainly ... He forbade us from facing the qiblah while doing so, from cleaning ourselves with our right hand, and from cleaning ourselves with less than three stones. We also should not use an impure substance or a bone to clean ourselves." (Related by Muslim, Abu Dawud, and at-Tirmizhi.) Hafsah reported, "The Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, reserved his right hand for eating, drinking, putting on his clothes, taking and giving. He used his left hand for other actions." (Related by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, Ibn Majah, Ibn Hibban, al-Hakim and al-Baihaqi).
  - 13- One should remove any bad smell from his hands after cleaning himself Abu Hurairah said, "When the Messenger of Allah upon whom be peace, relieved himself, I used to bring him a container of water. He would cleanse himself, then rub his hands against the soil." (Related by Abu Dawud, an-Nasa'i, al-Baihaqi, and Ibn Majah.)
  - 14- One should sprinkle his penis and underwear with water after urination Make sure that he has cleansed himself. If one finds some dampness in his clothes after so doing, he can content himself by saying, "That is just water." This is based on the hadith related by al-Hakim ibn Sufyan or Sufyan ibn al-Hakim who said, "When the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, urinated, he would wash and sprinkle (his penis)." In another narration it

states, "I saw the Messenger of Allah urinate, after which he sprinkled water over his penis." Ibn 'Umar used to sprinkle his penis until his underwear became wet.

- 15- Entering the bathroom One should enter the bathroom or a privy with his left foot, and exit with his right foot, saying: "O Allah! I seek your forgiveness." 'Aishah related that when the Messenger of Allah left the bathroom, he would say this supplication. (Related by "the five," except for an-Nasa'i.) What 'Aishah stated is the soundest statement on this topic. It is related through a number of weak chains that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, used to say, "Praise be to Allah who made the filth leave me and who has given me health," and "Praise be to Allah who let me enjoy it, kept for me its energy and relieved me of its harm."

## Acts that correspond to the Nature of Mankind

**A**llah has chosen certain acts for all of His prophets and their followers to perform. These acts distinguish them from the rest of mankind, and are known as sunan al-fitra, (the acts that correspond to the nature of mankind).

**1- Circumcision:** This prevents dirt from getting on one's penis, and also makes it easy to keep it clean. For women, it involves cutting the outer portion of the clitoris. Abu Hurairah reported that the Messenger of Allah said, "Ibrahim circumcised himself after he was eighty years old." (Related by al-Bukhari.) Many scholars say that it is obligatory." The Shaf'iyyah maintain that it should be done on the seventh day. Says ash-Shaukani, "There is nothing that states explicitly its time or indicates that it is obligatory."

**2 & 3 Shaving pubic hairs and pulling out underarm hairs:** They are two sunan acts. If the hair is only trimmed or pulled out, it will suffice.

**4 & 5 Clipping one's fingernails, trimming and shaving his moustache:** Ibn 'Umar related that the Messenger of Allah said, "Differ from the polytheists: let your beards (grow)" and shave your moustache." (Related by al-Bukhari and Muslim). Abu Hurairah reported that the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, said, "Five things are part of one's fitra: Shaving the pubic hairs, circumcision, trimming the moustache, removing the hair under the arms and trimming the nails." (Related by "the group.") It does not mention which one would specifically fulfill the sunnah. One should make sure that his moustache is not so long that food particles, drink and dirt accumulate in it. Zaid ibn Arqam related that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said "Whoever does not take (off) some of his moustache is not one of us." (Related by Ahmad, an-Nasa'i and at-Tirmizhi, who classified it as sahih.) It is preferred to cut the pubic hairs, pluck out the underarm hairs, cut the nails and trim the moustache on a weekly basis, a practice which is most hygienic. If some unnecessary hair is left on the body for a longer period of time, it may disturb the person. One may leave this action for forty days, but no longer. Said Anas, "The time period for us to trim the moustache, cut the nails, pluck out the underarm hairs and cut the pubic hairs was forty nights." (Related by Ahmad, Abu Dawud and others).

**6- Letting one's beard grow and become thick:** This is a feature of dignity. It should not be cut so short that it appears like a shaved beard, nor should it be left so long that it becomes untidy. It is also a sign of manhood. Says al-Bukhari, "Whenever Ibn 'Umar made the hajj or 'umrah, he would hold his beard in his fist and, whatever exceeded his fist, he would cut off."

**7- Oiling and combing one's hair:** Abu Hurairah reported the Prophet, upon whom be peace, as saying, "Whoever has hair should honour it." (Related by Abu Dawud.) Said 'Ata ibn Yasar, "A man came to the Prophet with unkempt hair and an untidy beard. The Prophet pointed to him, as if ordering him to straighten his hair and beard. He did so and returned. Thereupon the Prophet observed, 'Is that not better than one of you coming with his hair unkempt, as if he were a devil?'" (Related by Malik.) Abu Qatadah related that he had a great amount of hair. He asked the Prophet, "O Messenger of Allah, I have lots of hair. Should I comb it?" He answered, "Yes ... and honour it." Abu Qatadah used to oil it twice a day due to the Prophet's words, "... and honour it." Cutting one's hair off is permissible, and so is letting it grow if one honours it. Ibn 'Umar narrated that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, "Shave it all or leave it all." (Related by Ahmad, Muslim, Abu Dawud and an-Nasa'i). To shave part of it and leave part of it is greatly disliked. Nafa' related from Ibn 'Umar that the Messenger of Allah prohibited qiza'. Nafa' asked, "What is qiza' ?" He said, "It is to shave off part of the hair of a youth and to leave part." (AlBukhari and Muslim.)

**8- Leaving gray hairs in place:** This applies to both men and women. 'Amr ibn Shu'aib related on the authority of his father from his grandfather that the Prophet said, "Do not pluck the grey hairs as they are a Muslim's light. Never a Muslim grows grey in Islam except that Allah writes for him, due to that, a good deed. And he raises him a degree. And he erases for him, due to that, one of his sins." (Related by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, at-Tirmizhi, an-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah.) And Anas said, "We used to hate that a man should pluck out his white hairs from his head or beard." (Related by Muslim. )

**9- Changing the colour of grey hair by using henna, red dye, yellow dye, and so on:** Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, "The Jews and Christians do not dye, so differ from them." (Related by "the group.") Abu Zharr reported that the Messenger of Allah said, "The best thing that one can use to change the colour of grey hairs is henna and katm (a reddish dye)." (Related by "the five.") There are some narrations that state that dying is disliked, but it is obvious that these narrations conflict with the sunnah and custom. It is related from some of the companions that it is better not to dye, while others say it is better to do it. Some used a yellow dye, while others used henna or katm. Others used saffron, and a group of them used a black dye. Ibn Hajr mentioned in Fath al-Bari that az-Zuhri said, "We used black dye if our face was youthful, but if wrinkles were present and the teeth were gone we would not use it." Said Jabir, "Abu Quhafah (Abu Bakr's father) was brought to the Prophet during the conquest of Makkah while his head was "white." The Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, "Take him to one of his wives and let her change the colour of his hair with something, but she should avoid (making his hair) black." (Related by "the group," except for al-Bukhari and at-Tirmizhi). This dealt with a certain incident, and cannot be generalized. Furthermore, black would not be proper for someone as old as Abu Quhafah.

**10- To use musk and other types of perfume:** These are pleasing to the soul and beautify the atmosphere. Anas reported the Messenger of Allah as saying, "Among the things of this world, I love women and perfume, and the coolness of my eyes is prayer." (Related by Ahmad and an-Nasa'i.) Abu Hurairah reported that the Messenger of Allah said, "If someone offers perfume, do not reject it, for it is light to carry and has a sweet scent." (Related by Muslim, an-

Nasa'i and Abu Dawud.) Abu Sa'eed reported that the Prophet said about musk, "It is the best of perfumes." (Related by "the group," except for al-Bukhari and Ibn Majah). Nafa' narrated that Ibn 'Umar used to burn and inhale a branch called aluwah that has a nice smell. He also used camphor. He used to say, "This is the way the Messenger of Allah inhaled such scents (that is, by burning them.)" (Related by Muslim and an-Nasa'i.)

## Ablution

**A**blution means to wash one's face, hands, arms, head and feet with water.

- 1- Part of Islamic law:** This is proven from the three major sources of Islamic law:
1. **The Qur'an.** Says Allah in the Qur'an, "O you who believe, when you rise for prayer, wash your faces and your hands up to the elbows and lightly rub your heads and (wash) your feet up to the ankles (al-Ma'idah 6).
  2. **The Sunnah.** Abu Hurairah reported that the Messenger of Allah said, "Allah does not accept the prayer of one who nullified his ablution until he performs it again." (Related by al-Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawud and at-Tirmizhi.)
  3. **The Consensus.** There is a consensus of scholarly opinion that ablution is part of Islamic law. Therefore, it is a recognized fact of the religion.

**2- Its virtues:** Many hadith state the virtues of ablution. We shall mention just a few:

- A- 'Abdullah ibn as-Sunnabiji stated that the Messenger of Allah said, "When a slave makes ablution and rinses his mouth, his wrong deeds fall from it. As he rinses his nose, his wrong deeds fall from it. When he washes his face, his wrong deeds fall from it until they fall from beneath his eyelashes. When he washes his hands, his wrong deeds fall from them until they fall from beneath his fingernails. When he wipes his head, his wrong deeds fall from it until they fall from his ears. When he washes his feet, his wrong deeds fall from them until they fall from beneath his toenails. Then his walking to the mosque and his prayer give him extra reward." (Related by Malik, an-Nasa'i, Ibn Majah and al-Hakim.)
- B- Anas reported that the Messenger of Allah said, "If good characteristics exist in a person, Allah makes all of his acts good. If a person purifies himself for prayer, he expiates all of his sins and his prayer is considered an extra reward for him." (Related by Abu Ya'la, al-Bazzar and at-Tabarani in al-Ausat.)
- C- -3- Abu Hurairah reported that the Messenger of Allah said, "Shall I inform you (of an act) by which Allah erases sins and raises degrees?" They said, "Certainly, O Messenger of Allah." He said, "Perfecting the ablution under difficult circumstances, taking many steps to the mosque, and waiting for the (next) prayer after the (last) prayer has been performed. That is ribat. (Related by Malik, Muslim, at-Tirmizhi and an-Nasa'i.)
- D- Abu Hurairah also reported that the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, passed by a grave site and said, "Peace be upon you, O home of believing people. Allah willing, we shall meet you soon, although I wish I could see my brothers." They asked, "Are we not your brothers, O Messenger of Allah?" He said, "You are my companions. My brothers are the ones who will come after (us)." They said, "How will you know the people of our nation who will come after you, O Messenger of Allah?" He said, "If a man has a group of horses with white forelocks amidst a group of horses with black forelocks, will he recognize his horses?" They said, "Certainly, O Messenger of Allah."

He said, "They (my brothers) will come with white streaks from their ablutions, and I will receive them at my cistern. But there will be some who will be driven away from my cistern as a stray camel is driven away. I will call them to come. It will be said, 'They changed matters after you,' then I will say, 'Be off, be off.'" (Related by Muslim.)

**3- The obligatory parts of the ablution:** Ablution has certain components which, if not fulfilled according to the correct Islamic procedures, make one's ablution void.

**a: Intention:** This is the desire to do the action and to please Allah by following His command. It is purely an act of the heart, for the tongue (verbal pronouncement, and so on) has nothing to do with it. To pronounce it is not part of the Islamic law. That the intention is obligatory is shown in the following: 'Umar related that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, "Every action is based on the intention (behind it), and everyone shall have what he intended..." (Related by "the group.")

**b: Washing the face:** This involves "pouring" or "running" water from the top of the forehead to the bottom of the jaws, and from one ear to the other.

**c: Washing the arms to the elbow:** The elbows must be washed, for the Prophet, upon whom be peace, did so.

**d: Wiping the head:** This means to wipe one's head with his hand. It is not sufficient just to place the hand on the head or to touch the head with a wet finger. The apparent meaning of the Qur'anic words, "...and wipe over your heads..." does not imply that all of the head needs to be wiped. It has been recorded that the Prophet used to wipe his head three different ways:

**1- Wiping all of his head.** 'Abdullah ibn Zaid reported that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, wiped his entire head with his hands. He started with the front of his head, then moved to the back, and then returned his hands to the front. (Related by "the group").

