

# A-WORSHIP-Z



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# ACTS OF WORSHIP IN ISLAM

As Muslims, we believe that Allah is the sole creator of the universe, and that He created us to worship Him alone, and that we must obey Him according to what He taught us in His Book and the guidance of His final Messenger Muhammad. This is the path to true happiness and success in this life and the next.

Allah the Most Exalted says in the Qur'an,  
*"And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me alone."* [51:56]

And He said,  
*"And obey Allah and the Messenger so that you may obtain mercy."* [3:132]

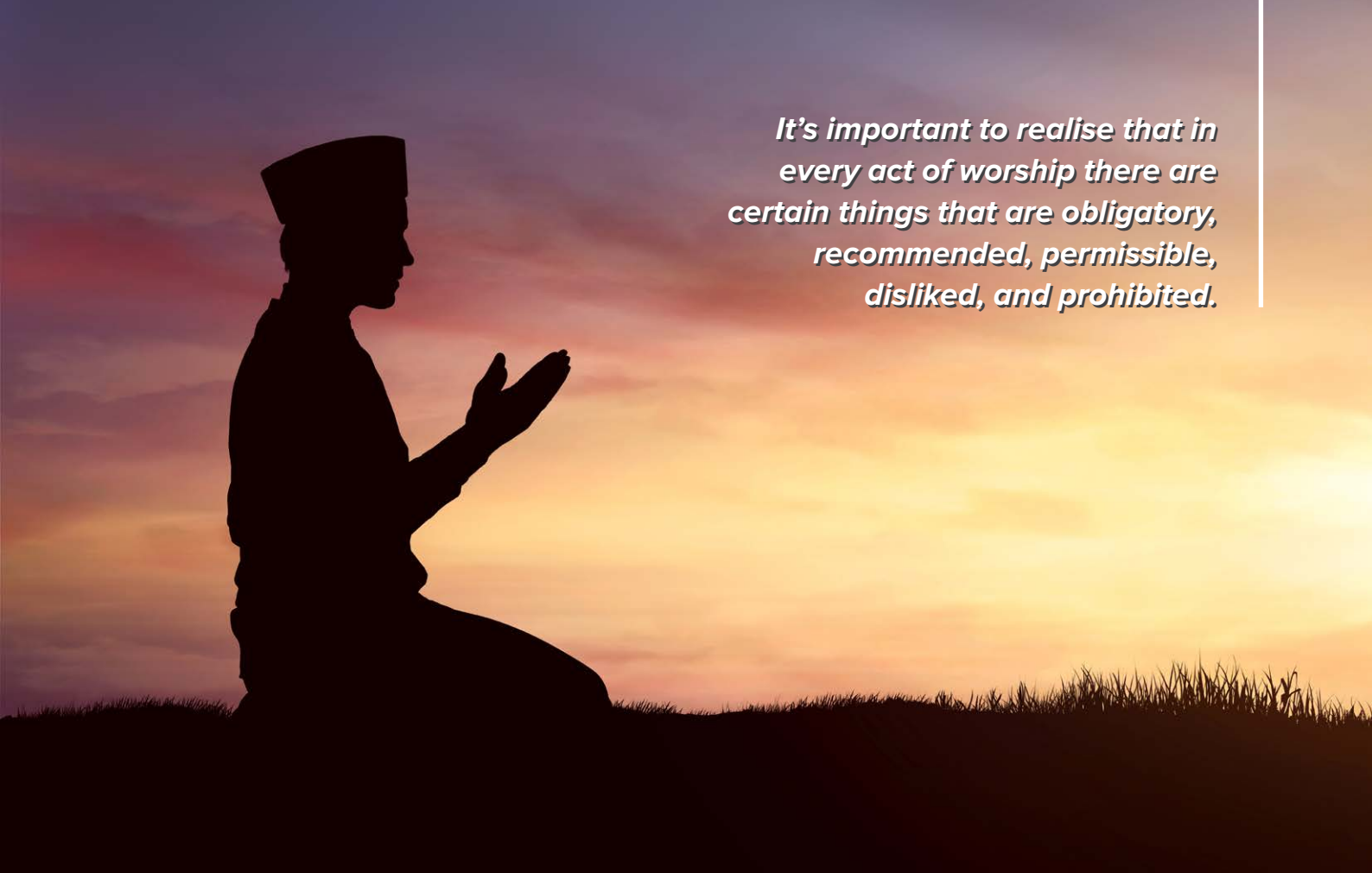
So the question arises: What are the main acts of worship in Islam? And how do we worship Allah as He wants us to worship Him?

The main acts of worship after the 'Shahādah' (when one testifies that there is no true god but Allah, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah) are four things:

1. Establishing the five daily prayers
2. Giving the obligatory charity called 'zakāh'
3. Fasting the month of Ramadan
4. Making the pilgrimage to the Ka'bah in Makkah

The Prophet said,  
*"Islam is based upon five pillars: testifying that there is no true god but Allah, establishing the prayer, paying the Zakāh, fasting Ramadan, and the pilgrimage to the House of Allah (meaning the Ka'bah in Makkah)."* [Bukhari]





*It's important to realise that in every act of worship there are certain things that are obligatory, recommended, permissible, disliked, and prohibited.*

We notice that the prayer and fasting are acts of worship related to our bodies.

We notice that paying the obligatory charity is an act of worship related to our wealth.

We notice that performing the pilgrimage is an act of worship related to both our body and our wealth, as going to Makkah to perform the pilgrimage requires both physical strength and financial ability.

There are even more important acts of worship related to our hearts! Glorifying Allah, loving Him, fearing His punishment, being sincere to Him, hoping in His mercy and reward, relying upon Him, and being grateful to Him are some of the main actions of the heart that bring us closer to Allah.

The beautiful thing is that these four pillars of Islam, which we will explain in more detail, are all linked to the heart. Every act of worship we perform, if done properly, will increase us in our love of Allah, in our hope in Allah, in our fear of Allah, and so on. These acts of worship will refine our hearts and our character.

When we purify ourselves before the prayer for the sake of Allah, we should feel

tranquility in our hearts. Why? Because we realize that we are purifying ourselves for the sake of the Lord of the heavens and the earth, that Allah loves this act from us, and that He will reward us tremendously for it. This will increase our glorification of Allah, our love of Allah, and our hope in His reward. We will gain a purity in our hearts as we purify our bodies for His sake.

It's important to realise that in every act of worship there are certain things that are obligatory, recommended, permissible, disliked, and prohibited.

There are certain conditions or pillars that are required to make the act of worship valid, and there are certain things that must be avoided or else the act of worship may be considered invalid.

We will begin with the prayer, as it is the most important pillar after the testimony of faith, and because it is something that is done five times a day. But before we begin discussing the rules of the prayer, we must first cover the rules related to purification, because one of the main conditions of the prayer is to be in a state of purity.

# PURIFICATION

Did you ever wonder what to do if you need to pray, and do not have access to water?

In this section, we will look at:

- The different types of purification
- What we need to perform them
- Some etiquettes of going to the bathroom
- How to purify one's self afterward.

Whenever you want to pray, you need to be in a state of spiritual purity. If you did something that nullifies your ablution or wudu' - which we will discuss in the nullifications of wudu' - then you need to perform wudu' before praying. If there is something that requires you to take a bath - which we will discuss in what necessitates a bath - then you need to take a complete shower, which is called ghusl, before you can pray.

## What do we use to perform wudu' (ablution) or ghusl (the bath)?

We need clean water. We can use any water which is clean to perform wudu' or ghusl. If the water's color, taste, or smell changed due to an impurity falling into it, such as urine, then it cannot be used.

If someone does not have any access to water, or if using water or seeking it becomes harmful, such as if it is dangerous to leave the house or area to seek water, a person then performs what is called tayammum.

## How do you perform tayammum?

You strike the dirt of the earth with both of your palms, then wipe with them your face, and then you wipe your hands. Once you are able to use water again, then you must use it to make either wudu' or ghusl.

## Using the Bathroom

If you need to use the bathroom before you perform wudu', then you should know the following rules and manners.

1. It is recommended to enter the bathroom with your left foot and say before entering

*Allahumma inni a'ūthu bika minal khubthi wal kubā'ith*

Which means:

O Allah, I seek refuge in you from male and female devils.

Looking at this supplication, we learn that Muslims turn only to Allah to protect them from all evil. For Allah is the only Creator, the controller of the universe, and the only one who can bring good and ward off evil.

