

GHUSL

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 the ritual impurity (*najasat*) caused by sexual intercourse, discharge of semen or blood, and by touching the dead body. The ritual bath given to a dead Muslim before burial is also known as *Ghusl*.

There are seven obligatory *Ghusl*. The *Ghusl* for each of these causes has different names:

1) ***GHUSL JANABAT***

Purification from the impurity caused by sexual intercourse or discharge of semen.

2) ***GHUSL HAYD (for women only)***

Purification from the impurity caused by menstruation.

3) ***GHUSL ISTIHADAH (for women only)***

Purification from the impurity caused by irregular bleeding.

4) ***GHUSL NIFAS (for women only)***

Purification from the impurity caused by post-natal bleeding.

5) ***GHUSL MAYYIT***

In Islamic laws, death is also considered a cause of ritual impurity of a Muslim's body. Therefore, a dead Muslim has to be given a ritual bath before the burial ceremony.

6) ***GHUSL MASE MAYYIT.***

Touching a dead body, before the ritualistic bath, also makes one impure (*najis*). He is required to take a ritual bath.

7) **GHUSL** which becomes obligatory on account of a vow or an oath to perform it.

METHOD OF PERFORMING *GHUSL*

Before explaining the rules of performing the *ghusl* it is necessary to mention that all the *ghusls* are performed in the same manner; the difference is only in the *niyyat* of each *ghusl*. For example, for purifying oneself from the ritual impurity of sexual intercourse, one has to make the *niyyat* that he is doing '*ghusl janabat*'.

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*.

(1) **GHUSL TARTIBI (in stages)**

"*Ghusl Tartibi*" means an ordinal bath, performed in three stages.

After washing away the *najasad* from the body and after *niyyat*, the body has to be washed in three stages: First, head down to the neck; then the right side of the body from the shoulder down to the foot; and lastly, the left side of the body.

Note: After washing the head and neck, it is sufficient to wash the remaining parts of the body but it is better to wash the right side of the body first and then the left side.

Each part should be washed thoroughly in such a way that the water reaches the skin. Special care should be taken while washing the head; the hair should be combed (e.g., with your fingers) so that water reaches the hair - roots. While washing the right side of the body, some part of the left side must be washed too, and also, while washing the left side of the body, some part of the right side must be washed.

It is not necessary that the body should be washed downwards from the head. It is also not necessary to wash the body immediately after washing the head and the neck. There is no harm, therefore, if there is a lapse of some time after washing one's head and neck before washing one's body. It

is not necessary that one should wash one's head, neck and body in one instance.

(2) ***GHUSL IRTIMASI*** (by submerging the whole body in the water)

"*Ghusl Irtimasi*" means a bath involving immersion of the whole body in the water. It is needless to say that such a *ghusl* can only be done in a body of water, e.g., a pool, river, lake or sea.

After washing away the *najarat* from the body and after niyyah, the whole body should be completely immersed in the water all at once, not gradually. One has to make sure that the water reaches all parts of the body, including hair and the skin under it.

However, *Ghusl Tartibi* is preferred to *Ghusl Irtimasi*.

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. Niyyah.
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 himself. (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.

SOME GENERAL RULES RELATING TO *GHUSL*

- 01) It is not necessary that the entire body of a person should be *tahir* before *irtimasi* or *tartibi ghusl*. So, if the body becomes *tahir* while diving in water or pouring water over one's body with the intention of the *ghusl*, the *ghusl* will be in order.
- 02) While doing *ghusl*, if a part of the body, however small, remains unwashed the *ghusl* is invalid. But, it is not obligatory to wash the inside of the ear or nose and other places which are reckoned to be the interior of the body.
- 03) All things which prevent water from reaching the body should be removed. If a person does *ghusl* before ensuring that such obstacles have been removed, the *ghusl* will be void.
- 04) At the time of *ghusl*, if one doubts whether there is something on one's body which would prevent water from reaching the body, one should investigate and satisfy oneself that the obstacle is not there and if it is there he should remove it.
- 05) While doing *ghusl*, one should wash the short hair which are taken as a part of the body. Washing of the long hair is not obligatory. However, if one makes water reach the skin in such a way that those long hair do not become wet, the *ghusl* is in order. However, if it is not possible to make water reach the skin without washing those hair one should wash them so that water may reach the body.
- 06) When a person is in doubt whether he or she has done *ghusl* or not, such a person must do *ghusl*. However, if doubt arises in the mind after *ghusl* as to whether *ghusl* was correct or not, then there is no need to do *ghusl* again.