**2- Wiping over the turban only.** Said 'Amru ibn Umayyah, "I saw the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, wipe over his turban and shoes." (Related by Ahmad, al-Bukhari and Ibn Majah). Bilal reported that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, "Wipe over your shoes and head covering." (Related by Ahmad.) 'Umar once said, "May Allah not purify the one who does not consider wiping over the turban to be purifying." Many hadith have been related on this topic by al-Bukhari, Muslim and others. Most of the scholars agree with them.

**3- Wiping over the front portion of the scalp and the turban:** Al-Mughirah ibn Shu'bah said that the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, made ablution and wiped over the front portion of his scalp, his turban and his socks. (Related by Muslim.) There is, however, no strong hadith that he wiped over part of his head, even though al-Ma'idah: apparently implies it. It is also not sufficient just to wipe over locks of hair that proceed from the head or along the sides of the head.



**e- Washing the feet and the heels:** This has been confirmed in mutawatir (continuous) reports from the Prophet, upon whom be peace, concerning his actions and statements. Ibn 'Umar said, "The Prophet lagged behind us in one of our travels. He caught up with us after we had delayed the afternoon prayer. We started to make ablution and were wiping over our feet, when the Prophet said, 'Woe to the heels, save them from the Hell-fire,' repeating it two or three times." (Related by al-Bukhari and Muslim.) Needless to say, the preceding obligations are the ones that Allah has mentioned in (al-Ma'idah 6).

**f- Following the prescribed sequence:** Allah mentioned the obligations in a specific order. He also differentiated the legs from the hands--though both of them have to be washed--from the head, which only needs to be wiped. The polytheists of Arabia would not differentiate items unless there was some benefit in doing so. The way Allah structured the ablution made it easier for them to comprehend it. Al-Ma'idah 6 explains what is obligatory and it falls under the generality of the Prophet's statement, "Begin with what Allah began with." The Prophet used to follow that sequence as one of ablution's principles. There is no such report that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, ever departed from that sequence. Ablution is part of worship, and in matters of worship there is no room for anything except doing what has been commanded.

## Sunan (traditions) of Ablution

This section deals with those acts connected with the ablution, but which are not obligatory, as the Prophet, upon whom be peace, did not rigorously stick to them or censure anyone for not doing them. They are as follows:

**1-Mentioning the name of Allah at the beginning:** There are some weak hadith that mention this act, and all of the chains of these hadith point to the fact that there is some basis for this act. In any case, it is a good act in and of itself and, in general, it is part of the Islamic law.

**2- Dental Hygiene:** This involves using a stick or similar object to clean one's teeth. The best type to use is that of the arak tree found in the Hejaz. Such a practice strengthens the gums, prevents tooth disease, helps digestion and facilitates the flow of urine. This sunnah is fulfilled by using any object which removes yellow stains on the teeth and cleans the mouth, such as a toothbrush, and so on. Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, "Were it not to be a hardship on my community, I would have ordered them to use a toothbrush for every ablution." (Related by Malik, ash-Shafi'i, al-Baihaqi and al-Hakim.) 'Aishah reported that the Prophet said, "The toothbrush purifies the mouth and is pleasing to the Lord." (Related by Ahmad, an-Nasa'i and at-Tirmizhi.)

Using a toothbrush is liked at any time, but there are five times in which it is especially liked:

- a) -1- ablution,
- b) -2- prayer,
- c) -3- reading the Qur'an,
- d) -4- rising from sleep, and
- e) -5- when the taste in one's mouth has changed. Fasting and non-fasting people may use it at the beginning, the end, or at any other time during the day. 'Amr ibn Rabi'ah said, "I have seen the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, on countless occasions using a toothbrush while fasting." (Related by Ahmad, Abu Dawud and at-Tirmizhi.)

When one uses a toothbrush, it is sunnah to clean it afterwards. Said 'Aishah, "When the Prophet, upon whom be peace, used his toothbrush, he would give it to me. I would wash it, use it, wash it again and give it back to him." (Related by Abu Dawud and al-Baihaqi.) It is part of the sunnah that one who has no teeth may use his fingers to clean his mouth. Asked 'Aishah, "O Messenger of Allah, how should a toothless person cleanse his mouth?" "By putting his fingers into his mouth," he replied. (Related by at-Tabarani.)

**3- Washing the hands three times at the beginning:** This is based on the hadith of Aus ibn Aus al-Thaqafi who said, "I saw the Messenger of Allah make ablution, and he washed his hands three times." (Related by Ahmad and an-Nasa'i.) Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, "When one of you rises from his sleep, he should not put his hand into a pot until he has washed it three times, for he does not know where his hand was (while he slept)." (Related by "the group", al-Bukhari did not mention the number of times.)

**4- Rinsing the mouth three times:** Laqit ibn Sabrah reported that the Prophet said, "When one performs ablution, he should rinse his mouth." (Related by Abu Dawud and al-Baihaqi.)

**5- Sniffing up and blowing out water three times:** Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, "When one of you performs ablution, he should sniff water up his nostrils and then blow it out." (Related by al-Bukhari, Muslim and Abu Dawud.) The sunnah is to put the water into the nostrils with the right hand and blow it out with the left. 'Ali once called for water for ablution, rinsed his mouth, sniffed up water into his nostrils and blew it out with his left hand. He did that three times and then said, "That is how the Prophet, upon whom be peace, would purify himself." (Related by Ahmad and an-Nasa'i.) This sunnah is fulfilled by putting water into the mouth and nostrils in any way. The practice of the Prophet was to do both acts at the same time. 'Abdullah ibn Zaid said, "The Prophet would rinse his mouth and nose with just one hand (at one time, together). He did that three times." In one narration it says, "He would rinse his mouth and nose with three scoops of water." (Related by al-Bukhari and Muslim.) It is also sunnah to be plentiful (with water) while performing this sunnah, except if one is fasting. Laqit asked the Prophet, "Inform me about your ablution." He replied, "Complete and perfect the ablution and (put water) between your fingers. Use lots of water while sniffing it up your nostrils, unless you are fasting." (Related by "the five." At-Tirmizhi said it is sahih.)

**6- Running one's fingers through his beard:** 'Aishah reported that the Messenger of Allah would run his fingers through his beard. (Related by Ibn Majah and at-Tirmizhi, who classified it as sahih.) Anas said that when the Messenger of Allah performed ablution, he would take a handful of water and put it under his jaws and pass it through his beard. He said, "This is what my Lord, Allah, ordered me to do." (Related by Abu Dawud, al-Baihaqi and al-Hakim.)

**7- Running water through one's fingers and toes:** Ibn 'Abbas said that when the Messenger of Allah performed ablution, he would run his fingers through his fingers and toes. (Related by "the five," except Ahmad.) It is also related that it is preferable to remove jewelry, for example, rings, bracelets, and so on, while performing ablution. Even though these reports are not accepted as fully authentic, one must follow them, for they fall under the general category of completing and perfecting the ablution.

**8- Repeating each washing three times:** This is a sunnah that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, almost always followed. If he acted otherwise, it was just to show that the other acts are permissible. 'Amr ibn Shu'aib related on the authority of his father from his grandfather who said: "A bedouin came to the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, and asked him about the ablution. He showed him how to wash each part three times and said, 'This is the ablution. Whoever does more than that has done wrong, transgressed and committed evil.'" (Related by Ahmad, an-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah.) 'Uthman also reported that the Messenger of Allah would repeat each washing three times. (Related by Ahmad, Muslim and at-Tirmizhi.) It is also proven that he performed each washing only once or twice. According to most of the reports, he wiped his head only once.

**9- Beginning each action with the right side:** Said 'Aishah, "The Messenger of Allah loved to begin with his right side while putting on his shoes, straightening his hair and cleaning (or purifying) himself." (Related by al-Bukhari and Muslim.) Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet said, "When you clothe or wash yourself, begin with your right side." (Related by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, at-Tirmizhi, and an-Nasa'i.)

**10- Rubbing the limbs with water:** This means to rub the hands over the bodily parts with water. 'Abdullah ibn Zaid reported that the Messenger of Allah was brought a pot of water which he used to perform ablution, and then rubbed his arms. (Related by Ibn Khuzaimah.) He also related that the Messenger of Allah performed ablution, then rubbed his limbs. (Related by Abu Dawud at-Tayalisi, Ahmad, Ibn Hibban and Abu Ya'la.)

**11- Close sequence:** Each bodily part must be washed right after the other in the prescribed sequence (without separating the washing of the different parts of acts not related to the ablution). This is the customary practice of the early and later generations of Muslims.

**12- Wiping the ears:** The sunnah is to wipe the interior of the ears with the index fingers and the exterior portions with the thumbs. The water used to wipe the head is also used for the ears, as the ears are part of the head. Al-Miqdam ibn Ma'd Yakrih reported that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, wiped his head and his ears, the interior and exterior, while making ablution. He also put his finger inside his ear. (Related by Abu Dawud and at-Tahawi.) While describing the ablution of the Prophet, upon whom be peace, Ibn Abbas said, "He wiped his head and ears with one wipe." (Related by Ahmad and Abu Dawud.) In one narration it states, "He wiped the inner portion of his ears with his index finger, and the outer portion with his thumb."

**13- Elongating the streaks of light:** This refers to washing the complete forehead, a practice which is more than what is obligatory in washing the face, and will increase the streak of light (on the Day of Judgement). It also refers to washing above the elbows and ankles. Abu Hurairah reported that the Messenger of Allah said, "My nation will come with bright streaks of light from the traces of ablution." Abu Hurairah then said, "If one can lengthen his streak of light, he should do so." (Related by Ahmad, al-Bukhari and Muslim.) Abu Zar'ah related that when Abu Hurairah made ablution, he washed his arms above his elbows and his feet up to his calves. He was asked, "Why do you do this?" He said, "This is the extent of the embellishment." (Related by Ahmad.) According to al-Bukhari and Muslim, its chain is sahih.

**14- Economizing the use of water, even if one is in front of the sea:** Anas said, "The Prophet, upon whom be peace, used to perform ghusl (the complete bathing) with a sa'a of water (1.616 cm) 3 to 5 madd (each 4 madd equals one sa'a). He also used to make ablution with one madd (404 cm) of water." (Related by al-Bukhari and Muslim.) 'Ubaidullah ibn Abu Yazid narrated that a man asked Ibn 'Abbas, "How much water is sufficient for ghusl?" He answered, "One madd." "And how much is sufficient for ghusl?" He said, "One sa'a." The man said, "That is not sufficient for me." "Ibn 'Abbas said, "No? It was sufficient for one better than you, the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace." (Related by Ahmad, al-Bazaar and at-Tabarani in al-Kabeer. Its narrators are trustworthy.) 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar narrated that the Messenger of Allah passed by Sa'd while he was performing ablution and said, "What is this extravagance, Sa'd?" He said, "Is there extravagance in the use of water?" He said, "Yes, even if you are at a flowing river." (Related by Ahmad and Ibn Majah with a weak chain.)

Extravagance is to use water without any benefit, like washing the parts more than three times. Ibn Shu'aib's hadith, quoted earlier, illustrates the point in question. 'Abdullah ibn Mughaffal narrated that he heard the Prophet say, "There will be people from my nation who will transgress in making supplications and in purifying themselves." (Related by Ahmad, Abu Dawud and an-Nasa'i.) Says al-Bukhari, "The scholars do not like one to use water beyond what the Prophet, upon whom be peace, used for ablution.

**15- Supplication while performing ablution:** There is nothing confirmed from the Prophet, upon whom be peace, regarding supplications during ablution save the hadith of Abu Musa al-Ash'ari who said, "I came to the Messenger of Allah with water. While he was performing ablution, I heard him supplicate, 'O Allah, forgive my sins. Make my residence spacious for me and bless me in my provisions.' I said, 'O Prophet of Allah, I heard you supplicating such and such.' He said, 'Did I leave anything out?'" (Related by an-Nasa'i and Ibn as-Sunni with a sahih chain.) An-Nawawi includes this event under the chapter, What is to be said after one completes the ablution, and Ibn as-Sunni has it under, What is to be said when one is in the state of ablution. An-Nawawi holds that both meanings may be implied from the hadith.