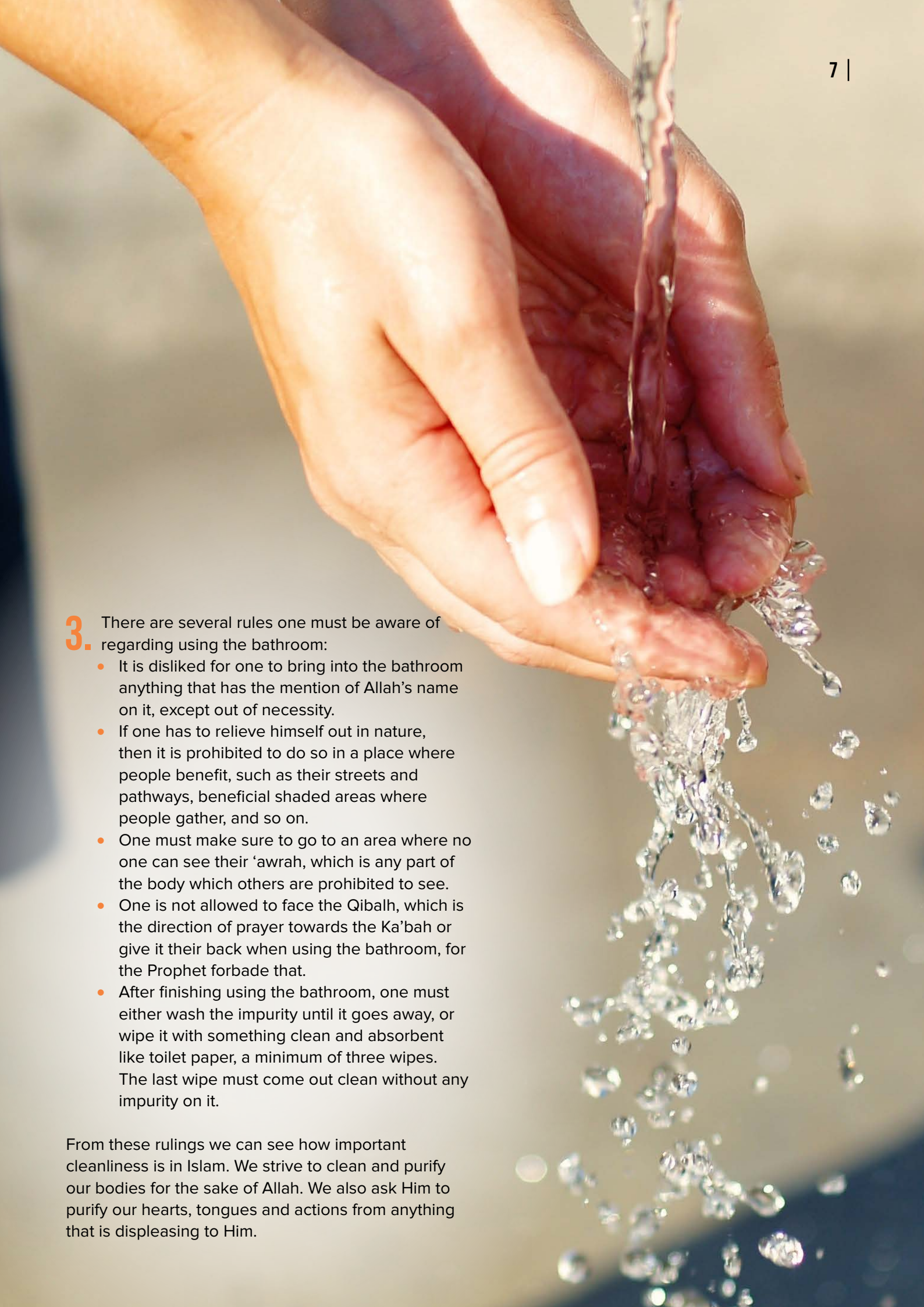
2. When you exit the bathroom, you should exit with your right foot and say after exiting:

*Ghufranak*

Meaning,

I seek your forgiveness, O Allah

In this supplication we are asking Allah to remove the filth of our sins, as he allowed us to remove the filth in our bodies. We must remember it is a great blessing from Allah to allow us to go to the bathroom and relieve ourselves whenever we need to.

- 
- 3.** There are several rules one must be aware of regarding using the bathroom:
- It is disliked for one to bring into the bathroom anything that has the mention of Allah's name on it, except out of necessity.
  - If one has to relieve himself out in nature, then it is prohibited to do so in a place where people benefit, such as their streets and pathways, beneficial shaded areas where people gather, and so on.
  - One must make sure to go to an area where no one can see their 'awrah, which is any part of the body which others are prohibited to see.
  - One is not allowed to face the Qiblah, which is the direction of prayer towards the Ka'bah or give it their back when using the bathroom, for the Prophet forbade that.
  - After finishing using the bathroom, one must either wash the impurity until it goes away, or wipe it with something clean and absorbent like toilet paper, a minimum of three wipes. The last wipe must come out clean without any impurity on it.

From these rulings we can see how important cleanliness is in Islam. We strive to clean and purify our bodies for the sake of Allah. We also ask Him to purify our hearts, tongues and actions from anything that is displeasing to Him.

# WUDU'

When is it required to be in a state of wudu', and when is it recommended?

In this section, we will cover:

- The act of worship of performing wudu'
- Its description from the Quran and Sunnah
- Its virtues
- Its meaning
- When it is required
- When it is recommended.

Allah, the Most Exalted, mentions the essentials of wudu' in the Qur'an:

He says to the believers,

*O you who have believed, when you rise to [perform] prayer, wash your faces and your forearms to the elbows and wipe over your heads and wash your feet to the ankles. [5:6]*

More details of how to perform wudu' are mentioned in the Sunnah of the Prophet .

*It is authentically reported that the noble companion 'Uthman ibn 'Affān, may Allah be pleased with him, asked for a container of water to perform wudu'. First, he washed his hands three times. Then, he rinsed his mouth and nose, three times and washed his face, three times. Then he washed his right hand up to the elbow three times. Then he washed his left hand in the same way. Then he wiped his head. Then he washed his right foot up the two ankles, three times. Then he washed his left foot in the same way. Then he said, 'I saw Allah's Messenger (may Allah's praise and peace be upon him) say: "Whoever performs wudu' like this wudu' of mine, then prays two rak'ahs without talking to himself in them will have his previous sins forgiven.'" [Bukhari]*

Wudu' has great virtues for the believers in this life and the Hereafter. We see many mentions of this in the authentic narrations of the Prophet where he mentioned the virtues of performing wudu'. We should keep these virtues in mind whenever we make wudu':





The Prophet said regarding the Muslim who performs wudu':  
*"When a Muslim, or a believer, washes his face, every sin which he committed with his eyes, will be washed away from his face with the water, or with the last drop of water.*

*When he washes his forearm, every sin which is committed by his hands will be washed away from his hands with the water, or with the last drop of water. When he washes his feet, every sin his feet committed will be washed away with the water, or with the last drop of water; until he is cleansed of his sins."*  
 [Muslim]

He also said,  
*"My people will come on the Day of Resurrection with shining faces, hands and feet from the traces of Wudu'."* [Al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim]

## WHAT IS WUDU'?

Wudu' - in the Arabic language means 'Beauty'.

As an Islamic term, wudu' is an act of worship which brings the believer closer to Allah by washing the face hands and feet, and wiping the head, in a specific manner.

**Why is this act of worship called wudu', which means beauty in Arabic?** Because it beautifies the believers in this life and the Hereafter.

A person is required to perform wudu' or be in a state of purity in three situations:

1. When a person wants to pray.
2. When a person wants to perform Tawaf around the Ka'bah.
3. When a person wants to touch the Mushaf, or physical copy of the Quran.

These are the only situations which require wudu'.

It is *recommended* to perform wudu' in five situations:

1. When a person wants to remember Allah or recite the Quran without touching the mushaf.
2. Before going to sleep
3. When a person is in a state of sexual impurity and wants to eat, drink, or sleep, but does not feel like making ghusl (or taking a shower).
4. Before performing ghusl.
5. Renewing one's wudu' for every prayer, even if a person is already in a state of wudu'.

## Rules Related to Wudu'

In this section we will cover the rules and regulations related to Wudu'. It's conditions, requirements, recommendations, prohibitions, nullifications and what to do if you doubt your wudu'.

### Conditions of Wudu'

#### What are the conditions of wudu'?

1. The first is to use clean water.
2. The second is to remove anything on the body that will prevent water from reaching the required area. A woman, for example, must remove her nail polish which prevents water from reaching her nails. However, if a person is required to keep a bandage or a wrap on for a wound to heal for example, or for any medical necessity, and removing it is harmful, then this does not need to be removed, and one can wipe over it with a wet hand, until the wound heals and the bandage is removed.
3. The third is to have the proper intention before performing wudu'. Either intend in your heart that you are performing wudu' to remove a spiritual impurity, or to be able to pray. The intention is done in the heart, and is not to be said with the tongue.

#### What are the *required* acts of wudu'?

There are six acts which are required:

*This means that these are the minimum, obligatory requirements for Wudu'*

1. Washing the face one time, including the rinsing of the mouth and nose.
2. Washing the hands to the elbows, including the elbows, one time.
3. Wiping the entire head, one time.
4. Washing the feet to the ankles, including the ankles, one time.
5. Maintaining the above mentioned order.
6. Being consecutive in the actions of wudu', which means not delaying the washing of one limb to the extent that the previous limb dries up.