- 07) If one urinates or passes wind (or does any act which would invalidate the *Wudu*) while doing the *ghusl*, one does not have to abandon the *ghusl* and start all over again. In fact, one can continue with the same *ghusl* till completion. **However, in this situation, one will have to do *Wudu* also, as per obligatory precaution.**
- 08) If more than one *ghusl* become *wajib* on a person, e.g., *janabat*, *mase mayyit*, etc., then one *ghusl* with the *niyyat* of all of them will suffice.
- 09) All the *ghusls*, except the *ghusl* for "medium *istihazah*," suffices the performer from *wudu* provided none of the *nawaqiz* (those things which end the effectiveness of *Wudu* and make it null and void) of *wudu* have taken place after the *ghusl*. So a person who has done *ghusl janabat*, for example, can pray without doing *wudu*.

NOTE: All the conditions for the validity of *Wudu* (e.g. the water being pure and not having been usurped) also apply to the validity of *Ghusl*.

- 10) At the time of doing *Ghusl*, it is not necessary to have in mind that he/she is performing an obligatory *Ghusl*. It is sufficient if he/she performs the *Ghusl* with the intention of *Qurbat*, i.e. complying with Allah's orders.
- 11) As far as the method of the *Ghusl* of *Janabat* caused by haram act is concerned, there is no difference. The method of *Ghusl* for halal and haram *JUNUB* is the same.

NOTE: The sweat of *Junub bil Haram* (*Janabat* caused due to a *haraam* act) is *Tahir*, but as a recommended precaution, the clothes soiled with such sweat should not be worn for *Salaat*.

After *Ghusl* of *Janabat* (caused by halal or haram) *Wudu* is not necessary, unless any such act has been committed which invalidates *Wudu*. **Except** in the case of the homosexual act between males where *Wudu* after *Ghusl* is *Wajib* for both. (May Allah save us from all evils).

- 12) All the conditions for the validity of *Wudu* also apply to the validity of *Ghusl* except:
- a) For *Ghusl* it is not necessary that the body be washed downwards.
 - b) It is not necessary to wash the body immediately after washing the head and the neck. There is no harm, therefore, if there is a lapse of some time after washing one's head and neck before washing one's body. It is not necessary that one should wash one's head, neck and body in one instance.

RECOMMENDED ACTS OF *GHUSL*

What has been mentioned above are the *wajib* acts of *ghusl*; here we shall explain the things which are recommendable (*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.
- 5) **(For men only)** Passing urine and doing *istibra'* after urinating before *ghusl janabat*.

The benefit of *istibra'*:

If a liquid comes out of one's urinary organ after completing the *ghusl*, and he doubts whether it is semen or urine, then should he repeat the *ghusl* or not? If he had done *istibra'* before the *ghusl*, then he can assume that the liquid is urine he will not have to repeat the *ghusl*; he just has to do *Wudu* for his *Salaat*. But, on the other hand, if he had not done *istibra'* before the *ghusl*, then he has to assume that it is the remnant of semen and he will have to do the *ghusl* again.

MAKRUH (DISLIKED) ACTS FOR A PERSON IN *JANABAT*

The following things are *makruh* (disliked) for the *Junub*:

1. Eating and drinking except after washing his/her face, hands and mouth.
2. Reciting more than seven verses from the Qur'an. This applies to other than the four verses with *Wajib Sajdah* mentioned above.
3. Touching the cover, margin or border of the Qur'an or the space between its lines, with any part of one's body.
4. Sleeping except after performing *Wudu* or *Tayammum* instead of *Ghusl* on account of non-availability of water.
5. To have sexual intercourse after *Ihtilam* (discharge of semen during sleep)

FORBIDDEN ACTS BY A PERSON IN *JANABAT*

There are certain things in Islam which are so sacred that a Muslim cannot come into contact with them unless he or she is ritually pure and clean. Based on this concept of sacredness, a *junub* is forbidden from coming into contact, in various ways, with two of the most sacred things in Islam: the Qur'an and the Mosque.

The following five acts are *Haraam* for *Junub* (a person who is in *Janabat*) until after he has performed *Ghusl* of *Janabat*:

1. To touch with any part of one's body the script of the holy Qur'an or the Name of Almighty Allah in whichever language it may be. And it is better that the names of the holy Prophet and Imams and Hazrat Fatima Zahra (peace be upon them) should also not be touched in that condition.
2. Entering Masjidul Haraam or Masjidun Nabi, even though it may be only passing from one gate and going out of another.
3. To stay or halt in all other Masjids, and similarly, on the basis of obligatory precaution, to stay in the shrines of the holy Imams. However, there is no harm if one crosses or traverses

through a Mosque, entering from one gate and exiting from another.

