



## **Muslim Rituals of Death**

Dr. Boshra EL-Guindy



## A. INTRODUCTION



***Ghusl*** is a major ablution as opposed to wudu which is a minor ablution. In Islamic laws, ***ghusl*** is considered an act of worship; it is an act of purifying oneself from any ritual impurity (***najasat***). The ritual bath given to a dead Muslim before burial is also known as ***ghusl***.



## A. INTRODUCTION



The ***ghusl*** for each of these causes has different names: Purification from the impurity caused by sexual activities as ***ghusl janabat***. Purification from the impurity caused by menstruation is known as ***ghusl hayd***. Purification from the impurity caused by irregular bleeding is known as ***ghusl istihadah***. Purification from the impurity caused by post-natal bleeding is known as ***ghusl***



## A. INTRODUCTION



In Islamic laws, death is also considered a cause of ritual impurity of a Muslim's body. Therefore, a dead Muslim has to be washed ritually before the burial ceremony. Such a ritualistic bath for a dead Muslim is known as ***ghusl mayyit***. Touching a dead body, before the ritualistic bath, also makes one impure (***najis***). Purification from this impurity is known as ***ghusl mass mayyit***.



## B. MANNER OF PERFORMING *GHUSL*



***Ghusl*** is a ritual bath; it involves washing of the whole body. There are two methods of performing ***ghusl***. One is known as ***ghusl tartibi***, and the other is known as ***ghusl irtimasi***.



## B. MANNER OF PERFORMING *GHUSL*



What has been mentioned above are the wajib acts of *ghusl*; here we shall explain the things which are recom-mendable (*mustahab, sunnat*) during the *ghusl*. These recommendable acts are five:

1. Washing both hands up to the elbows three times before the *ghusl*.
2. Gargling three times.
3. Wiping the hands on the whole body to ensure that every part has been thoroughly washed.
4. Combing the hair with the fingers to ensure that the water reaches the hair-roots.



## C. A SUMMARY OF *GHUSL*



This is a summary of ***ghusl***. The recommendable acts of ***ghusl*** are in italics type-face.

1. Remove the najasat (semen, blood) from the body.
2. Niyyat.
3. *Wash the hands up to the elbows three time.*
4. *Gargle three times.*
5. Wash the head down to the neck; *wipe your hand on the face and neck, and comb the hair with your fingers.*
6. Wash the right side of your body from the shoulders down to the feet; *include some part of the left side also. While washing, wipe the body with your hand.*
7. Wash the left side of your body from the shoulders down to the feet; *include some part of the right side also. While washing, wipe the body with your hand*



## D. THE CONDITIONS FOR THE VALIDITY OF *GHUSL*



The validity of *ghusl* depends on certain conditions which are known as "the conditions for the validity of *ghusl*". These conditions are ten in number: three conditions are related to the water, four are related to the person and three to the act of *ghusl* itself.



### i. The Water:

1. The water must be ***mutlaq*** (unmixed, pure).
2. The water must be ***tahir*** (ritually clean).
3. The water must be ***mubah*** (lawful). The details of these conditions are same as the conditions of the water of wudu



### ii. The Person:

4. Niyyat.

5. All parts of the body must be clean from the impurity (e.g., semen, blood) before starting the *ghusl*.

6. Use of water should not be harmful to the person who wants to perform *ghusl*.

7. The *ghusl* must be performed by the person him-self. (The details are same as in wudu)



### iii. The *Ghusl*

**8.** The place where *ghusl* is being performed must be ***mubah*** (lawful).

**9.** The ***ghusl*** should be performed either in ***tartibi*** manner or in ***irtimasi*** manner.

**10.** All parts of the body must be washed thoroughly as explained above.