**16- Supplication after ablution:** 'Umar reported that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, "If one completes (and perfects) the ablution and then says, 'I testify that there is no god except Allah, the One Who has no partner, and that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger,' the eight gates of paradise will be opened for him and he may enter any of them that he wishes." (Related by Muslim.) Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri reported that the Prophet said, "Whoever makes ablution and says, 'Glory be to Thee, O Allah, and the praise be to Thee. I bear witness that there is no god except You. I beg Your forgiveness and I repent unto you,' will have it written for him, and placed on a tablet which will not be broken until the Day of Resurrection. This hadith is related by at-Tabarani in al-Ausat. Its narrators are of the sahih. An-Nasa'i has it with the wording, "It will be stamped with a seal, placed below the throne, and it will not be broken until the Day of Resurrection." The correct statement is that it is mauqoof. As for the supplication, "Allah, cause me to be from among the repentant, and cause me to be from among the pure," it has been narrated by at-Tirmizhi who said, "Its chain is muzhtarib and there is nothing authentic concerning this (supplication)."

**17-Praying two rak'ah after ablution:** Abu Hurairah reported that the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, said to Bilal, "O Bilal, tell me what good deed you have done in Islam

that I hear the sound of your footsteps in Paradise?" Bilal said, "That after I purify myself during the day or night, I pray with that purification as much as Allah has destined for me." (Related by al-Bukhari and Muslim.) 'Uqbah ibn 'Aamr related that the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, said, "If one performs and perfects his ablution and prays two rak'ah with his heart and face (completely on his prayer), Paradise becomes his." (Related by Muslim, Abu Dawud, Ibn Majah and Ibn Khuzaimah in his Sahih.) Khumran, the client of 'Uthman, added, "I saw 'Uthman call for water for ablution, pour it from the pot onto his right hand and wash it three times. He then put his right hand into the container, rinsed his mouth and nose and blew the water out. Then he washed his face three times, followed by his arms up to the elbows. Then he washed his feet three times and said 'I saw the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, make ablution like this.' And then he would say, 'Whoever makes ablution like this and then prays two rak'ah without having any other concern on his mind, all his past sins will be forgiven.'" (Related by al-Bukhari, Muslim and others.) Other practices (protecting the eyes and wrinkles, removing any rings, wiping the neck, and so on) have not been mentioned here as their narrations are still questionable. But, one may follow them as part of general cleanliness.

## Nullification of ablution

It is not desirable that one who is making ablution should leave any of the sunan that have just been mentioned. The person would then lose the great reward of these (simple)acts. Anytime one abandons the sunnah, he has done a disliked deed.

**1- An excretion of the penis, vagina or anus:** This would include urine, feces (Allah says, "...or one of you comes from relieving himself," thus proving that such an act obligates a new purification), and releasing gas from the anus. Abu Hurairah reported that the Messenger of Allah said, "Allah does not accept the prayer of a person who has released gas until he makes a new ablution. A person from Hazhramaut asked Abu Hurairah, "What does releasing gas mean?" He answered, "Wind with or without sound." (Related by al-Bukhari and Muslim.) He also narrated that the Prophet said, "If one of you finds a disturbance in his abdomen and is not certain if he has released any gas or not, he should not leave the mosque unless he hears its sound or smells its scent." (Related by Muslim.) Hearing the escaping gas or smelling it is not a condition for nullifying ablution, but he stressed that one should be certain of the action. As for al-Mazhi (prostatic fluid), the Prophet said, "Make ablution." Concerning sperm or al-mani, said Ibn 'Abbas "It requires ghusl and for al-mazhi and al-wadi, wash your sex organs and make ablution." This was related by al-Baihaqi in his Sunan.

**2- Deep sleep that makes a person completely unaware of his surroundings:** If the person did not keep his buttocks firmly seated on the floor while sleeping, he must make a new ablution. Safwan ibn 'Asal said, "The Prophet, upon whom be peace, used to order us while we were travelling not to take our socks off unless we were in post-sex impurity (i.e. not for defecation, urination or sleep)." (Related by Ahmad, an-Nasa'i and at-Tirmizhi, who graded it sahih.) If one's buttocks has remained firmly on the floor during his sleep, no new ablution is necessary. This is implied by the hadith of Anas who said, "The companions of the Prophet were waiting for the delayed night prayer until their heads began nodding up and down (from drowsiness and sleep). They would then pray without performing ablution." (Related by ash-Shaifi, Muslim, Abu Dawud and at-Tirmizhi.) The wording that at-Tirmizhi recorded from the chain of Shu'bah is, "I have seen the companions of the Prophet sleeping to the extent that one

could hear some of them snoring. But, they would stand for prayer without a new ablution." Said Ibn alMubarak, "In our opinion, this happened when they were sitting."

**3- Loss of consciousness:** This nullifies the ablution regardless of whether it was owing to insanity, fainting, drunkenness, or some medicine. It also does not matter if one was unconscious for a short or long period of time, or if one was sitting, or fell to the earth, and so on. The aspect of unawareness here is greater than that of sleeping. The scholars are agreed on this point.

**4- Touching the sexual organ without any "barrier" between the hand and the organ:** Busrah bint Safwan narrated that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, "Whoever touches his sexual organ cannot pray until he performs ablution." This hadith is related by "the five." At-Tirmizhi classified it as sahih and al-Bukhari called it the most authentic report on that topic. Malik, ash-Shaifi, Ahmad and others also narrated it. Abu Dawud said, "I asked Ahmad, 'Is the hadith of Busrah authentic?' He said, 'Certainly it is authentic.'" In the narration of Ahmad and an-Nasa'i, Busrah heard the Prophet saying, "Ablution is to be made by the one who touches his sexual organ." This is general and encompasses touching one's own sexual organs or touching somebody else's. Abu Hurairah reported the Prophet as saying, "Whoever touches his sexual organ without any covering (between them) must perform ablution." (Related by Ahmad, Ibn Hibban and al-Hakim, who classified it as sahih, as did Ibn 'Abdul-Barr.)

Said Ibn as-Sakin, "That hadith is from the best of what has been related on this topic." Ash-Shafi'i related: "Any man who touches his penis must perform ablution. Any woman who touches her vagina must perform ablution." Commenting on its authenticity, Ibn alQayyim quotes al-Hazimi who says, "That chain is sahih." The Hanifiyyah are of the opinion, based on the following hadith, that touching the sexual organ does not nullify the ablution: "A man asked the Prophet if a man who touches his penis has to perform ablution. Said the Prophet, upon whom be peace, "No, it is just a part of you." (Related by "the five." Ibn Hibban classified it as sahih, and Ibn al-Madini said, "It is better than the hadith of Busrah.")

## **Actions That Do Not Nullify the Ablution**

**1- Touching a woman:** 'Aishah related that the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, kissed her while he was fasting and said, "Kissing does not nullify the ablution, nor does it break the fast." (Related by Ishaq ibn Rahawaih and al-Bazzar with a good chain.) Evaluating its authenticity, 'Abdul-Haqq says, "I do not know of any defect in the hadith that could cause its rejection." 'Aishah also said, "One night, I missed the Messenger of Allah in my bed, and so went to look for him. I put my hand on the bottom of his feet while he was praying and saying, 'O Allah, I seek refuge in Your pleasure from Your anger, in Your forgiveness from Your punishment, in You from You. I cannot praise you as You have praised Yourself" (related by Muslim and at-Tirmizhi, who classified it as sahih.), and she also reported, "The Prophet kissed some of his wives and went to prayer, without performing ablution." (Related by Ahmad and "the four," and its narrators are trustworthy.) She also said, "I would sleep in front of the Prophet, upon whom be peace, with my feet in the direction of the qiblah (to him). When he made prostrations, he would touch me, and I would move my feet." In another narration it says, "When he wanted to prostrate, he would touch my legs."

**2- Bleeding from an unusual place:** This involves bleeding due to a wound, cupping or a nosebleed, and regardless of whether the amount of blood is small or large. Said al-Hassan, "The Muslims still prayed even while wounded." (Related by al-Bukhari.) He also reported, "Ibn 'Umar squeezed a pimple until it bled, but he did not renew his ablution. Ibn Abi 'Uqiyah spat blood and continued his prayer. 'Umar ibn al-Khattab prayed while blood was flowing from him. 'Ibbad ibn Bishr was hit with an arrow while praying, but continued his prayers." (Related by Abu Dawud, Ibn Khuzaimah, and al-Bukhari in mu 'allaq form.)

**3- Vomit:** Regardless of whether the amount of vomit was great or small, there is no sound hadith that it nullifies ablution.

**4- Eating camel meat:** That this does not nullify the ablution was the opinion of the four rightly guided caliphs, the companions and the following generation, although there is an authentic hadith that states one should make ablution after it. Said Jabir ibn Sumrah, "A man asked the Prophet, 'Should we make ablution after eating mutton?' He said, 'If you wish, make ablution. If you do not, do not make ablution.' The man asked 'Should we make ablution after eating camel meat?' He said, 'Yes.'" Al-Barra' ibn 'Aazib related that someone asked the Prophet about praying in the dens of camels, and he said, "Do not pray therein, for they are of the devils." He asked about the dens of sheep, and he said, "Pray therein, for they are blessings." (Related by Ahmad, Abu Dawud and Ibn Hibban. ) Ibn Khuzaimah said, "I know of no dispute over the authenticity of this report." In summation, an-Nawawi can be quoted as saying, "This opinion has the strongest proof, although the majority of the scholars differ from it."

**5- Of doubts whether or not one has released gas:** This is the case where the person cannot quite recall if he is in a state of purity or not. Such a state of mind does not nullify ablution, regardless of whether the person is in prayer or not, until he is certain that he has nullified his ablution. 'Abbad ibn Tameem related that his uncle queried the Prophet about a person who feels something in his abdomen while praying. Said the Prophet, "He should not leave (the prayer) until he hears it or smells it." (Related by Muslim, Abu Dawud and at-Tirmizhi). It does not mean that its sound or bad smell nullifies ablution, but that the person must be certain about the fact that he has nullified his ablution. Says Ibn al-Mubarak, "If one is uncertain about his condition of purity, he does not need to perform a new ablution." If one is certain that he has nullified his ablution and doubts whether he has purified himself or not, he must perform a new ablution.

**6- Laughing during prayer:** This does not nullify ablution, for there are no confirmed reports that state such a thing.

**7- Washing a dead person:** This also does not require a new ablution, for the reports that say it nullifies ablution are weak.

## **Actions That Require Ablution As A Prerequisite**

It is obligatory to perform Ablution for three matters:

**1- Any type of ritual prayer:** This involves only obligatory, voluntary, or funeral prayers, not the supplications (du'a). This is based on Allah's statement, "O you who believe. When you get

up to perform a prayer (salah) wash your face and your arms up to the elbows and wipe your head and feet to the ankles." Also, the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, said, "Allah does not accept a prayer (that was performed while the person) was not in a state of purity. Nor does he accept charity from misappropriated booty." (Related by "the group," except for al-Bukhari.)

**2- Circumambulating the Ka'bah:** Ibn 'Abbas reported that the Messenger of Allah said, "Circumambulation is a type of prayer, but Allah has permitted speaking during it. Whoever speaks during it should only speak good." This hadith is related by at-Tirmizhi, ad-Daraqutni, al-Hakim, Ibn as-Sakin and Ibn Khuzaimah, who classified it as sahih.