#### What are the *recommended* acts of wudu'?

There are eight acts which are recommended:

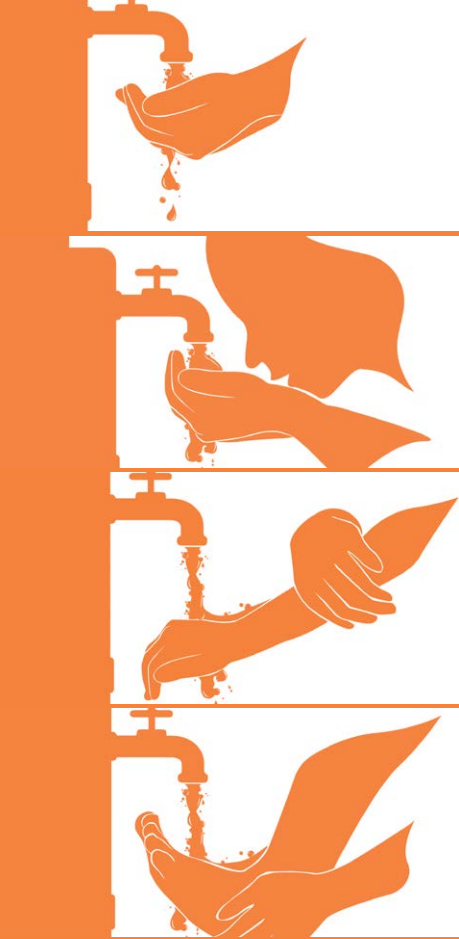
1. Saying "Bismillah" before the beginning.
2. Washing the hands in the beginning of wudu', three times.
3. Being excessive in rinsing of the mouth and nose – unless one is fasting
4. Rinsing the beard and running the fingers through the beard hair.
5. Pouring water between the toes and rubbing between them with one's finger.
6. Wiping the ears after wiping the head.
7. Washing the right hand before the left, and the right foot before the left.
8. Washing the face, hands, and feet three times.

**Note:** *It is disliked to be wasteful of water and it is prohibited to wash the limbs in wudu' more than three times.*

#### What are the things that *break* a person's wudu'?

There are seven nullifications of wudu':

1. Anything that comes out of the two private parts, whether a lot or a little. If pre-seminal fluid comes out of a man, he is required to wash his entire penis, perform wudu, and soak with water whatever came of it onto his clothes. For a woman, cervical discharge that comes out throughout the month without desire is pure and does not break a woman's wudu' according to the stronger opinion.



2. The excretion of blood and vomit coming out of other parts of the body, if it is a lot.
3. Loss of mental awareness. As for sleep, it breaks one's wudu' if it is deep sleep that makes a person unaware of his or her surroundings. As for a light doze such that a person knows his or her surroundings, then this does not break wudu'.
4. Touching the penis, vagina, or anus with one's hand.
5. Passing wind, if he is sure that he has passed it; ie by the sound, smell or sensation. If he is unsure; ie felt something in his stomach but did not hear a sound or smell anything, then one does not need to break his prayer). (This does not include 'burping', which does not invalidate wudu')
6. A man touching a woman out of desire, or vice-versa.
7. Eating the meat of camels.
8. Apostatizing from Islam, we seek Allah's refuge from this!

What happens if you cannot remember if you made wudu' or if you broke your wudu'?

You go with what you are *certain* of - if you are *certain that you are in a state of wudu'*, and cannot recall if you broke it or not, then consider yourself in a state of purity. If you are *certain that you broke your wudu'*, but cannot recall if you performed wudu' after that or not, then consider yourself in a state of impurity.

### Wiping over the socks

Instead of washing your feet, you are allowed to wipe over you socks with a wet hand with the following conditions:

1. You must have worn the socks after performing complete wudu' or ghusl and after washing both feet.
2. The socks must cover both ankles.
3. You can wipe for 24 hours if you are a resident, or 72 hours if you are a traveler. The time begins when you wipe over your socks for the first time. Once the time expires, you can no longer wipe on your socks unless you take them off and perform a complete wudu', and wash both feet.

# GHUSL

When is a person required to take a **bath**, which is called 'ghusl'?

Ghusl - in Arabic is the act of washing something with water. As an Islamic term, it is an act of worship which involves washing the entire body with water, in a specific manner.

## Ghusl is required in six situations:

1. After sexual intercourse.
2. After an orgasm or a wet dream
3. After a woman finishes her menstrual cycle.
4. After a woman finishes her postpartum bleeding.
5. After a non-Muslim accepts Islam.
6. And after a Muslim dies, he or she must be washed.

## How is ghusl performed?

There are two types of ghusl:

1. The ghusl which fulfills the minimum requirements
2. The complete ghusl which fulfills the minimum requirements as well as all the recommended acts.

As for the ghusl which fulfills the minimum requirements, then it includes two things:

1. Having the correct intention before beginning. One should intend to either pray, or remove their major spiritual impurity with this ghusl.
2. Washing the entire body with water, which includes rinsing inside the mouth and nose. One must be sure the water reaches all of the areas that are difficult for water to reach, such as in between the legs, one's armpits and navel, the roots of the hair, and so forth.

As for the complete ghusl which fulfills the minimum requirements and all the recommended acts, then it was described by the Prophet's wife, Maymūna, may Allah be pleased with her:

*It was narrated that 'Aa'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: "When the Messenger of Allah did ghusl for janābah, he would wash his hands and do wudu' as for prayer, then he would wash himself, then he would run his fingers through his hair, then when he thought that it [the water] had reached his skin, he would pour water over it [the head] three times, then he would wash the rest of his body." [Bukhari]*

**Note:** A woman does not have to undo her braids when performing ghusl as long as she soaks the roots of her hair, and as long as she washes the outer parts of her hair.



A person who is required to perform ghusl is not allowed to:

1. Pray
2. Touch the mushaf
3. Perform Tawaf around the Ka'ba
4. Recite the Quran
5. Stay inside the masjid until he or she performs ghusl.

However, a woman on her period or who has postpartum bleeding is allowed to recite the Quran without directly touching the mushaf. If she needs to touch the mushaf, then she must do so with a barrier, or by wearing gloves. Once her period ends, then she cannot recite the Quran until she performs ghusl.

There are several cases when ghusl is **recommended**:

- Before going to the Friday prayer.
- Before going to the Eid prayer.
- After washing a deceased person.
- Due to loss of consciousness, such as a coma, once the person is aware.
- Before entering a state of Ihram, which is the intention of starting one's pilgrimage to Makkah, for either Hajj or Umrah.
- Before making the Tawaf of Hajj.

# MENSTRUATION

When a woman is on her period, what is permissible and what is to be avoided? In this section we will cover the rules related to a woman's menstrual cycle and postpartum bleeding, God willing.

## **A woman can have three types of vaginal bleeding:**

1. The first is called 'Hayd', which is menstrual blood. This usually comes once a month, usually for six or seven days.
2. The second is called 'Nifās', which is postpartum bleeding, blood which a woman gets after the delivery of her child.
3. The third is called 'Istihādah', which is blood that comes out due to some other reason.

## **Menses: once a woman gets her period she is not permitted to do the following things:**

1. **Pray.** A woman cannot pray during menses, nor can she make them up later.
2. **Fast.** A woman cannot fast during her menses but she must make up the obligatory fasts of Ramadan later.
3. **Tawaf.** A woman cannot make Tawaf around the Ka'bah while on her menses.
4. **Touch the Mushaf** (written copy of the Arabic Qur'an). A menstruating woman cannot touch the Mushaf without a barrier. She is allowed to recite the Quran and remember Allah.
5. **Stay in the masjid.**
6. **Intercourse.** However, other intimate relations are permitted. As for anal intercourse, then this is strictly prohibited at all times.
7. **Divorce.** Her husband is not allowed to divorce her during her period. However, if he does so, for any reason, it will count as a valid divorce.

These are the only prohibitions related to a woman's period. Everything else that is normally allowed is allowed for her during her period.

Period blood is usually darker than normal blood, it may have a stronger odor, and it may thicken or clot. If there is any brown or yellow discharge in the beginning or the end of her cycle, this also counts as part of her period. Her period is not over until she sees clear discharge that has no color, or if she places a tissue inside, it should consistently come out clean without any discharge or color.

Once a woman finishes her period, she must take a complete shower, also known as ghusl, as we discussed in the previous episode. After her period ends and *before showering*, none of the above mentioned prohibitions become permissible, except for fasting and divorce.

Once a woman's period finishes, a *minimum of 13 days* must pass before her next period. If she sees blood before that, then this is abnormal bleeding, or 'Istihādah' as we mentioned, and not her period.

# ISTIHADAH

The maximum period is fifteen days and nights. If she continues bleeding after this, this bleeding is called Istihādah, or extra and abnormal blood. In such a case, she must shower at the end of the fifteen days, wash her private part, pad herself well, make wudu' for every prayer, and pray. None of the above prohibitions previously mentioned related to her or to her husband apply to a woman with Istihādah. However, if she enters the masjid, she must be sure to be well padded so that blood does not get anywhere in the masjid.