**3- Touching a copy of the Qur'an:** Abu Bakr ibn Muhammad related from his father on the authority of his grandfather that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, sent a letter to the people of Yemen which stated, "No one is to touch the Qur'an except one who is purified." This hadith is related by an-Nasa'i, ad-Daraqutni, al-Baihaqi and al-Athram. Of its chain, Ibn 'Abdul-Barr says, "It appears to be a continuous transmission." 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar reported that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, "No one is to touch the Qur'an unless he has purified himself." (Al-Haithami mentioned it in Majma' az-Zawaid and said its narrators are trustworthy.) Apparently, this hadith has a problem. The word "purify" must have one particular meaning here. Therefore, to say that one who has a minor defilement may not touch the Qur'an makes no sense. Concerning Allah's statement, "...which none touches save the purified," (al-Waqi'ah 79), apparently the pronoun refers to "the Book kept hidden" (from the preceding verse) and that is "the well-preserved tablet" and the "purified" refers to the angels, which is similar to the verses, "On honored scrolls, exalted, purified, (set down) by scribes, noble and righteous" (Abasah 13-16). Ibn 'Abbas, ash-Sha'bi, azh-Zhahak, Zaid ibn 'Ali, al-Mu'ayyid Billah, Dawud, Ibn Hazm and Hammad ibn Abu Sulaiman are of the opinion that one who has a minor defilement may touch the Qur'an. Most of the scholars, however, agree that such people may recite the Qur'an without touching it.

## **Actions For Which A State of Purity is Preferred**

**1- While mentioning the name of Allah:** Al-Muhajir ibn Qunfuzh related that he greeted the Prophet, upon whom be peace, but that the latter did not return his salutation until he had made ablution: "There is nothing that prevented me from responding to you except that I do not like to mention the name of Allah unless I am in a state of purity." Said Qatadah, "Because of this, al-Hassan hated to recite the Qur'an or mention Allah's name unless he had performed ablution. (Related by Amad, Abu Dawud, an-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah.) Reported Abu Juhaim ibn al-Harith, "The Prophet, upon whom be peace, met a person at the well of Jaml, who greeted him, but he did not return his greeting until he had wiped his face and hands." (Related by Ahmad, al-Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawud and an-Nasa'i.) This action was one of preference, not of obligation. Mentioning the name of Allah is permissible for the one who is in a state of purity, one who has a minor impurity, a person in post-sex impurity, or one who is standing, sitting, and so on. Said 'Aishah, "The Messenger of Allah used to remember Allah at all times." (Related by "the five," except for an-Nasa'i.) Al-Bukhari recorded it in mu'alliq form.) Reported 'Ali, "The Messenger of Allah would come from relieving himself, recite to us and eat meat with us. Nothing would stop him from the Qur'an except post-sex impurity." (Related by "the five." At-Tirmizhi and Ibn as-Sakin categorized it as sahih.)



**2- Going to sleep:** Al-Barra' ibn 'Aazib reported that the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, said, "When you go to your bed, perform ablution, lie on your right side and then say, 'O Allah, I submit my soul to You, and I turn my face to You. I entrust my affairs to You. I retreat unto You for protection with hope and fear in You. There is no resort and no saviour but You. I affirm my faith in Your books which You revealed and in Your prophets you sent.' If you die during that night, you will be along the natural path. Make it your final statement (of the night). He reported that he repeated this supplication to the Prophet, upon whom be peace, and he said, "...and Your messengers." The Prophet interjected, "No,...'and the prophets You sent." (Related by Ahmad, al-Bukhari, and at-Tirmizhi.) This also applies to one who is in post-sex impurity . Ibn 'Umar asked the Prophet, "O Messenger of Allah, can one of us sleep while he is in post-sex impurity?" The Prophet answered, "Yes, if he makes ablution." Reported 'Aishah, "When the Prophet, upon whom be peace, wanted to sleep in a state of post-sex impurity, he would wash his private parts and perform ablution." (Related by "the group.")

**3- To remove a sexual impurity:** If a person in a state of post-sex impurity wants to eat, drink or have intercourse again, he should perform ablution. Said 'Aishah, "When the Prophet, upon whom be peace, was in a state of impurity because of intercourse and wanted to eat or sleep, he would perform ablution." 'Ammar ibn Yasar reported that the Prophet permitted a person in post-sex impurity to eat, drink or sleep if he performed ablution first. (Related by Ahmad and at-Tirmizhi, who classified it as sahih.) Abu Sa'eed reported that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, "If one has intercourse with his wife and wants to repeat the act, he should perform ablution." (Related by "the group," except for al-Bukhari. Ibn Khuzaimah, Ibn Hibban and al-Hakim recorded it with the addition, "It makes the return more vivacious.")

**4- Before performing ghusl:** It is preferred to perform ablution before ghusl regardless of whether that particular ghusl was an obligatory or a preferred act. Said 'Aishah, "When the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, performed post-sex ghusl, he would begin by washing his hands and then pour water from his right hand to his left and wash his private parts. He would then perform ablution.." (Related by "the group.")

**5- Before eating food touched by fire:** Said Ibrahim ibn 'Abdullah ibn Qarizh, "I passed by Abu Hurairah while he was performing ablution and he said, 'Do you know why I am making ablution? It is because I ate some yoghurt dried over a fire, for I heard the Messenger of Allah say, 'Perform ablution before eating food touched by fire.'" (Related by Ahmad, Muslim and "the four.") 'Aishah related that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, "Perform ablution from whatever touches fire." (Related by Ahmad, Muslim, an-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah.) This order is one of preference as the following hadith makes clear: 'Amr ibn Umayyah azhZhamari said, "I saw the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, cutting a piece of a sheep's shoulder and eating it. He was then called to prayer. He put the knife down, prayed, and did not perform another ablution." (Related by al-Bukhari and Muslim.)

**6- Renewing the ablution for every prayer:** Said Buraidah, "The Prophet, upon whom be peace, made ablution for every prayer. On the day of the conquest of Makkah, he made ablution, wiped over his socks and prayed a number of times with just one ablution. 'Umar said to him, 'O Messenger of Allah, you did something that you have not done (before).' He

answered, 'I did it on purpose, 'Umar.'" (Related by Ahmad, Muslim and others.) Said Anas ibn Malik, "The Prophet, upon whom be peace, used to make ablution for every prayer." He was asked, "And what did you people use to do?" Malik said, "We prayed the prayers with one ablution unless we nullified it." (Related by Ahmad and al-Bukhari . ) Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet said, "Were it not to be a hardship on my people, I would order them to make ablution for every prayer." (Related by Ahmad with a hassan chain.) Ibn 'Umar reported that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, "Whoever makes ablution while he is already in a state of purity will have ten good deeds written for him."~ (Related by Abu Dawud, at-Tirmizhi, and Ibn Majah.)

#### **Notes of importance concerning ablution**

1. It is permissible to speak while performing ablution. There is nothing reported from the sunnah that prohibits it.
2. Making supplications while washing the extremities is based on false hadith. It is best for the person to use only the supplications mentioned under the Sunnah Acts of Ablution.
3. If the person who is making ablution has a doubt concerning how many times he has washed a particular part of the body, he should go by the number he is certain about.
4. If any barrier or substance with weight, such as wax, is found on the body, it would invalidate one's ablution unless it is removed and the ablution is performed again. Colouring, like henna, is permissible, as it does not affect the ablution's correctness.
5. People with unusual circumstances (i.e. women with "prolonged flows of blood"), people who cannot control their urine, people with flatulence, and so on, should perform one ablution for each prayer whether their problem exists all or part of the time. Their prayers will be acceptable even while their problems are occurring.
6. One may be assisted by others in performing ablution.
7. One may use a towel to dry himself during any time of the year.

### **Wiping over the socks**

**1- Proof of its legitimacy:** Wiping over the socks is part of the sunnah. An-Nawawi states, "All those who qualify for ijma' (consensus) agree that it is allowed to wipe over the socks--during travelling or at home, if needed or not--even a woman who stays at home or a handicapped person who cannot walk can do so. The Shi'ah and Khawarij reject it, but their rejection is not valid. Says Ibn Hajr in Fath al-Bari, "All of the preservers (of hadith) are of the opinion that wiping over the socks has come through a continuous transmission. Some have collected all of its narrations (from among the companions), and its number exceeds eighty. This includes hadith from the ten pepole who were promised Paradise." The strongest hadith on this point has been related by Ahmad, al-Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawud and at-Tirmizhi on the authority of Hammam anNakha'i who said, "Jarir ibn 'Abdullah urinated, performed ablution and wiped over his socks." It was said to him, "You do that and you have urinated?" He said, "Yes, I saw the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, urinate and then do likewise." Said Ibrahim, "They were amazed at that hadith, because Jarir had embraced Islam after surah al-Ma'idah was revealed (10 AH). One of its verses calls for washing one's feet. This hadith helps us understand the verse by confining it to one who is not wearing socks. This constitutes a particular case, and the person who wears socks can just wipe over them.

**2- Wiping over slippers:** It is allowed to wipe over slippers, as this has been related from many companions. Says Abu Dawud, "Wiping over sandals (has been done by) 'Ali ibn Abu Talib, Ibn Mas'ud, al-Barra' ibn 'Aazib, Anas ibn Malik, Abu Umamah, Sahl ibn Sa'd and 'Amr ibn Hareeth. It has also been related from 'Umar ibn al-Khattab and Ibn 'Abbas." 'Ammar, Bilal ibn 'Abdullah ibn Abu Aufi and Ibn 'Umar also have hadith on this subject. In Ibn alQayyim's Tahzib as-Sunan, he relates from Ibn al-Munzhir, "Ahmad made a statement about the permissibility of wiping over slippers because of his fairness and justice. Nevertheless, the basis of this permissibility is the practice of the companions and a manifest analogy. There is no real difference between socks and slippers. It is correct that they take the same ruling. Most scholars say that one can wipe over either one." Those who permit it include Sufyan al-Thauri, Ibn al-Mubarak, 'Ata, al-Hasan and Sa'eed ibn alMusayyab. Commenting on this subject, Abu Yusuf and Muhammad said, "It is allowed to wipe over them if they are thick and completely hide what they cover." Abu Hanifah did not approve of wiping over thick slippers, but he changed his mind three or seven days before his death. He wiped over his slippers during his illness and said to his visitors, "I did what I used to tell people not to do." Al-Mughirah ibn Shu'bah reported that the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, made ablution and wiped over his socks and slippers. This is related by Ahmad, at-Tahawi, Ibn Majah and at-Tirmizhi, who called it hassan sahih. Abu Dawud graded it weak. As it is permissible to wipe over socks so is it permissible to wipe over any foot covering, which has been used to avoid the cold or protect the wound, and so on. Of its permissibility, Ibn Taimiyyah says, "It is all right to wipe over foot covering because it takes precedence over wiping socks or slippers, for usually a foot covering is used for some need and to protect the feet from some harm. If wiping over the socks and slippers is allowed, then wiping over any foot covering should come first. Whoever claims that there is a consensus on the inadmissibility of wiping over foot coverings does so with a lack of knowledge. Not to speak of a consensus, he cannot prove its forbiddance even from the works of ten famous scholars." He goes on to say, "Whoever ponders over the words of the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, and gives analogy its proper place, will know that the license from him was spacious on this subject and in accord with the beauty of Islamic law and the monotheistic magnanimity with which the Prophet had been sent." Even if there are some holes or cuts in the socks, it is permissible to wipe over them, as long as the person has only such socks to wear. Says al-Thauri, "The slippers of the emigrants and helpers were not free of cuts or holes, like the slippers of the people (in general). If this were a matter of concern, it would have been mentioned and related by them."

**3- Conditions for wiping over the socks:** One must have put his socks (or whatever covering he is using) while in a state of purity. Said al-Mughirah ibn Shu'bah, "I was with the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, one night during an expedition. I poured water for him to make ablution. He washed his face and arms and wiped his head. Then I went to remove his socks and he said, 'Leave them on, as I put them on while I was in a state of purity,' and he just wiped over them." (Related by Ahmad, al-Bukhari and Muslim). Al-Humaidi related in his Musnad that al-Mughirah reported, "We said, 'O Messenger of Allah, may we wipe over our socks?' He said, 'Yes, if you put them on while you were in a state of purity.'" The stipulations by the jurists that the socks must completely cover the foot to the ankle, and that one must be able to walk (a distance) in them alone, has been shown by Ibn Taimiyyah in his al-Fatawa to be weak.

**4- The place to be wiped on a sock:** Islamic law prescribes that the top of the sock is to be wiped. Said al-Mughirah, "I saw the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, wipe over the top of his socks." (Related by Ahmad, Abu Dawud and at-Tirmizhi, who called it hassan.) 'Ali observed, "If the religion was based on opinion, the bottom of the sock would take preference in being wiped to the top of the sock." (Related by Abu Dawud and ad-Daraqutni with a hassan or sahih chain.) What is obligatory in the wiping is what is meant by the lexicographical meaning of the word "wipe." There are no specifications authentically mentioned with respect to the wiping.

**5- The duration of the wiping:** For the resident, this period is one day and night. For the traveller, it is three days and nights. Said Safwan ibn 'Assal, "We were ordered (by the Prophet) to wipe over the socks if we were in a state of purity when we put them on, for three days if we were travellers, and for one day and night if we were residents. We did not remove them unless we were in post-sex impurity." (Related by ash-Shaf-i, Ahmad, Ibn Khuzaimah, at-Tirmizhi, and an-Nasa'i, who graded it sahih.) Shuraih ibn Hani said, "I asked 'Aishah about wiping over socks and she answered, 'For the traveller, three days and three nights; for the resident, one day and night.'" This hadith is related by Ahmad, Muslim, at-Tirmizhi, an-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah. Of its authenticity, al-Baihaqi says, "This is the most authentic report on this topic." Some say that the duration begins with the time of the wiping, while others say it begins from the time of nullifying the ablution after wearing the socks.

**6- The description of the wiping:** After the person completes his ablution and puts on his socks or slippers, it is proper for him to wipe over them later on when he wants to perform ablution. He is permitted to do that for one day and night if he is resident, and for three days and nights if he is a traveller. But if he is in post-sex impurity, he must remove his socks, in accordance with the preceding hadith of Safwan.

**7- What invalidates the wiping:** The following invalidates the wiping:

- 1- The end of the permissible time period for wiping.
- 2- Post-sex impurity.
- 3- Removal of the socks. If (i) or (iii) occurs while the person was in a state of purity, he need only wash his feet.

## **Ghusl (the complete ablution)**

**G**husl means to wash the entire body with water. Says Allah in the Qur'an, "If you are sexually impure, purify yourselves." And, "They question you concerning menstruation. Say: It is an illness, so let women alone at such times and do not have sex with them until they are cleansed" (al-Baqarah 222).

### **It's Obligation**

Ghusl is obligated in five matters:

**1- Discharge of al-Mani owing to stimulation while asleep or awake:** The opinion of the jurists in general is that ghusl is a must should one have a discharge of al-mani (sperm) owing to stimulation while asleep or awake. Abu Sa'eed reported that he heard the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, say, "Water (washing) is (needed) after (ejaculation of) sperm."

(Related by Muslim.) Umm Salamah reported that Umm Sulaim said, "O Messenger of Allah, Allah is not ashamed of the truth. Does a woman have to perform ghusl if she has a wet dream?" He said, "Yes, if she sees the liquid." (Related by al-Bukhari, Muslim and others.)

**There are some other points of importance that need to be noted:**

**a- If the sperm is discharged without any type of stimulation** (owing to illness or extreme cold) In this case, ghusl is not obligatory. 'Ali reported that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said to him, "If sperm is ejaculated, perform ghusl." (Related by Abu Dawud). Said Mujahid, "We were in a meeting in the mosque with the companions of Ibn 'Abbas (Tawus, Sa'eed ibn Jubair and 'Ikrimah). When he stood to pray, a man came in and said, 'Is there one who can give a legal verdict?' We said, 'Ask your question.' He said, 'Whenever I urinate, a liquid always follows it.' We asked, 'Is it the type of liquid that gives birth to children?' He said, 'Yes.' We said, 'Then you have to perform ghusl.' The man went away. Ibn 'Abbas hurried to finish his prayer, after which he told 'Ikrimah to bring the man back. He turned to us and said, 'Is your verdict found in the Book of Allah?' We said, 'No.' He asked, 'Is it based on the sayings of the Prophet, upon whom be peace?' We said, 'No.' 'Then from what?' We said, 'From our opinion.' He said, 'That is why the Messenger of Allah said that one learned man is more difficult for Satan than a thousand worshippers.' The man came and faced Ibn 'Abbas, who said to him, 'When that happens, is it owing to any stimulation?' He answered, 'No.' Ibn 'Abbas asked, 'Do you feel any numbness in your body?' He answered, 'No.' Said Ibn 'Abbas, 'That is from the cold. Ablution is sufficient.'"

**b- If one has a wet dream but does not find any traces of ejaculation:** There is no need for ghusl in this instance either. Ibn al-Munzhir said, "All of the knowledgeable people known to me agree on this point." The hadith of Umm Salamah mentioned earlier supports this proposition.

**c- If one wakes from sleep and finds some moistness, but does not recall any wet dream,** though he is sure it is sperm, what should he do? To be safe, he should perform ghusl. Said Mujahid and Qatadah, "There is no need for ghusl until he is sure that it is sperm, for his prior condition of purity is not ended by an uncertainty .

**d- If a man squeezes his penis to prevent ejaculation:** This also makes ghusl unnecessary. This is based on the hadith which states that ghusl is required if the sperm can be seen. But, if the person walks and cannot control his ejaculation. he must perform ghusl.

**e- Sperm on the clothes during prayer:** If a man does not know how the sperm got on his clothes, and he has already prayed, should he perform ghusl and repeat all of his prayers since the last time he slept? If he thinks that it happened before his most recent sleep, he should repeat all of his prayers since the supposed time of his ejaculation .

**2- Touching the two circumcised parts:** This refers to the penis and the vagina. If one's penis has entered his wife's vagina, ghusl is obligatory even if there was no ejaculation. Says

Allah, "If you are sexually impure, purify yourselves." Commenting on the subject, ash-Shaifi says, "In the Arabic language, sexual impurity refers to any type of sexual intercourse, regardless of whether sperm was ejaculated or not. If someone says, 'So and so is sexually impure due to so and so,' it refers to any type of sexual intercourse between them, even if there was no ejaculation. No one disagrees that the fornication which requires the prescribed punishment is sexual intercourse, even if there is no ejaculation." Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, "When anyone sits between the four parts of her body and exerts himself (has intercourse), bathing becomes obligatory (for both)." (Related by Ahmad and Muslim.) Sa'eed ibn al-Musayyab reported that Abu Musa al-Ash'ari said to 'Aishah, "I would like to ask you something, but I am embarrassed." She said, "Ask and don't be shy, for I am your mother." He asked about a man who had intercourse but did not ejaculate. She said, on the authority of the Prophet, "If the two circumcised parts encountered each other, ghusl is obligatory." This hadith is related by Ahmad and Malik with different wordings. There is no doubt that there must be insertion; if there is only touching, ghusl is not obligatory for either. All scholars agree on this point.

**3- Termination of Menstruation and Childbirth Bleeding:** Concerning, Allah says in the Qur'an, "Do not approach them until they become pure. When they are pure, go to them in the manner that Allah has prescribed for you." The Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, said to Fatimah bint Abu Habish, "Do not pray during your period. After it has ended, perform ghusl and pray." (Related by al-Bukhari and Muslim.) Post-childbirth bleeding is treated in a similar manner, according to the consensus of the companions. If a woman gives birth and has no flow of blood afterwards, some scholars say that she must perform ghusl, while others say that it would not be necessary. There is no textual authority on this latter point.

**4- Death:** When a Muslim dies, it is obligatory to wash his or her body, according to the consensus of the Muslims. This will be discussed in more detail later on.

**5- A non-Muslim upon embracing Islam:** New converts to Islam must perform ghusl. Abu Hurairah reported that Thumamah al-Hanafi was captured. The Prophet, upon whom be peace, passed by him and said, "What do you have to say for yourself, O Thumamah?" He said, "If you kill me, you would be killing a relative. If you give me a bounty (set me free), I would be thankful. If you want wealth (as a ransom), we can give you what you wish." The companions of the Prophet preferred the ransom and said, "What would we get if we killed him?" One time when the Prophet passed by him, he finally embraced Islam. The Prophet, upon whom be peace, untied him and told him to go to the garden of Abu Talhah and perform ghusl. He performed ghusl and prayed two rak'ah. The Prophet said, "Indeed, your brother became a fine Muslim." This hadith is related by Ahmad. There is also a source for the story in reports by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

## Acts that are Forbidden to the Impure

It is prohibited for the sexually impure to :-

### 1- Prayer

**2- Circumambulating the Ka'bah:** The reasoning behind this can be found in What actions require the ablution as a prerequisite.

**3- Touching or carrying the Qur'an:** The companions were all agreed that it is forbidden to touch or carry the Qur'an while one is in a state of impurity. There are some jurists, such as Dawud ibn Hazm, who allow the physically unclean person, whether because of sex or menstruation, to touch or carry the Qur'an, and they see nothing wrong with this. He derives his support from a hadith in the two Sahihs in which it is stated that the Prophet sent a letter to Heraclius saying, "In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful...O people of the book, come to a statement that is common between us and you, that we should worship none but Allah, and that we shall ascribe no partner unto Him, and that none of us shall take others for lords besides Allah. If they turn away, then say 'Bear witness that we are they who have surrendered (unto Him).' (al'Imran 64). Ibn Hazm concludes, "This is the letter the Messenger of Allah wrote, containing this verse, to the Christians, and of course they touched it." The majority of scholars answer him by stating that one is allowed to touch parts of the Qur'an that are used in letters, books, tafsir, and so on, as such things are not copies of the Qur'an, nor is it confirmed that such an action is forbidden.

**4- Reciting the Qur'an:** According to most scholars, one who is physically unclean (because of sex or menstruation) may not recite any portion of the Qur'an. This is based on a hadith from 'Ali, in which he stated that nothing kept the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, from the Qur'an save being sexually impure. This is related by "the four." At-Tirmizhi graded it sahih. Says al-Hafez in al-Fath, "Some people declare some of its narrators weak. But, in fact, it is of the hassan class and it is satisfactory as a proof." He also related, "I saw the Messenger of Allah perform ablution and recite some of the Qur'an, after which he said, 'This is for the one who is not in post-sex impurity. If one is in post-sex impurity, he may not do so, not even one verse.'" Ahmad and Abu Ya'la related this hadith with that wording. With that wording, al-Haithami says, "Its narrators are trustworthy." Says ash-Shaukani, "If that (report) is authentic, that is proof enough that it is forbidden." The first hadith does not forbid it, for it just states that it was his practice not to recite the Qur'an while he was in post-sex impurity. Similar reports do not show that it is disliked. Therefore, how can it be used as a proof that it is forbidden?" Al-Bukhari, at-Tabarani, Dawud, and Ibn Hazm are of the opinion that it is permissible for one who is in post-sex impurity (or in menstruation) to recite the Qur'an. Says al-Bukhari, "Ibrahim said, 'There is no problem if a menstruating woman recites a verse.' Ibn 'Abbas did not see anything wrong with a sexually impure person reciting the Qur'an. The Prophet, upon whom be peace, used to mention Allah under all circumstances." In Ibn Hajr's notes to that work, he says, "There is no authentic hadith reported by the author (al-Bukhari) concerning the prohibition of reciting by one who is sexually impure or menstruating." The sum total of what has been related on this issue informs us on this point, though the interpretations differ.