If the blood continues to the next month, then she looks at her last cycle, and considers that time to be her period, and anything past it as Istihādah. If her last period started at the beginning of the month and lasted for seven days, then her next period would be at the beginning of the next month for seven days.

A woman who is pregnant cannot have her period. If she bleeds before delivery, even during her contractions, this is neither period blood nor postpartum blood. She should just wash it off, pad herself, and perform wudu'. She should continue praying as normal. If she cannot bear praying while standing, then she can pray sitting down.



# NIFAAS

Once a woman delivers her child, she will normally experience postpartum bleeding up to six weeks. This is called nifās. It takes the same exact rulings as menses, whether it applies to her or her husband.

The maximum nifās is forty days and nights from the time of delivery. If her bleeding ends before that, then she must shower and pray and is considered pure.

If it comes back during that 40 day period, then it is also from her nifās. If she continues bleeding past forty days, she must shower at the end of the forty days, and that extra blood is considered Istihādah. Thus she would wash her private part, pad herself well, and make wudu for every prayer, and pray.

With this we end the rules related to purity, Alhamdulillah.



In the case where the woman miscarries, there are two situations:

1. If the fetus had developed human features (such as hands, feet, face, etc.) then the blood that comes out is considered nifās (postpartum bleeding), and all of the rules of nifās apply.
2. If the fetus had not developed human features, then the blood that comes out is not considered nifās. None of the rules of nifās apply, rather the rules of istihāda, or abnormal blood.



# SALAH - THE FIVE DAILY PRAYERS

How important are the five daily prayers in Islam?

In this section, we will cover the following, the meaning of the prayer, the virtue and importance of the prayer, the ruling of the prayer and who it is obligatory upon, the ruling of leaving the obligatory prayer and delaying it past its time, and the conditions for a prayer to be valid.

Salāh (or prayer) - in the Arabic language means to supplicate. In Islam, it is an act of worship done for Allah's sake, which starts with takbīr, or saying Allahu Akbar, and ends with taslīm, or saying Assalamu Alaikum wa Rahmatullah.

The virtues of prayer:

- It was prescribed in the Night of Ascension to the Prophet after he was elevated to a place higher than the seventh heaven. All other acts of Islam were revealed to the Prophet on earth.
- It is the only *pillar of Islam* required to be performed on a daily basis, five times a day.
- It is the greatest pillar of Islam after the testimony of faith and the most beloved act of worship to Allah.
- It purifies the Muslim from minor sins and gives him great rewards.
- If done properly, it increases the Muslim in his faith and forbids him from immorality and wrongdoing.
- Allah promises the one who guards his prayers to forgive his sins and enter him into Paradise. Whoever does not guard all of his prayers, does not have such a guarantee.

These are just a few of the many benefits of prayer.

The five daily prayers are obligatory upon every sane, adult Muslim, except for a woman who has her menses or postpartum bleeding. Parents must teach their children how to perform wudu' and Salah, and command them to pray, starting from the age of seven, to get them used to praying.

Intentionally delaying any of the five prayers past its set time is a major sin. One is excused for oversleeping or forgetting, but must make the prayer up as soon as he wakes up or remembers.

The scholars differed regarding the Muslim who leaves the prayer all together out of laziness and carelessness: is he committing major sin, or did he step outside the fold of Islam? There are many severe verses and Prophetic statements that show the danger of abandoning the prayer. All of this should encourage Muslims to realize the danger of abandoning the prayer, and to call their Muslim family members and friends who are careless with their prayers to repent and to be keen on performing all their prayers on time.

Before beginning to pray any prayer, there are conditions that Muslims must make sure are fulfilled.

### Conditions of the Prayer:

1. That he is in a state of purity. Meaning, he must perform wudu' if his wudu was broken, or take a shower if he is in a major state of impurity.
2. That his body, clothes, and place of prayer are free from physical impurities. Physical impurities of a human are: urine, stool, vomit, and blood. However, a small amount of blood is permitted.
3. Covering certain parts of the body, which is called the 'awrah. A man must cover what is between his navel and knee, and is recommended to cover both of his shoulders. A woman must cover her entire body, except for her face and hands.
4. The time of the obligatory prayer must enter before one can pray it. Praying an obligatory prayer before its time is invalid. There are certain universal signs to know the times of the prayer, which will not be discussed now, but the easiest way to know the time now is by checking a prayer calendar or by following the prayer calls of a local mosque.
5. One must face the Ka'bah in the Blessed city of Makkah. If one can see the Ka'bah, he must face it directly. If one is far away, he must face the direction of Makkah. Diverging from the direction of the Qiblah slightly is forgiven as long as a person does not move to a completely different direction.
6. One must have the intention to pray before praying, and if the prayer is a specific prayer, like the five obligatory prayers, one must specify which prayer he wants to pray in his heart before beginning the prayer. The intention is in the heart, and is not to be stated with one's tongue.

### Description and Meanings of The Prayer

When standing up to pray, one should try as much as he can to think about the meanings of what he is saying. While reciting in Arabic, aim to think about the meaning in your own language. This will help keep your heart present in the prayer, God willing.

1. Takbir (saying Allahu akbar). When you stand up to pray, say Allahu Akbar- Allah is the Greatest. Remind yourself that Allah is greater and more powerful than everything.
2. Then, raise your hands while saying the takbīr, to the level of your shoulders or ears. Then, placing your right hand over your left above your navel, in a state of humility, remembering that you are standing before the Lord of the heavens and the earth.
3. Look slightly down, with humbleness and concentration, at your place of prostration. Then say: Subhānakallahumma wa bihamdika wa tabārakasmuka wa ta'ālā jadduka wa lā ilāha ghayruk. (Glory and praise be to You, O Allah. Blessed is Your name and exalted is Your majesty. There is none worthy of worship except You.)
4. Then say: A'ūdhu billāhi minash-shaytānir-rajīm I seek refuge in Allah from the cursed devil. Remember that you are seeking refuge in the Most Powerful from the devil, your greatest enemy, who wants to keep you away from Allah's straight path.
5. Then say: Bismillāhir-rahmānir-rahīm In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the specially Merciful.
6. Then recite Surat al-Fātihah. Try to ponder over its meaning and focus.
7. Then recite a surah or a portion of the Quran. Your recitation should be performed out loud during the dawn prayer, and in the first two units, or rak'ahs, of the sunset and night prayers. Recite silently in all other rak'ahs.
8. Then say 'Allahu Akbar', and bow, raising your hands to your shoulders as you did in the beginning of the prayer.

9. While bowing, place your hands on your knees, spreading out your fingers, and make your back straight. Make your head at the same level as your back. Then say the following three times:  
Subhāna Rabbiyal-‘Adhīm (Exalted is my Lord, the Most Great).

*Remember, as you are saying this, that you are magnifying and exalting the Lord of the Heavens and the Earth, out of your extreme love, fear, and reverence of Him.*

*Remember when you say Subhanna Rabbī, you are freeing Allah from every form of imperfection and shortcoming, and attributing to Him all traits of perfection.*

*Remember, that you are exalting Allah in action by bowing to Him, and you are exalting Him in speech, by saying this remembrance, and you are exalting Him in your heart by recalling and believing in what you are saying.*

10. Then go back to a standing position, saying as you raise up: Sami‘Allahu liman hamidah. Allah answers those who praise him.  
Meaning, once you praise Allah seeking his reward, Allah will give you what you are seeking. He hears it and will answer it, out of His mercy and kindness.
11. Once you are standing, raise your hands as you did in the beginning. Then say: Rabbanā wa lakal-hamd, mil’as-samā’ wa mil’al ard, wa mil’a mā shi’ta min shay’in ba’d (Our Lord, to You all praise is due, filling the heaven, filling the earth, and filling whatever else You will).
12. Then fall into prostration, saying ‘Allahu Akbar’, and do not raise your hands.

The following body parts will touch the floor, in a position of prostration and submission to Allah: the tips of your feet, your knees, your hands, your forehead and your nose.

Keep your arms away from your sides and your stomach away from your thighs. Place your hands at the level of your shoulders. Say the following three times: Subhāna Rabbi‘al-a’lā (Exalted is Allah, the Most High).

Remember that Allah is the greatest and Most High, and that you are closest to Allah when you prostrate to him. Supplicate to Allah for whatever you wish, and ask him for the best of this world and the next, and to rectify your religion.