**5- Staying in the mosque:** It is forbidden for one who is physically unclean (because of sex or menstruation) to stay in the mosque. 'Aishah said, "The Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, saw that his companions' houses were practically in the mosque. He said, 'Direct those houses away from the mosque.' He then entered the mosque, but the people did nothing, hoping that Allah would reveal to Muhammad that what they were doing was permissible. After he came out, he said, 'Direct those houses away from the mosque, for it is not permitted for a menstruating woman or sexually impure person to be in the mosque.'" (Related by Abu Dawud.) Umm Salamah related that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, came to the mosque's courtyard and said at the top of his voice, "The mosque is off limits to menstruating women and

the sexually impure persons." (Related by Ibn Majah and at-Tabarani.) Such people can, however, pass through the mosque, for says Allah, "O you who believe, draw not near unto prayer when you are drunk until you know that which you utter, nor when you are impure save when journeying upon the road, until you have bathed" (an-Nisa' 43). Said Jubair, "One of us used to pass through the mosque though he was impure." (Related by Ibn Abu Shaibah and Sa'eed ibn Mansur in his Sunan.) Zaid ibn Aslam said, "The companions of the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, used to walk through the mosques while they were sexually impure." (Related by Ibn al-Munzir.) Yazib ibn Habib reported that the companions' doors opened up into the mosque, and that when they were sexually impure, they could find no water or any path to water save through the mosque. Then Allah revealed, "...nor when you are impure, save journeying upon the road..." (Related by at-Tabari.) Commenting on the preceding reports, ash-Shaukani says, "The meaning is so clear that there is no room for doubt." Said 'Aishah, "The Prophet said to me, 'Hand me my cloth from the mosque.' I said, 'I am menstruating.' He said, 'Your menstruation is not in your hand.'" (Related by the group, except for al-Bukhari.) Said Maimunah, "The Messenger of Allah used to come to one of our rooms while we were menstruating and put his head on (his wife's) lap and recite the Qur'an. Then one of us would take his clothes and put them in the mosque while she was menstruating." (Related by Ahmad and an-Nasa'i. The report has supporting evidence.)

### **Actions for which ghusl is preferred**

**T**his category of actions involves a reward for performing ghusl, and no blame if he does not. Such actions are:

**1- Before the Friday prayer:** Muslims are encouraged to perform ghusl before they gather for the Friday prayer. In fact, Islamic law even goes to the extent of ordering one to perform ghusl at this time as part of the overall cleanliness and hygiene of the Muslim society. Abu Sa'eed reported that the Prophet said, "Ghusl on Friday is obligatory (wajib) on every adult, as is using a toothbrush and applying some perfume." (Related by al-Bukhari and Muslim.)

The meaning of "obligatory" here is that it is greatly recommended. This understanding of the Prophet's saying is derived from what al-Bukhari recorded about an incident from Ibn 'Umar about his father. One day, 'Umar ibn al-Khattab was standing and delivering the khutbah when 'Uthman, one of the people from among the emigrants and helpers, entered. 'Umar said to him, "What time is it now?" He said, "I was busy and could not return home. When I heard the call to prayer, I did not make more than the regular ablution." 'Umar said, "And the ablution only, when you know that the Messenger of Allah ordered us to perform ghusl?" Commenting on the incident, says ash-Shafi', " 'Uthman did not leave the prayer to perform ghusl, nor did 'Umar order him to do so. This illustrates that the companions knew that this order was one of choice. It also shows that it is preferred." Muslim recorded that Abu Hurairah reported the Prophet saying, "Whoever makes the ablution and perfects it and then goes to the Friday prayer and listens attentively, will have forgiveness during (the period) between the Friday and the next (Friday), and an additional three days." Says al-Qurtubi, "This hadith shows that ghusl is preferred. The mention of ablution, the reward and acceptability points to the fact that ablution alone is sufficient." Ibn Hajr states in at-Talkhis, "It is one of the strongest proofs that ghusl for the Friday prayer is not obligatory. The statement that it is preferred is built upon the fact that if one does not perform ghusl, it will not harm (his prayer). But, if others are harmed by his perspiration or bad smell from his clothes and body, ghusl becomes obligatory, and not



performing it detracts from the rewards of salah. Some scholars say that the Friday ghusl is a duty even if its non-performance causes no harm (to others). Their basis for this opinion is the hadith related by Abu Hurairah in which the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, "It is a duty upon every Muslim to perform ghusl once every seven days, by washing his head and body." Al-Bukhari and Muslim accept the hadith mentioned on the subject in their apparent meanings, and refute the ones contrary to the last hadith (of Abu Hurairah).

The time for the Friday ghusl is between dawn and the time of the Friday prayer. It is preferable to do it at the time of departure (to the mosque). If one loses his ablution after that, it is sufficient for him just to make a new ablution (he does not have to repeat the ghusl).

Says al-Athram, "I heard Ahmad being asked if a person performed ghusl, and then lost it, would the regular ablution be sufficient for him. He said, "Yes, and I have not heard anything about that preferable to the hadith of Ibn 'Abzi," Ahmad is referring to the hadith related by Ibn 'Abzi Shaibah (with a sahih chain from 'Abdurahman ibn 'Abzi on the authority of his father, who was a companion.) He performed ghusl for the Friday prayer, and afterwards nullified his ablution. After that, he performed just the regular ablution, and did not repeat his ghusl. The time for the ghusl ends with the time of the prayer. If one performs ghusl after the prayer, it would not be the ghusl of the Friday prayer, and one who does so is not following the Prophet's order. Ibn 'Umar reported that the Prophet said, "Before you come to the Friday prayer, you should perform ghusl. (Related by "the group.") Muslim says, "When one of you wants to come to the Friday prayer, he should perform ghusl." Ibn 'Abdul-Barr related that there is a consensus on this point.

**2-Performing ghusl for the 'Id prayers:** Scholars also encourage Muslims to perform ghusl for the 'id prayers, even though there is no authentic hadith to support this opinion. It says in al-Badr alMuneer, "The hadith concerning performing ghusl for the 'ids are weak. But there do exist good reports from the companions (on this point) . "

**3- Ghusl for washing a corpse:** According to many scholars, performing ghusl is also preferred for one who has washed a corpse. Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, "Whoever has washed a corpse must perform ghusl, and whoever carried him must perform ablution." (Related by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, at-Tirmizhi, an-Nasa'i, Ibn Majah and others.) However, there is some criticism of this hadith. 'Ali ibn al-Madani, Ahmad, Ibn al-Munzhir, ar-Rafi' and others say, "The hadith scholars did not classify anything on this topic as authentic." But Ibn Hajr quotes at-Tirmizhi and Ibn Hibban: "At-Tirmizhi called it hassan and Ibn Hibban called it sahih. And, due to its numerous chains, it is most likely hassan. An-Nawawi strongly refutes what at-Tirmizhi said." Says azh-Zhahabi, "The chains of this hadith are stronger than a number of chains of the hadith that the jurists argue by." The order in the hadith implies preference, based on what has been related by 'Umar, who said, "We used to wash the dead. Some of us would perform ghusl and some would not." (Related by al-Khateeb with a sahih chain.) When 'Asma bint Umaish washed the body of her deceased husband, Abu Bakr as-Siddiq, she asked if there were any among the emigrants present, and said, "This day is extremely cold and I am fasting. Do I have to make gh usl?" They said, "No." (Related by Malik.)

**4- Making Ghusl for Hajj:** According to the scholars, it is also preferable for one who is undertaking the pilgrimage or 'umrah to perform ghusl. Zaid ibn Thabit related that he saw the

Messenger of Allah, when he intended to perform the hajj, perform ghusl. (Related by ad-Daraqutni, al-Baihaqi and at-Tirmizhi, who called it hassan. As-Usaili regarded it as weak.)

**5- Making Ghusl upon entering Makkah:** It is preferable for whoever wants to enter Makkah to perform ghusl. It is reported that Ibn 'Umar, when going to Makkah, would spend the night in Tawa, and would enter Makkah during the day. He mentioned that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, also used to do this. (Related by al-Bukhari and Muslim.) Ibn al-Munzhir said, "All of the scholars say it is preferred to perform ghusl upon entering Makkah, but if one does not do so, there is no expiation for him to make. Most of them say that the regular ablution is sufficient.

#### **6- Making Ghusl at Mount 'Arafah**

Such an act is preferred while one stops there during the hajj. Malik ibn Nafa' reported that Ibn 'Umar used to do so before embarking upon the hajj, upon entering Makkah, and while stopping at 'Arafah.

### **Articles of Ghusl**

**T**he permitted Ghusl is not completed except with two articles:

**1- The intention:** This involves distinguishing the acts of worship from the customary acts. The intention is only in the heart, and should not be stated, as this would be tantamount to innovation.

**2- Washing all bodily parts:** This is based on the following: Says Allah, "If you are sexually impure, cleanse yourselves," that is, perform ghusl, and "They ask you concerning menstruation. Say: 'It is an illness, so leave women alone at such times and go not in unto them until they are cleansed,'" that is, until they perform ghusl. The proof that cleansing means ghusl is in the verse, "O you who believe, draw not unto the prayer when you are drunk until you know what you utter, nor when you are polluted, save when journeying upon the road, until you have bathed (taghtasilu)." This shows that ghusl, the washing of all bodily parts, is meant.

**Its Sunan:** It is sunah for the one who perform the ghusl to adapt the practice of the Prophet, upon whom be peace, in his manner of performing his ghusl to start with:

- 1- wash both hands three times,
- 2- wash the penis,
- 3- make a complete ablution (like the one made for prayer--the Prophet used to delay washing his feet until the end of his ghusl if he was using a tub, and so on),
- 4- rub water through one's hair three times, letting the water reach down to the roots of the hair,
- 5- pour water over the entire body, beginning with the right side, then the left, washing under the armpits, inside the ears, inside the navel, inside the toes and whatever part of the body can be easily rubbed. This account is based on the following report from 'Aishah: "When the Prophet, upon whom be peace, took his bath after sexual intercourse, he would begin by washing his hands. Then he would pour water from his right hand to his left and wash his sexual organs, make the ablution for prayer, take some water and put his fingers to the roots of his hair to the extent that he sees that the skin is wet, then pour water over his head three times and then over the rest of his body." (Related by al-Bukhari and Muslim.) In

one narration it states, "He used to rub his head with his hands until he was certain the water reached his skin, and then he poured water over it three times." It is also related that she said, "When the Prophet would perform ghusl after having had sexual intercourse, he would call for some water, which he would pour on his right hand to wash the right side of his head and then the left. He would then take water with both hands and pour it over his head." Said Maimunah, "I put water out for the Messenger of Allah to perform ghusl. He washed his hands two or three times, and then he poured water from his right hand to his left and washed his private parts, wiped his hands on the earth, rinsed his mouth and nose, washed his face and hands, washed his head three times, poured water over his body, and finally moved from his place and washed his feet. I brought him a towel, but he did not take it, for he shook the water off with his hands." (Related by "the group.")

## Women's Ghusl

**A** woman performs ghusl just as a man does, except that if she has plaited hair she does not have to undo it, provided that the water can reach the roots of her hair. Umm Salamah said, "O Messenger of Allah, I am a woman who has closely plaited hair on my head. Do I have to undo them for ghusl after sexual intercourse?" He said, "No, it is enough for you to throw three handfuls of water on your head and then pour water over yourself. After doing this, you shall be cleansed." (Related by Ahmad, Muslim and at-Tirmizhi, who called it hassan sahih.) 'Ubaid ibn 'Umair reported that 'Aishah discovered that 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr was ordering the women to undo their plaits of hair (for ghusl). She observed, "It is amazing that Ibn 'Amr orders the women to undo the plaits of hair for ghusl. Why doesn't he just order them to shave their heads? I and the Messenger of Allah used to bathe from one vessel, and all I did was pour three handfuls of water over my head." (Related by Ahmad and Muslim.)

It is preferable for a woman performing ghusl to cleanse herself from menstruation or post-childbirth bleeding to take some cotton smeared with musk or perfume and wipe it over the traces of blood. This will remove the bad smell of the menstrual blood. 'Aishah reported, "'Asma bint Yazid asked the Messenger of Allah about ghusl after menstruation has ended. He said, "She should use water mixed with the leaves of the lote-tree and cleanse herself. Then she should pour water over her head and rub it well till it reaches the roots of the hair, after which she should pour water over it. Afterwards, she should take a piece of cotton smeared with musk and cleanse herself with it." 'Asma asked, "How should she cleanse herself with it?" He said, "Praise be to Allah, she should cleanse herself with it." 'Aishah said in a subdued tone that she should apply it to the traces of blood. 'Asma then asked about bathing after sexual intercourse. He said, "She should take water and cleanse herself or complete the ablution, pour water on her head and rub it till it reaches the roots of her hair, and then she should pour water over herself." 'Aishah observed, "How good are the women of the 'helpers' that shyness does not keep them from learning their religion." (Related by "the group," except at-Tirmizhi.)