13. Then raise your head, saying ‘Allahu Akbar’, and sit in a position of iftirāsh, where you flatten your left foot and sit on it, and make your right foot upright, with its toes facing the Qiblah.
14. Once sitting, say the following three times: Rabbighfir-lī. (My Lord, forgive me). Remember, that no one forgives sins except Allah, and that every time you make a mistake and repent to Him, He forgives you.
15. Then prostrate the second prostration the same way you did in the first prostration.
16. Then raise your head, saying ‘Allahu Akbar’, and stand up again.
17. Pray the second (rak’ah) the same way you prayed the first.
18. Once you finish the two rak’ahs, sit down to say at-tashah-hud, in a position of iftirāsh. Place your left hand on your left thigh, and your right hand on your right thigh. With your right hand, close the pinky and index fingers, make a circle with the middle finger and thumb, and point forward with the index finger.
- Say: At-tahiyyātu lillāhi was-salawātu wat-tayyibāt As-salāmu ‘alaika ayyuhan-nabiyyu wa rahmatullahi wa

barakātuh As-salāmu ‘alaynā wa ‘alā ibādillāhis-sālihīn Ash-hadu anlā ilāha illAllah wa ash-hadu anna Muhammadan ‘abduhū wa. This is called the tashahhud.

It means: Greetings are due to Allah, prayers, and good words. Peace be upon you, O Prophet, and the mercy of Allah and His blessings. Peace be upon us and on the pious slaves of Allah. I testify that there is no true god except Allah, and I testify that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger.

19. Then say: Allahumma sallī ‘ala Muhammadin wa ‘alā ‘āli Muhammadin kamā sallayta ‘alā Ibrāhīma wa āli Ibrāhīm innaka Hamīdun Majīd Wa bārik ‘alā Muhammadin wa ‘alā āli Muhammadin kamā bārakta ‘alā Ibrāhīma wa āli Ibrāhīma innaka Hamīdun Majīd. This is called the Salah upon the Prophet

*This means: O Allah, send praises upon Muhammad and the followers of Muhammad as you have sent praises upon Ibrahim and the followers of Ibrahim. You are Praised and Glorious. O Allah, bless Muhammad and the followers of Muhammad as you have blessed Ibrahim and the followers of Ibrahim. You are Praised and Glorious.*

It is recommended that you seek refuge from the Hellfire, from the punishment of the grave, from the tribulations of life and death, and from the trial of the false Messiah, by saying Allahumma Innī A’ūdhu bika min ‘adhābin-nār, wa ‘adhābil Qabr, wa fitnatil masīhid-dajjāl, wa min fitnatil mahyā wal-mamāt.

20. Then turn your head to the right side and say: As-Salāmu ‘alaikum wa rahmatullah. (Peace be upon you and the mercy of Allah)
21. Then turn your head toward the left side and say the same.
- This is the description of a prayer that has two rak’ahs, such as the dawn prayer.
22. If the prayer is more than two rak’ahs, then after the tashahhud, you will stand up again, saying Allahu Akbar, in the same way you did when you stood after prostration.
23. Then you will pray one more rak’ah in case of Al-Maghrib (or sunset) prayer, and two more rak’ahs if you are praying Dhuhr, the noon prayer, Asr, the afternoon prayer, or Ishā, the night prayer.

You pray those two rak’ahs the same way you prayed the first two rak’ahs, except that you do not recite anything after Surat al-Fātihah.

Once you sit for the final tashah-hud, you should sit in the position of ‘tawarruk’, by keeping your right foot upright, and flattening your left foot, and bringing it out from your right side.

You only sit in a position of tawarruk in a prayer that has two tashah-huds, during the last tashahhud only.

24. After you finish praying, it is recommended to say the remembrances of the prayer, which the Prophet, praise and peace be upon him, taught us.

*Please note: some of these actions and statements of the prayer are pillars, some are obligations, and some are recommended acts.*

# VOLUNTARY PRAYERS

Any prayer which is not obligatory is considered a voluntary prayer. If one performs a voluntary prayer they will be rewarded, and if they do not they will not be sinful.

## Muslims pray voluntary prayers for several benefits:

1. To gain Allah's love and special support.
2. To draw closer to Allah and purify their hearts.
3. To gain more reward.
4. To expiate their sins.
5. To cover any shortcomings that may have occurred in their obligatory prayers.

## Voluntary prayers are of 4 different types:

1. **As-Sunan Ar-Rawātib.** The first type are what are called As-Sunan Ar-Rawātib. They are the ones that are done right before or after the obligatory prayers. It is recommended for a Muslim to pray
  - 2 rak'ahs before the Fajr or dawn prayer
  - 2 or 4 rak'ahs before the Dhuhr or noon prayer
  - 2 or 4 rak'ahs after the Dhuhr prayer,
  - 2 rak'ahs after the Maghrib or sunset prayer
  - 2 rak'ahs after the 'Isha or night prayer.
2. **Witr.** The second type is the witr prayer, which is simply an odd number of rak'ahs. Its time starts after Isha prayer, and ends with the break of dawn. It should be the last prayer someone prays after any other voluntary night prayers. The minimum witr is one rak'ah. The maximum is eleven. One common way is to pray 2 rak'ahs, make taslīm, and then pray one rak'ah by itself. Another way is to pray three consecutive rak'ahs, without sitting after the second rak'ah. It is permissible to pray it in any way the Prophet prayed it.
3. **General.** The third type is the general voluntary prayer. A person can pray as many general voluntary prayers as he wishes, in the morning or at night, as long as it is not a time of prohibition. The general voluntary prayer is prayed in units of two, meaning two rak'ahs. The night prayer is more virtuous than the day prayer, and the last third of the night is even better, when Allah, the Most Exalted, descends to the lowest heaven, in a way befitting of His Majesty, and says,

*“Who will ask my forgiveness and I will forgive him? Who will ask me and I will give him. Who will supplicate to me and I will answer him?” [Bukhari]*

- Sometimes a Muslim may pray a general voluntary prayer but for a specific reason. If a person enters a masjid, he should not sit down until he prays two rak'ahs.
- Likewise, if a person wants to make an important decision, and has decided on it, but wants Allah to decree it for him if it is good and to remove it from him if it

is bad, he should pray two rak'ahs, a voluntary prayer, and then say a specific supplication called the dua of 'Istikharah'. In this supplication he asks Allah to guide him to the best decision, and to decree for him what is best. The wording of this duā can be found in books that gather authentic supplications and remembrances, such as the book *The Fortress of the Muslim*.

- It is recommended to pray two voluntary rak'ahs after a person performs wudu'.

#### 4. Voluntary Congregation In The Masjid.

The fourth type of voluntary prayer is the prayer in which a congregation in the masjid is legislated. Under this category, there are three types of prayers:

- The first is the *Tarawīh prayer*, which is performed after the *Ishā* prayer in the month of Ramadan. The Imam of the masjid can either pray eight rak'ahs plus three rak'ahs of *witr*, making a total of eleven rak'ahs. Or, he can pray twenty rak'ahs plus three rak'ahs of *witr*, making a total of twenty three rak'ahs. Both are allowed, and there is no specific number that has to be prayed. The Prophet said regarding this prayer,

*"Whoever prays the night prayer in Ramadan out of faith and expecting the reward of Allah, will have his previous sins forgiven."*

[Bukhari]

- The second prayer is the prayer for rain, called '*Istisqā'*'.
- The third prayer is the solar or lunar eclipse prayer, called *Salāt Al-Kusūf*, in which Muslims pray to Allah to forgive their sins and not punish them, when they see this great universal sign that Allah has brought.

Muslims are allowed to pray voluntary prayers throughout the day unless it is a time of prohibition.

#### Prohibited Prayer Times:

There are three times in which a Muslim is prohibited from praying voluntary prayers.

1. The first is after the Fajr prayer and until the sun rises above the horizon. This is usually fifteen minutes after sunrise.
2. The second is when the sun is in the middle of the sky, at its zenith, before it starts setting to the west. If you were to take the time of midday, exactly between sunrise and sunset, then the prohibited time would be three minutes before that and three minutes after that.
3. The third time period is after the Asr prayer until the sun completely sets.

During these times, a Muslim is prohibited from praying voluntary prayer, except for the funeral prayer after Asr prayer and after Fajr prayer, if needed.



# THE FUNERAL PRAYER

How is a Muslim honored and taken care of after death? It is a communal obligation to wash the deceased Muslims, shroud them, pray upon them, and bury them. If enough people do it, then there is no sin upon the rest of the community.

It is recommended for a Muslim to remember death which will make him focus on the hereafter, rush to repentance, and avoid bad deeds. It is recommended to visit the sick Muslim, remind him to repent and to write his will.

If a person is near death, it is recommended to gently remind him to say the testimony of faith: There is no one worthy of worship except Allah. *Lā ilāha illAllāh.*

Once it is certain that the Muslim has died, his eyes should be closed, his jaws should be tied shut, and the joints of his arms and legs should be moved back and forth so that they do not become stiff.

## **Ghusl For The Deceased:**

- If he begins washing him, the 'awrah of the deceased should be covered.
- Then he should press his stomach gently.
- The washer should place a cloth over his hand and wash away any dirt from the back and front passage, pouring water over it.
- Then he should perform wudu' for him. Then he should wash his head and his beard with water and ground lote tree leaves. Then he should wash the right side of his body, then the left side. Then he should wash him again as previously mentioned, a second time and a third time, each time passing his hand (to wipe him).
- If he does not get cleansed after three times, he should increase (the washes) to five, or seven times.

- Then he should dry him with a towel.
- Then, he should put perfume on the areas of his body in which sweat and dirt gathers, such as behind his knees, the top of his thighs, and his armpits, as well as the places which touch the ground during prostration. If he perfumes his entire body, then this would be good.
- He should burn incense and let its smoke cover his shroud so that it will smell nice.
- If his moustache or nails are long, he should shorten them. He should not comb his hair.
- The woman should have her hair braided into three braids, and it should be left to hang from behind.
- He should then be wrapped in three large pieces of white cloth, and he should be enveloped into them.
- The woman should be wrapped in five garments: in a long gown, a head scarf, a lower wrap, and two large outer sheets.

## **Praying the Janazah (Funeral)**

### **Prayer:**

The way to pray on the deceased is as follows:

- The Imam places the deceased in front of him. If it's a man the Imam stands at his chest, and if it's a woman he stands near her waist.
- First, he says the first takbīr (*Allāhu Akbar*), to start the prayer.
- Then he recites Surat Al-Fātihah in a low voice.
- Then he makes the second takbīr.
- Then he sends Salāh upon the Prophet, the way it is done when sitting in the obligatory prayer.
- Then he makes the third takbīr.

- Then he prays for all Muslims by saying:

*“ O Allāh! Forgive those of us who are alive, and those who are dead, those present and those absent, those who are young and those who are old, those who are male and those who are female. You know our place of return, and our refuge, and You are upon all things able. O Allāh, to whomsoever of us You give life, grant him life upon Islam and the Sunnah, and whomsoever of us you give death, give him in death upon them.*

Then he pray for the deceased by saying:

*O Allāh! Forgive him and have mercy on him. Grant him ease and relief. Make his resting place a noble one, and facilitate his entry. Wash him with the most pure and clean water, ice and hail. Purify him from sins as a white garment is cleansed of dirt. Give him in exchange a home better than his home on earth, neighbors better than his neighbors, and a family better than his family. Grant him entrance to Paradise and protect him from the torture of the grave and the torture of Hell Fire. Widen his grave for him, and fill it with light for him.”*

- Then he performs the fourth takbīr, and turns his head to the right side, saying As-Salāmu ‘Alaikum wa Rahmatullāh – May the peace and the mercy of Allāh be upon you. Only one taslīm is made and not two.

It is recommended to raise one’s hands to the shoulders along with every takbīr.

#### **The obligatory (matters) from this are:**

- The (four) takbīrs
- The recitation of Surat Al-Fātihah
- Sending Salāh upon the Prophet, praise and peace be upon him.
- A minimum supplication of the living one for the deceased
- Performing the taslīm.

#### **Recommendations**

It is recommended to bury the deceased in an L-shaped grave. He should be placed inside the horizontal part of the “L” on his right side, and he must face the Qiblah.

Then, bricks made up of unbaked clay should be stacked up to seal that area.

Then the rest of the grave should be filled with dirt, and should be mounded up to a fist length. It is disliked to write on the grave, to walk on it or sit on it. It is prohibited to build something above it.

It is recommended to give condolences to the

family of the deceased.

Crying out of sadness is permissible as long as it is not accompanied by eulogizing or wailing. Anything said or done which shows disapproval of Allah’s divine decree is prohibited.

It is recommended for men to visit the graves to be reminded of death and to pray for the deceased Muslims.

If a person passes by the graves or visits them, he should say:

“Peace be upon you, O inhabitants of the dwellings, the community of believers. We will join you by Allāh’s will. O Allāh, do not deprive us of their reward and do not put us to trial after them. Forgive us and them. We ask Allāh security for us and for you.

It is recommended to give condolences to those who have lost a loved one, and to make du‘ā for their deceased Muslim family member or friend.

A person can benefit a deceased Muslim by praying for him, asking Allah to forgive him and have mercy on him, giving charity on his behalf, and doing Hajj or Umrah on his behalf.

May Allah forgive all of the deceased Muslims and give us a good end, amīn.



# ZAKAAH

**Zakāh** - in Arabic means purity and growth. When a person gives from their wealth this obligatory charity it is called zakāh because it increases one's wealth, purifies it, and protects it from harm.

As an Islamic term, zakāh is an act of worshiping Allah by giving an obligatory portion of a specific type of one's wealth to a specific type of people. Sometimes zakāh refers to the due right on one's wealth, and sometimes it refers to the actual wealth being given, depending on the context.

Zakāh has many virtues in Islam. It is the third pillar of Islam, and Allah mentions it in the Quran 28 times, and it is usually mentioned along with the prayer.

The Muslim who does not give zakāh, disbelieving in its obligation, has stepped out of the fold of Islam. However, if a Muslim does not pay the zakāh out of stinginess and greed, even though he believes in its obligation, is committing a major sin. His wealth will not be blessed, and there is a severe punishment awaiting him in the Hereafter, as mentioned in an authentic Prophetic narration, if such a person does not repent and pay his zakāh.



## **There are many wisdoms and benefits in the legislation of zakah:**

1. It completes a person's faith.
2. It testifies to the honesty of a Muslim's faith.
3. It purifies the Muslim from the disease of greed and stinginess.
4. It brings comfort to the Muslim's heart that he is willingly helping those in need.
5. It expiates a person's sins.
6. It extinguishes Allah's anger.
7. It shades a person during the extremely hot Day of Judgment.
8. It is a cause of entering Paradise.
9. It makes the Muslim community like one family, the rich loving and taking care of the poor.
10. It decreases or eliminates poverty.
11. It prevents crimes that are caused by poverty.
12. It purifies the Muslims' wealth, blesses it, and causes it to increase.
13. It protects the individual and the community from calamities.

**Zakāh is obligatory in four categories of wealth:**

1. Gold, silver, and modern day currency.
2. Business inventory
3. Grazing livestock from camels, cows, goats, and sheep.
4. What comes out of the earth. This is of two types.
  - a. The first type is grains and dry fruits that are harvested from a person's plants.
  - b. The second type is natural resources such as gold, silver, and valuable metals and stones.

The detailed rules on all of these types, such as their minimum threshold, how much is to be paid, and so forth, are mentioned in the books of Islamic law.

Zakah is not obligatory upon a person unless he is a Muslim who owns for an entire lunar year the minimum threshold of any wealth upon which zakāh is due. The zakāh would be due one lunar year after the minimum threshold is maintained, except for what comes out of the earth, for it is due upon harvest or extraction.

The threshold for gold is 85 grams and for silver 595 grams. If a person owns 85 grams of gold or 595 grams of silver, or the value of one of those two in modern currency, for an entire lunar year, then he **must pay 2.5% of what he owns after the completion of the lunar year.**

Allah mentions in the Quran eight categories of people who can receive zakāh. The most common of them are the poor and the needy, and those who are in debt due to a permissible loan for a permissible matter.



# RAMADAN

Sawm - Siyām - or fasting, means to abstain from something. As an Islamic term, it means to worship Allah the Most High, by abstaining from anything that breaks one's fast, from the break of dawn until the sun sets, with the intention of fasting.

The only obligatory fast in Islam is fasting the month of Ramadan, which is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar. This is the fourth pillar of Islam.

## There are many benefits and wisdoms in fasting:

1. It is a way to thank Allah, since all acts of worship are a way to thank Allah.
2. It teaches the Muslim to fear Allah in secret, as he abstains from his desires when no one else is watching except Allah.
3. It refines the soul, heart, and character as a person is trained to leave his desires out of obedience to Allah.
4. It increases one's focus and concentration on worship, being good to others, and on the Hereafter.
5. It is very healthy for the body, and is a cure for many diseases.
6. It makes the person feel for the poor and needy who do not have food, and makes him more inclined to help them.

The Prophet said,

*"Whoever fasts Ramadan out of faith and expecting (the reward from Allah) will have his previous sins forgiven."* [Bukhari]

He said,

*"Allah – the Most Exalted – said, 'Every act of the son of Adam is for him, except for fasting, which is exclusively for Me, and I will reward him for it.'"*

[Bukhari]

He also said,

*"Fasting is a shield. When any one of you is fasting, he should refrain from obscene language and from raising his voice; and if anyone insults him or tries to fight with him, he should say: 'I am fasting.' By Him in Whose Hand the soul of Muhammad is, the breath of the one fasting is sweeter to Allah than the fragrance of musk. The one who fasts experiences two joys: the joy he feels when he breaks his fast, and the joy he feels when he meets his Lord."*

[Bukhari]

Fasting Ramadan is obligatory upon every sane, adult, Muslim who has the physical ability to fast, and is residing and not traveling. It is obligatory upon parents to begin training their children to fast gradually, once they can handle it, so that they can get used to it.



Ramadan begins once the new moon is sighted after the twenty ninth day of Sha'bān, which is the month preceding Ramadan. If it cannot be seen, then the Muslims must consider Sha'ban to be a full thirty days.