### Matters related to Ghusl

- 1- It is sufficient to perform one ghusl for both menstruation and sexual impurity, or for the Friday prayer and the 'id prayer, or for sexual impurity and the Friday prayer, if one has the intention for both of them. This is based on the Prophet's saying, "All acts are based on intentions."

- 2- If a person performed post-sex ghusl but did not make ablution, the ghusl will suffice. Said 'Aishah, "The Messenger of Allah did not perform ablution after ghusl." Ibn 'Umar said to a man who had told him that he performed ablution after ghusl, "You went too far." Says Abu Bakr ibn al-'Arabi, "There is no difference of opinion among the scholars that ablution falls under the category of ghusl. If the intention was to remove sexual impurity, it also includes the minor impurities, as what sexual impurity prevents is greater than what the minor impurities prevent. The smaller one falls under the greater one, and the intention for the greater one suffices."
- 3- It is acceptable for a person in post-sex uncleanness or a menstruating woman to remove their hairs, cut their nails, go to the markets, and so on, without any dislike. 'Ata said that such people can get cupped, cut their nails and their hair, and that this is allowed even if he (or she) has not performed the regular ablution. (Related by al-Bukhari).
- 4- One may enter a public bathroom. As long as he keeps his private parts from being seen, and he does not look at others' private parts. Says Ahmad, "If you know that everyone inside the bathroom is wearing a loincloth, you may enter. If not, then don't enter." The Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, "A man should not look at another man's private parts, and a woman should not look at another woman's private parts." There is no problem with mentioning Allah's name in the public baths, as mentioning the name of Allah under any circumstances is good, since there is no text prohibiting it. The Messenger of Allah used to remember Allah under all circumstances.
- 5- There is no problem in drying one's self with a towel or other cloth after performing ablution or ghusl during the summer or winter.
- 6- It is permissible for a man to use the water left over by a woman and vice-versa. This is derived from the fact that it is permissible for them to perform ghusl from the same container. Ibn 'Abbas narrated that some of the Prophet's wives were performing ghusl from a container. The Prophet came and performed his ablution or ghusl from it. They said to him, "We were sexually unclean." He said, "The water does not become impure." (Related by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, an-Nasa'i and at-Tirmizhi, who called it hassan sahih). 'Aishah used to wash with the Messenger of Allah from one container, and they would take turns taking water until he said, "Leave some for me, leave some for me."
- 7- It is not allowed to bathe in the nude in front of people. It is forbidden to uncover one's private parts. If you cover it with some clothes, it is permissible. The Messenger of Allah would cover Fatimah with a curtain when she performed ghusl. If one performs ghusl in the nude, far away from the people, it is not prohibited. The prophets Musa (Moses) and Ayyub (Job) did so, as al-Bukhari, Ahmad, and an-Nasa'i recorded.

## **Tayammum, the dry ablution**

**1- Definition:** Literally tayammum means "aim, purpose." In Islamic law, it refers to "aiming for or seeking soil to wipe one's face and hands with the intention of preparing oneself to pray, and so on."

**2- Proof of its legitimacy:** This is proven by the Qur'an, sunnah and ijma' (consensus). The Qur'an says, "And if you are ill, or on a journey, or one of you comes from relieving himself, or you have touched women, and you do not find water, then go to high clean soil and rub your

face and hands (therewith). Lo, Allah is Benign, Forgiving" (an-Nisa': 43). From the sunnah we have the hadith related by Abu Umamah in which the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, "All of the earth has been made for me and my nation a pure place of prayer. Whenever a person from my nation wants to pray, he has something with which to purify himself, that is, the earth." (Related by Ahmad.) Finally, there is a consensus that tayammum forms a legitimate part of the shari'ah, as it replaces ablution or ghusl under specific circumstances.

**3- It is Blessing from Allah for this Ummah:** This form of ablution is viewed as a blessing from Allah to the Muslims. Jabir relates that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, "I have been given five things that were not given to anyone before me: I have been made victorious due to fear for a distance of one month's journey; the earth has been made a place of prayer for me--wherever and whoever of my nation wants to pray, he may pray; and the war booty has been made lawful for me, and this was not lawful for anyone before me. I have been given permission to intercede. The prophets used to be raised for their own people only, but I have been raised for all of mankind." (Related by al-Bukhari and Muslim.)

**4- The reason for its legitimacy:** Said 'Aishah, "We went out with the Messenger of Allah on one of his journeys until we reached Baida'. At this place, one of my bracelets broke and fell somewhere. The Messenger of Allah and others began to look for it. There was no water at that place, nor did anyone have any water with him. The people went to Abu Bakr and said, "Do you see what your daughter has done?" Abu Bakr came to me, while the Prophet was sleeping on my thigh. He blamed me and said to me whatever Allah willed him to say. He also poked me in my side. I could not move, for the Prophet, upon whom be peace, was sleeping on my lap. He slept until the morning without any water available. Then, Allah revealed the verse of tayammum. As-Sayyid ibn Huzhain said, 'That was not the first blessing from the family of Abu Bakr.' The camel that I was on got up and we found the necklace underneath it." (Related by "the group," except for at-Tirmizhi.)

#### **5- Reasons of its allowance**

**a- One cannot find water, or the amount one finds is insufficient for ablution:** 'Imran bin Husain said, "We were with the Messenger of Allah during a journey. When he led the people in prayer, one man stayed apart. He asked him, "What prevented you from praying?" He said, 'I need a post-nocturnal bath and there is no water.' He said, 'Use the soil, for it is sufficient.'" (Related by al-Bukhari and Muslim.) Abu Zharr related that the Prophet, upon whom be peace, said, "The soil is a purifier for a Muslim, even if he does not find water for twenty years." (Related by "the four." At-Tirmizhi grades it hassan sahih.) But before one makes tayammum, he must look for water from any possible source. If he is sure water is not to be found or it is too far away, he does not have to look for it.

**b- One is injured or ill:** If one is in this condition, and believes water will worsen it (he does not have to be absolutely sure, but may base his opinion on past experience or what a knowledgeable person has told him), he may perform tayammum. Jabir said, "We were on a journey and one of us got injured. Later, he had a wet dream. He asked his companions, 'Can I perform tayammum?' They said, 'No, not if you have water.' He performed ghusl and died. When they came to the Messenger of Allah, they informed

him of what had transpired. He said, 'They killed him, Allah will kill them. Do you not ask if you do not know? The rescue of the ignorant person is the question. He could have performed tayammum and dropped water on his wound or wrapped it with something and wipe over the wrapping, and wash the rest of his body.' This is related by Abu Dawud, Ibn Majah, ad-Daraqutni and Ibn as-Sakin, who said it is sahih.

**c- If the water is cold enough to physically harm the user:** This is only allowed on the condition that he can find no one to heat it, or is unable to use the public bathrooms. 'Amr ibn al-'Aas narrated that he was participating in an expedition. He had a wet dream during an extremely cold night, and was afraid that if he performed ghusl he would die. He prayed the morning prayer with his companions. He then went to the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, to ask him about this. Muhammad said, "O 'Amr, did you pray with your companions while you needed a post-nocturnal bath?" 'Amr mentioned the verse, "Do not kill yourselves, Allah is merciful to you" to the Prophet. The Prophet just laughed and didn't say anything. (Related by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, al-Hakim, ad-Daraqutni, Ibn Hibban and al-Bukhari in mu'allaq form.) This example illustrated the Prophet's tacit approval.

**d- When water is nearby, but one does not want to fetch it due to fear:** If one fears for his life, family, wealth, (for example, if an enemy is nearby--beast or human--or one is a prisoner, and so on), one may perform tayammum. This is also allowed if there is water but one lacks the proper means to get it, or if one fears some accusation against him if he gets it.

**e-If one is saving his water for later use:** This could be for a hound, for dough, cooking or to remove an impurity that is not pardonable. Says Imam Ahmad, "Many of the companions performed tayammum to save their water for drinking." 'Ali said that a man who is travelling and becomes unclean because of sex or a wet dream can perform tayammum if he fears he will go thirsty: "He should perform tayammum and not ghusl." (Related by ad-Daraqutni.) Says Ibn Taimiyyah, "If a person needs to relieve himself but has only a small amount of water, it is best that he pray with tayammum and relieve himself, rather than keep his ablution and pray before relieving himself."

**f- One can get water, but fears that the prayer will be over by the time he gets it:** He can perform tayammum and pray, and does not need to repeat his prayer (after he gets water).

**6- The soil used for tayammum:** It must be pure soil: this can be sand, stone, gypsum, and so on. Says Allah, "Perform tyammum with pure soil," and all scholars of Arabic agree that "soil" is whatever covers the earth, dirt or otherwise.

**7- How to perform tayammum:** First, one must have the intention (see the section on ablution). Then, he mentions Allah's name, strikes the soil with his hands, wipes his face and his hands up to the wrist. Nothing is more authentic and clear than what 'Ammar related. He said, "We became sexually impure and had no water, so we rolled in the dirt and prayed. This was mentioned to the Prophet and he said, 'This would have been enough for you,' and he

struck the earth with his hands, blew in them and then wiped his face and hands with them." (Related by al-Bukhari and Muslim). In another text he states, "It would have been enough for you to strike the ground with your hands, blow into them, then wipe your face and hands up to the elbows." (Related by ad-Daraqutni.) This hadith shows that one strike of the earth is sufficient, and one only wipes the arms to the wrists. It is from the sunnah that one who makes tayammum with dirt should blow into his hands first and not make his face dusty or dirty.

**8- What tayammum makes permissible:** After doing so, he is pure and may do any of the acts requiring prior purification, such as praying and touching the Qur'an. He does not have to perform it during the time of prayer, and he may pray as many prayers as he wishes (unless he nullifies it), exactly as he can after performing the regular ablution. Abu Zharr reported that the Prophet said, "The soil is a purifier for a Muslim, even if he does not find water for twenty years. Then if he touches water, that is, to make ablution, and so on, it would be good." This is related by Ahmad and at-Tirmizhi, who said it is sahih.

**9- What nullifies tayammum:** In addition to the presence of water, everything that nullifies the ablution nullifies tayammum. If a person prays after performing tayammum and then finds water, he does not need to repeat his prayer even if there is time left to do so. Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri said, "Two men went out on a journey. The time of prayer came and, as they had no water, they performed tayammum. Then they found some water during the time of the same prayer. One of them repeated his prayer with ablution and the other did not. When they saw the Messenger of Allah, they asked him about the proper procedure in such a case. He said to the one who did not repeat his prayer, 'You have acted according to the sunnah and your prayer is sufficient for you.' He said to the other, 'You will get a double reward.'" (Related by Abu Dawud and anNasa'i.) If one comes across water before he prays or finishes his prayer with tayammum, his prayer becomes null and void, for he must make ablution with water. If a person is not clean because of sex or a wet dream, or a woman is menstruating, and they pray after performing tayammum, they need not repeat their prayer after finding water, but they must perform ghusl with water when they can. 'Umar said, "The Prophet led the people in prayer, and afterwards saw a man who had not prayed. He said, 'Why didn't you pray with us?' The man replied, 'I was sexually unclean and there was no water.' He told him, 'Use the soil, and it will be enough.' 'Imran then mentioned that they later found water. The Prophet, upon whom be peace, brought a bowl of water for the man and told him to perform ghusl. (Related by al-Bukhari.)