**The pillars of fasting are two:**

1. The intention of fasting. This must be done before the break of dawn. It is enough for the Muslim to know that he plans on fasting the following day.
2. Abstaining from anything that breaks one's fast.

Intentionally breaking one's fast during the day of Ramadan is prohibited and a major sin, in the case of a person who is obliged to fast.

**There are four types of people who are excused from fasting Ramadan:**

1. The sick person who is harmed by fasting, and the one who traveled away from his hometown an approximate distance of eighty-eight kilometers or more. It is better for them to break their fast. They must make it up. If they choose to fast, it will count for them.
2. The woman who has her menses or postpartum bleeding. She must break her fast, and she must make up the missed days after Ramadan. If she chooses to fast, she would be sinful, and it would not count.
3. The woman who is pregnant or nursing her child, if she fears for her health or the health of her child. In this case, she should break her fast, and make up the missed days.
4. The one who is unable to fast due to very old age or a terminal illness. Such a person must feed one poor Muslim for everyday that he breaks his fast in Ramadan.

Things that break one's fast are:

- Eating
- Drinking
- Taking into the body anything nutritional.
- Sexual Intercourse
- Any touching with desire, whether through masturbation or touching one's wife for example, which leads to ejaculation. Masturbation is prohibited at all times, and even more so when one is fasting.
- Forcing one's self to vomit, as opposed to vomiting unintentionally.

All of these things break one's fast if done intentionally, while remembering that one is fasting. A person who does so is committing a major sin, and would have to repent and make up that day.

If someone does any of the above forgetting that he is fasting, unintentionally, or out of coercion then his fast is not invalidated.



If a person has intercourse while fasting in Ramadan, there is an expiation that must be done other than making up that day. They must free a slave. If they cannot, they must fast two consecutive months. If they cannot, they must feed sixty poor people.

It is encouraged to:

- Have the pre-dawn meal (suhūr) as close to dawn as possible
- To break fast as soon as the sun completely sets
- To increase in good deeds and acts of worship
- To break fast on moist dates. If there are no moist dates, then dry dates. If there are no dry dates, then water.

It is disliked to taste food without swallowing it if there is no need. It is also disliked to touch one's wife with desire if they fear falling into what is prohibited.

At the end of Ramadan, it is obligatory to give staple foods in charity to the poor Muslims, for each person in the household if one can afford it. It is to be paid for and given by the head of the household. This is called Zakat Al-Fitr. The amount given is one Sā', which is about three liters, of any staple food, like rice, barley, and dates, for each person in the household, whether young or old. It can be given during the last two days of Ramadan, or on the Day of Eid before the Eid prayer is conducted.



# VOLUNTARY FASTING

Fasting Ramadan is obligatory, but what's the rule on fasting throughout the rest of the year?

Voluntary fasts are days that are recommended to fast in general or due to a special virtue mentioned in the authentic Prophetic narrations.

**Voluntary fasts** are a way to increase good deeds, expiate sins, come closer to Allah, refine and discipline the heart, soul, and character and to reap the benefits of fasting throughout the year.

## Different types of voluntary fasts:

- **Fasting one day and not fasting the next.**

The Prophet said, "The best fast is the fasting of Prophet Dawud, he used to fast one day, and break fast the following day."

- **Fasting during the month of Muharram**

The Prophet said, "The best fast after the month of Ramadan, is the month of Allah which you call Al-Muharram." This is the first month in the Islamic calendar."

- **The first 9 days of Dhul-Hijjah**

The Prophet said, "There are no days on which deeds are more beloved to Allah than the first ten days of Dhul Hijjah."

- **The day of Arafah (the 9<sup>th</sup> day of Dhul Hijjah)**

The Prophet was asked about fasting on the day of 'Arafah and he said: "It expiates for the past and coming year."

However, it is not recommended for the one performing the pilgrimage to fast on this day.

- **Six days of Shawwal**

The Prophet said, "Whoever fasts Ramadan then follows it with six days of Shawwal, it is as if he fasted for a lifetime."

Shawwal is the month that follows Ramadan. After the day of Eid, which is prohibited to fast, a Muslim can fast the six days of Shawwal any time during that month.

- **Fasting the tenth day of Muharram, which is called 'Ashura'**

The Prophet said, "For fasting the day of 'Ashura', I hope that Allah will expiate (the sins) of the previous year." The Prophet (praise and peace be upon him) fasted it, because it was the day on which Allah (the Most Exalted) saved Prophet Musa and his followers from Pharaoh."

- **Mondays and Thursdays**

The Prophet said, "Deeds are shown (to Allah) on Mondays and Thursdays, and I like my deeds to be shown when I am fasting."

- **Fasting three days of each lunar month, and it is better if they are the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth**

The Prophet said to a Companion, "Fast three days of each month, for the good deeds is multiplied tenfold, and that is like fasting for a lifetime."

He also said, "O Abu Dharr! When you fast three days of a month, then fast the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth.

- **Any day of the year**

A Muslim can fast any day of the year which is not prohibited or disliked.

- The person who is doing a voluntary fast can choose to break it if he wishes to, and he does not have to make it up. The only voluntary deed which must be completed, is a voluntary Hajj or Umrah.
- As for days a person is making up from Ramadan, a person cannot choose to end that fast, unless he has a valid excuse, such as a sickness or if he travels.



There are five days of the year which are prohibited to fast.

**EID** - It is prohibited to fast the two Days of Eid, which are the first of Shawwāl, and the tenth of Dhul Hijjah.

**The 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> OF DHUL HIJJAH** -

It is prohibited to fast these three days, except for a pilgrim performing the Hajj of Tamattu' or Qiran who cannot afford to slaughter a sacrificial animal.

**Days that are disliked to fast:**

The following days are disliked to fast:

- Friday by itself.
- Saturday by itself.
- The thirtieth day of Sha'bān.
- And a day or two before Ramadan.

*However, if these days coincide with a day that a Muslim normally fasts, like fasting on Mondays and Thursdays, 3 days of the lunar month, or the Day of Arafah, then it is not disliked to fast on them.*





# HAJJ AND UMRAH

In this section we will cover the meaning, ruling, virtues, and rules of Hajj, which is the major pilgrimage, as well as Umrah, which is the minor pilgrimage.

**Hajj** - The major pilgrimage to Makkah is called Hajj. Hajj in Arabic means seeking something that is great. As an Islamic term, it means to seek Makkah to worship Allah there through specific acts, at a specific time, and in a specific manner.

The Prophet said,  
**“An accepted Hajj does not have a reward except for Paradise.”** [Bukhari]

Hajj is the fifth pillar of Islam. It is obligatory once in a lifetime upon the sane, adult Muslim, who has the financial and physical ability to reach Makkah. A woman must have a male guardian accompany her, and Hajj is not obligatory upon her unless a male guardian is available to accompany her during her journey.

We will mention the pillars, obligations, and recommended acts for both Hajj and Umrah. If someone does not complete any of the pillars, his act of worship is not complete. If someone misses out on an obligatory act, they must slaughter a sacrificial animal and feed it to the poor people in Makkah. If someone does not do a recommended act, there is no penalty upon them.

### The pillars of Hajj are four:

1. Performing the Ihram, which is the intention to start the Hajj.
2. Standing on ‘Arafah on the 9th day of Dhul Hijjah. It is valid until the dawn of the next day.
3. Performing the Tawaf around the Ka’bah seven times, on the tenth of Dhul Hijjah or after it.
4. Walking between the mountains of Safa and Marwa seven times. This is called the Sa’i of Hajj.
5. Spending the majority of the night in Mina on the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth.
6. Shortening the hair or shaving it after completing Tawaf and Sa’i.
7. Performing the farewell Tawaf before leaving Makkah.

### Some of the recommended acts of Hajj are:

1. Performing Ihram from the ‘Miqat’. The miqat is a specific place one cannot pass on the way to Makkah until they perform the Ihram.
2. Staying in Arafah until the sun sets on the ninth.
3. Spending the night in Muzdalifa up to the middle of the night.
4. Stoning the Jamarat in Mina. The third Jamarah alone is stoned on the tenth. All three Jamarat are stoned on the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth.
1. Spending the eighth day and night in Mina.
2. The welcoming Tawaf upon entering Makkah.
3. Briskly walking in Tawaf for the first three rounds.
4. Men uncovering the right shoulder in Tawaf.
5. Making the Talbiya from the beginning of Ihram until stoning the Jamarat.
6. The remembrance and supplications that are said throughout the Hajj rituals. This can be found in books of remembrances such as The Fortress of the Muslim.

Umrah - Umrah is the minor pilgrimage. In Arabic it means to visit. As an Islamic term, it means to visit the Ka'bah in Makkah to worship Allah in a specific manner.

It is obligatory once in a lifetime according to the stronger opinion. Anything after a person's first Umrah is considered a voluntary act.

The Prophet said,  
*"Between one Umrah and the next is an expiation of the sins between them."*  
 [Bukhari]

### **The pillars of Umrah are three:**

1. Performing the Ihram, which is the intention to start the Umrah.
2. Performing Tawaf around the Ka'bah seven times.
3. Walking between the mountains of Safa and Marwa seven times.

### **The obligations of Umrah are:**

1. Performing Ihram from the Miqat.
2. Shortening the hair or shaving it after completing Tawaf and Sa'i.

### **Some of its recommended acts are:**

1. Praying two voluntary units of prayer after performing Tawaf.
2. Drinking Zamzam water after tawaf.
3. All the supplications and remembrances said during Tawaf and Sa'i. This can be found in books of remembrances such as The Fortress of the Muslim.

### **When a person is in a state of Ihram they are not allowed to do nine things:**

1. Cut their hair
2. Cut their nails
3. Put on perfume
4. A man cannot cover his head or ears.
5. A man cannot wear fitted clothing, such as a t-shirt, underwear, pants, socks, a hat, and shoes. Rather, a man wraps his lower body with a lower wrap, and places an upper wrap on his shoulders. He wears open toe sandals or flip-flops. Women wear their normal clothes.
6. Hunting land animals
7. Getting married
8. Sexual intercourse
9. Touching with desire

### **Here are some important notes to be aware of:**

1. When a person is performing Tawaf around the Ka'bah, he must be in a state of Wudu. Tawaf starts and ends with the black stone. The Ka'bah must be on the left side of the person making Tawaf.
2. A person performing Sa'i is not required to be in a state of purity. One must start with the mountain of As-Safa, and end with Al-Marwa. Each way is counted as one round, making a total of seven rounds.
3. People who are not physically fit may use wheelchairs.



# UDHIYAH

In this section we will discuss rules pertaining to slaughtering the sacrificial animal on the Day of Eid and the sacrificial animal slaughtered after one is blessed with a new born baby.

Udhiya is the sacrificial animal that is slaughtered for the sake of Allah on Eid Al-Adha, the Day of Sacrifice, and three days following it.

It's time starts after praying the Eid prayer on the tenth of Dhul Hijjah, and it continues until the sun sets on the thirteenth day of Dhul Hijjah.

It is a highly recommended Sunnah for anyone who can afford it.

The animals that can be sacrificed are camels, cows, goats, and sheep. No other animal can be sacrificed as an Udhiya.

## The animal must reach the minimum age of slaughter:

1. A sheep must reach the age of six months.
2. A goat must reach the age of one year.
3. A cow must reach the age of two years.
4. A camel must reach the age of five years.

The best animal to sacrifice is a camel, then a cow, then a sheep or goat. The sheep or goat is valid for an entire family. The cow or camel is valid for seven families. So the guardians of seven different families can come together to purchase a camel or cow and slaughter it on their behalf during the specified time.

## There are certain defects that must be avoided in the animal a Muslim wishes to sacrifice:

1. A lame animal which cannot walk with the other animals.
2. A one-eyed animal.
3. An animal which is clearly ill.
4. And an emaciated animal with no fat on it.

It is recommended to slaughter the camel while it is standing, with its left hand tied, and it is recommended to place the cow, sheep, and goat on its left side facing the Qiblah before slaughtering it. One must mention the name of Allah as the knife is

moved, saying "Bismillah, WALLahu Akbar." One is allowed to hire a professional butcher to slaughter on his behalf, but it is better to watch him as he slaughters.

## After slaughtering the animal, it is recommended to divide the animal's meat into three portions:

1. One portion for the one who slaughtered and his family, so they may eat from it.
2. One portion which will be gifted to friends and family.
3. And one portion which will be given as a charity to the poor and needy Muslims.
  - The minimum obligation is to give a little bit of meat to charity.
  - It is prohibited to sell any part of the Udhiya, even its hair and its skin. The person must pay the butcher in cash or any agreed upon property, and cannot pay him by giving him part of the animal..
  - If the new moon of the month of Dhul Hijjah is established, and a person wishes to sacrifice on the Day of Eid, he is not allowed to cut his hair or nails until he slaughters the Udhiya. So for example, if the new moon has appeared to signify the 1st of Dhul Hijjah then the person who plans to sacrifice on the day of Eid, cannot cut his hair or nails until after the sacrifice is done (on the 10<sup>th</sup> day or the three days after it).

## AQEEQAH

Another type of sacrifice is called the Aqiqah, which is a sacrificial animal that is slaughtered for the sake of Allah when one is blessed with a baby boy or girl.

It is a recommended Sunnah for the father to do this sacrifice on behalf of his newborn child.

- He should slaughter two sheep on behalf of the baby boy, and one sheep on behalf of the baby girl.
- He should slaughter the animal on the seventh day after birth. On the seventh day, he should also shave the head of the baby boy or girl, and give in charity its weight in silver.

If the seventh day passes, then the Aqiqah should be slaughtered on the fourteenth day. If that passes, then on the twenty-first day. If that passes, he can make it up on any day after that.

- After the animal is slaughtered, it should be cut up limb-by-limb, and it is disliked for its bones to be broken.
- Its rulings are the same rulings of Udhiyah in everything else.

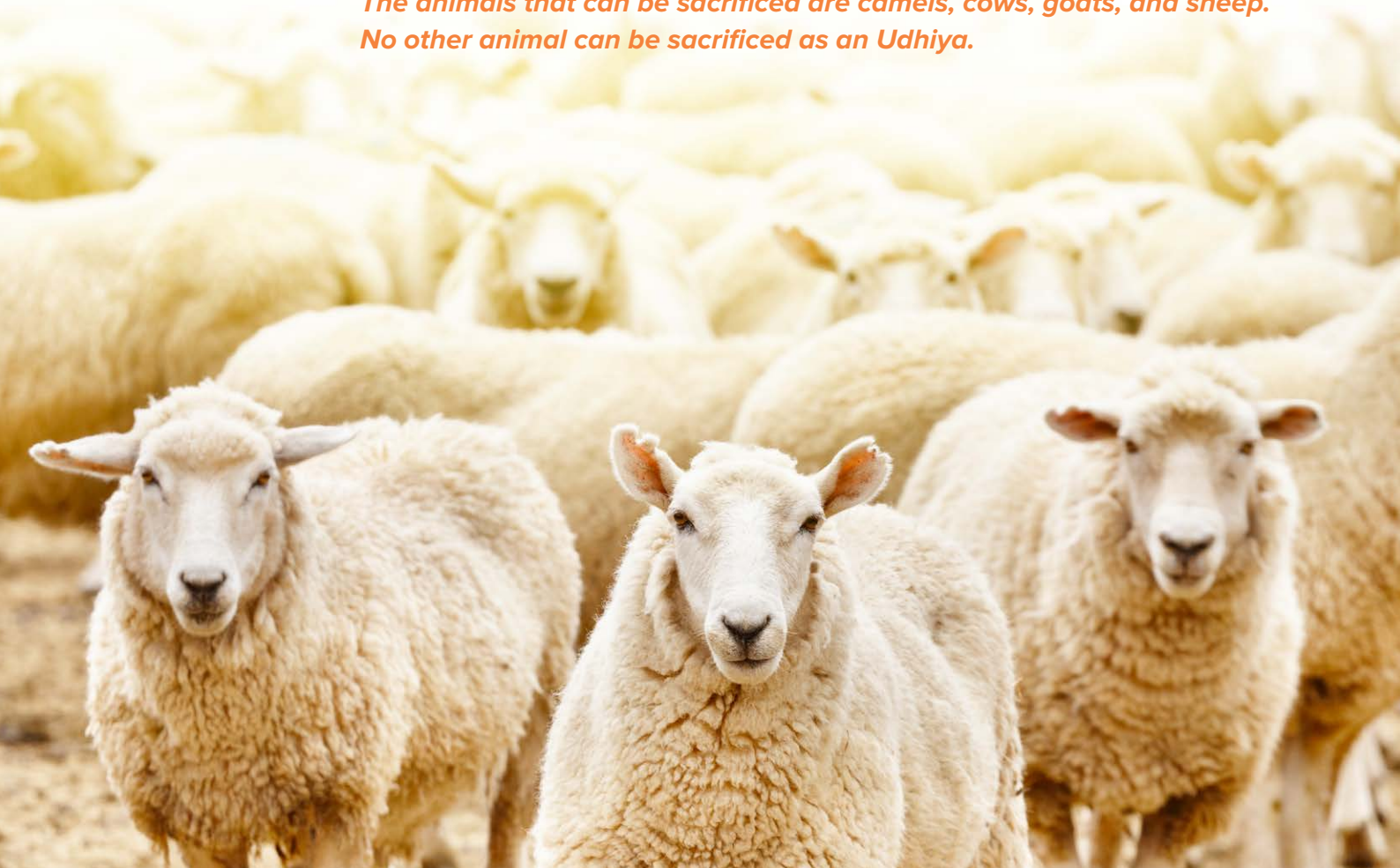
We hope you enjoyed and benefited from this booklet.



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