## **Wiping Over Casts, Wrappers and Similar Items**

**Legitimacy of wiping over Casts and Wrappers:** It is allowable to wipe over any wrapper or diseased or injured bodily part. There are many hadith on this point, and although they are all weak, their many chains strengthen each other, making them valid to talk about. One hadith, that of Jabir (quoted earlier), relates a story about a man who was on a journey and suffered an injury. While he slept, he had a wet dream, after which he asked his companions if he could perform tayammum. They said he could not, so he made ghusl and died because of it. When that was mentioned to the Prophet, he said "They killed him, may Allah kill them. Do you not ask about what you do not know? ... It would have been enough for him to perform tayammum and drop a little water over his wound or else wipe it, then to wipe it and wash the rest of the

body." This is related by Abu Dawud, Ibn Majah, ad-Daraqutni and Ibn as-Sakin, who classified it as sahih. Ibn 'Umar used to do this.

**The commandment of wiping:** In fact, it is obligatory to wipe over such casts or wrappers in ablution or ghusl instead of washing the injured parts.

**When it is obligatory:** This must be done even if he has to heat the water. But, if he believes that this would harm the diseased or injured part, or that his condition may worsen, or that his pain would increase, he may wipe the injured part with water. If he fears that this would also be harmful, he should wrap it and then gently wipe over it. It is not necessary for him to be in a state of purity while applying the cast or wrapper to be wiped. There is also no time limit for such wipings, for he can do so as long as his condition lasts.

**Nullification of Wiping :** Removing the wrapper or cast nullifies the wiping, as does the final cure.

**The Prayer of One Who Has no Means of Purifying Himself:** Whoever cannot get water or soil may pray in whatever state he is in, and he will not have to repeat his prayer later. This is based on what Muslim related from 'Aishah. She had borrowed some jewellery from 'Asma and it broke (and fell). The Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, sent some people to search for it. The prayer time came and they had to pray without ablution. When they came to the Prophet, they complained to him and the verses of tayammum were revealed. Usaid ibn Huzhair said, "May Allah give you good recompense. Allah never reveals an order with respect to you except that He removes by it some hardship and gives the Muslims some benefit." The companions prayed while in a state of impurity, but the Prophet did not admonish them nor did he order them to repeat their prayers. Says an-Nawawi, "That is the strongest statement of proof (on this question)."

## Menstruation

**1- Definition:** In Arabic, the word for menstruation (haizh) literally means "running." Here it refers to the discharge of blood during a woman's state of health, not from giving birth or breaking the hymen.

**2- Its Time:** Most scholars say that its time begins at the age of nine. If blood is seen before that age, it is not menstrual blood, but is considered to be putrid blood. As there is no evidence about when a woman stops menstruating, if an elderly lady finds blood flowing it is considered menstrual blood.

**3- Its Colour:** Requirements for blood to be considered menstrual

- 1- Dark. Once, when Fatimah bint Abu Habash had a prolonged flow of blood, the Prophet told her, "If it is the blood of menstruation, it will be dark and recognizable. If it is that, then leave the prayer. If it is other than that, then make ablution and pray, for it is only due to a vein." This is related by Abu Dawud, an-Nasa'i, Ibn Hibban and ad-Daraqutni, who said all of its narrators are trustworthy. Al-Hakim also related it, and said that it meets Muslim's standards.
- 2- Red. It is the original colour of blood.



- 3- Yellow. It is a liquid, like pus.
- 4- A muddy colour. It is an intermediate colour between black and white, like dirt. Malik and Muhammad al-Hassan ( and al-Bukhari in mu'allaq form) recorded that women would send 'Aishah small boxes with yellow-stained cotton, and she would tell them, "Do not be in haste until you see the pure white cotton." If the discharge is yellow or muddy during the days of menstruation, it is to be considered as part of the menses. During other days, it is not regarded as such. Umm 'Atiyyah said, "After we were pure, we did not consider the yellow or muddy discharge to be anything." This is related by Abu Dawud and al-Bukhari, but without the words "...after we were pure.. ."

**4- Its Period:** There is no stated minimum or maximum length of time for the menses. All statements dealing with this topic have no sound backing. If a woman has a customary length of time for her menses, she should according to it. Umm Salamah asked the Prophet about a woman with a prolonged flow of blood. He said, "She should look for the number of days and nights that she usually has her menses and the time of the month during which it occurs. Then she should leave the prayer (during those days, and then afterwards) perform ghusl, tie something around her vagina and pray." (Related by "the five," except for at-Tirmizhi.) If she has no customary period to go by, then she can try to distinguish between the different types of blood. This practice is based on the previously quoted hadith of Fatimah bint Abu Hubaish, which states that menstrual blood is distinguishable and well-known to women.

**5- The period of purifications between two menstrual periods :** All scholars agree that there is no minimum or maximum time limit between two menstrual periods. Some say that the latter period is fifteen days, while others say it is three days.

### **Post-Childbirth bleeding**

**S**uch bleeding occurs after the birth of a child, regardless if the child survived the birth or not. This type of bleeding has no minimum duration, for it could stop right after the birth, or there could even be no blood. Therefore, her confinement would end and she would be obliged to fast, pray, and so on. The maximum duration is forty days. Said Umm Salamah, "During the lifetime of the Prophet, the post-childbirth woman would be in confinement for forty days." (Related by "the five," except for an-Nasa'i.) After recording the hadith, at-Tirmizhi states, "The knowledgeable companions, the following generation and those that came later agree that a woman experiencing post-childbirth bleeding had to stop praying for forty days unless her blood stopped. If her bleeding stops before that time, she is to make ghusl and start praying. If she sees blood after forty days, most scholars say that she is not to stop praying."

**Forbidden Acts for Women Experiencing Menstruation and Post-Childbirth Bleeding:** All acts forbidden for a person who has not yet cleansed himself from sex or a wet dream are prohibited to women in these two conditions, as these are considered major impurities. But, there are also two further prohibitions:

**1-They cannot fast, menstruating women:** If women fast, their fasting will be considered null and void. If they fast during the month of Ramadan, they will still have to make those days of fasting up later on. Mu'azhah said, "I asked 'Aishah, 'Why must we make up the fasts missed

due to our menstruation, and not the prayers?' She said, 'That was what the Messenger of Allah told us to do. We were ordered to make up the fasts, and we were ordered not to make up the prayers.' (Related by "the group.")

**2- She can not engage in sexual intercourse:** Said Anas, "When a Jewish woman was menstruating, her husband would not eat or sleep with her. The companions asked the Prophet, upon whom be peace, about that, and Allah revealed: "They question you concerning menstruation. Say: 'It is an illness, so let women alone at such times and go not in unto them until they are cleaned. And when they have purified themselves, then go in unto them as Allah has enjoined upon you. Truly, Allah loves those who turn unto Him and loves those who have a care for cleanliness" (al-Baqarah 222). The Messenger of Allah also said, "Do everything except intercourse." (Related by "the group," except for al-Bukhari.) In his comments on the subject, an-Nawawi states, "If a Muslim believes it is permissible to have intercourse with his menstruating wife, he becomes an unbelieving apostate. If he does it, not thinking that it is permissible, but out of forgetfulness or not knowing that it is forbidden or not knowing that his wife was menstruating, then there is no sin or expiation upon him. If he does it on purpose, knowing that it is forbidden, he has committed a grave sin and must repent. There are two opinions on this: the more correct one is that there is to be expiation." He further says, "All scholars say that one may touch anything above the navel or below the knees. Most scholars say that it is permissible to touch what is between the navel and the knees, but not the vagina or anus." An-Nawawi concludes that it is permitted but hated, as that is the strongest position from the evidence. This evidence is based upon the practice of the Prophet's wives: when he wished to be with them during their period, they would put something over their vagina. (Related by Abu Dawud.) Al-Hafez observes, "Its chain is strong." Masruq ibn al-Ajda' asked 'Aishah, "What is off limits to me sexually during my wife's menstruation?" She said, "Nothing, except the vagina." (Related by alBukhari in his Tarikh.)

## Women with Prolonged Flows of Blood

**1- Definition:** Islam defines such an occurrence as the flowing of blood outside of the regular time.

**2- Its Cases:** This usually happens in three specific cases.

**a- In the first case,** the woman knows that her flow of menstrual blood is lasting longer than usual. In such a case, she will act according to her customary period, and the remainder will be considered days of prolonged blood flows. This is based on the hadith of Umm Salamah, in which she asked the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace, about this condition. He said, "She should wait for the days and nights of her normal period and figure them out of the month, and she should leave the prayer during those days. (Afterwards) she should perform ghusl, tighten something around her vagina and then pray." (Related by Malik, ash-Shafi and "the five," except for at-Tirmizhi.)

Evaluating the report, an-Nawawi says, "Its chain meets the conditions (of al-Bukhari and Muslim)." Al-Khattabi holds, "That regulation is for the woman who is experiencing prolonged blood flows. If the blood is flowing, the Prophet ordered her to leave the prayer during her regular period, and to perform ghusl after her customary time has passed. Then, she becomes just like any other purified person."

**b- In the second case**, a woman does not know her period well enough to determine if she is experiencing menstrual bleeding or a prolonged flow of blood. In that case, her menstruation is considered to be six or seven days, which is the most common among women. Said Jamnah bint Jahsh, "I had a very strong prolonged flow of blood. I went to the Prophet to ask him about it. When I asked him if I had to stop praying and fasting, he said 'Tie around a cloth, and it will stop.' I said, 'It is greater than that.' He said, 'Curb it.' I said, 'It flows greatly.' He then said, 'You may do one of two things: either one will suffice. Which one you are able to do you know best. This is a strike from Satan. Be on your period for six or seven days, which Allah knows, and then perform ghusl until you see that you are clean. Pray for fourteen nights or thirteen nights and days and fast, and that will be sufficient for you. Do that every month as the other women become pure and menstruate. If you can, you may delay the noon prayer and hasten the afternoon prayer. Perform ghusl and pray the noon and afternoon prayers together. Then delay the sunset and hasten the night prayers and pray them together. Perform ghusl for the morning prayer and pray it. This is how you may pray and fast if you have the ability to do so..." And he said, "That is the more loved way to me." As to the authenticity of the hadith, it is related by Ahmad, Abu Dawud and at-Tirmizhi, who grades it as hassan sahih. He says, "I asked al-Bukhari about it, and he called it hassan." Ahmad ibn Hanbal says it is hassan sahih. Al-Khattabi observes, in a note to this hadith, that this is for the woman who is a "beginner" and does not know her regular days of menstruation. The Prophet told her to act according to the customary situation of women, and to consider herself as having her period only once a month, like most women. His statement, 'As women menstruate and as they become pure' points to this fact. This is by analogy to the affairs of women with respect to each other in menstruation, pregnancy, maturity and other affairs of theirs."

**c- In the third case**, a woman has a regular period, but she is able to distinguish the blood. She should, therefore, behave according to the type of blood she sees. Fatimah bint Abu Hubaish had a prolonged flow of blood, and the Prophet told her, "If it is menstrual blood, it is dark and recognizable. If you have that, abstain from the prayer. If it is other than that, make ablution and pray, for it is a vein."

**3- Its Commandments:** Women who fall into any of these categories must abide by the following regulations:

**a- Ghusl, menstruating women:** She does not have to perform ghusl for every prayer, except for the one time when her period or blood flow has ended.

**b- She must make ablution for every prayer, menstruating women:** Said the Prophet, "Make ablution for every prayer." According to Malik, this is only preferred and not obligatory (unless she nullifies her ablution, of course).

**c- Keeping the blood in check, menstruating women:** She is to wash her vagina before she makes ablution, and she should wear something which soaks up the blood. It is preferred for her to do what she can to keep the blood in check.

**d-Ablution, menstruating women:** She should not make ablution before the prayer's time begins.

**e- Sex, menstruating women:** She may have intercourse with her husband even while the blood is flowing, according to most scholars, because there is no evidence to the contrary. Said Ibn 'Abbas, "If she can pray, her husband can have intercourse with her." Al-Bukhari says that if she is pure enough for prayer, she certainly must be pure enough for intercourse. Abu Dawud and al-Baihaqi related that 'Akramah bint Hamnah had a prolonged flow of blood and that her husband had intercourse with her. An-Nawawi holds its chain to be hassan.

**f-What she can do, menstruating women:** She is to be considered a pure person, and she may pray, fast, remain in the mosque, recite the Qur'an, touch a copy of the Qur'an, and so on.

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