4. To enter a Mosque with an intention of lifting away something or placing something in it.
5. To recite those verses of the Holy Qur'an on the recitation of which performance of *Sajdah* becomes obligatory. These verses occur in four *Surahs* of the Holy Qur'an:

- ❖ *Surah Alif Lam Mim as-Sajdah*, 32:15
- ❖ *Surah Ha Mim Sajdah*, 41:38
- ❖ *Surah an-Najm*, 53:62
- ❖ *Surah al 'Alaq*, 96:19

ACTS FOR WHICH GHUSL JANABAT IS OBLIGATORY

The acts whose validity depend on *Ghusl Janabat* are:

- *Ghusl* for *Janabat* is obligatory for offering the daily prayers and other similar acts of worship. However, it is not obligatory for *Salatul Mayyit* or for *Sajdatus Sahv* (prostrating on account of oversight) or *Sajdatush Shukr* (prostration for thanks giving) or for the obligatory *Sajdah* upon reciting or hearing the four particular verses of the Holy Qur'an given above.
- *Wajib tawaf* (the circumambulation of the Ka'bah in Hajj).
- Fasting. If someone knowingly remains in the state of *Janabat* until dawn in Ramadan, his fasting will become invalid (*batil*).

CAUSES THAT CALLS FOR PERFORMANCE OF GHUSL JANABAT

Janabat is a ritual impurity caused by the discharge of semen or by sexual intercourse; and the person on whom *ghusl janabat* becomes *wajib* is known as "*junub*".

1) DISCHARGE OF SEMEN

It does not make any difference whether this discharge is while awake or in a wet-dream, slight or profuse, intentionally or otherwise, in lawful way or unlawful (e.g., masturbation). In all these cases *Ghusl*

Janabat becomes obligatory (*wajib*).

If a liquid comes out from a man and he does not know whether or not it is semen, then he should look for the following three signs: (1) emission with passion; (2) spurting discharge; (3) feeling relaxed after the discharge. If these signs are found together on him, then he should consider the liquid as semen, otherwise not.

If a secretion is discharged from a woman, then it is precautionary *Wajib* for her to do *Ghusl Janabat* provided it came with sexual passion *and* she felt relaxed after it. But if the secretion comes without the sexual passion or without the feeling of relaxation after the discharge, then it is not *Najis* and therefore *Ghusl* is not *Wajib* upon her.

2) SEXUAL INTERCOURSE

It does not make any difference whether the intercourse was lawful or unlawful, and with or without discharge of semen. In Islamic laws, sexual intercourse is defined as the penetration of the glans into the vagina of the woman even up to the point of circumcision. That is, for *Ghusl Janabat* to become *Wajib* it is not necessary that full penetration or discharge of semen should take place. In case of sexual intercourse, *Ghusl Janabat* becomes *Wajib* on both the man and the woman.

GHUSL JABIRAH

If a person has a bandage over a wound on his body, then such a person will do *ghusl jabirah*. *Jabirah* literally means a splint, but in the present context, it means the material or the medicine used for bandaging a wound, etc. *Ghusl jabirah* means the *ghusl* which is done on the bandage that has been fixed on certain parts of the organs of *ghusl*.

Ghusl jabirah is relevant only in the case where the use of water is not harmful for the person. If the use of water is harmful, then one should do *tayammum*.

Ghusl Jabirah can be done only in the following cases:

- 1] If the bandage is on a wound in which the skin is cut or torn. So *ghusl jabirah* cannot be done on a bandage that has been fixed only for pain or swelling - in such a case, one has either to do *ghusl* as normally if possible or to do *tayammum*.
- 2] If it is a splint for keeping a fractured limb in a proper position.

RULES APPLICABLE TO *GHUSL JABIRAH*

Ghusl Jabirah can be done by observing the following rules:

- (a) If the wound or fracture is not bandaged and water does not cause any harm to it, then *ghusl* must be performed as normally.
- (b) If the wound or fracture is covered with a bandage and the bandage can be removed without causing any harm, and water is not harmful to the wound, then the bandage should be removed and perform *ghusl* as normally.
- (c) If there is uncovered wound or broken bone and if the use of water would cause harm to the affected part, then the adjoining parts must be washed and wet hands passed over the affected part by placing a *Paak* piece of cloth over it. But in the case of a fracture, *tayammum* must be performed.
- (d) If the wound or fracture is covered with a bandage which is *Paak* and it is not possible to remove the bandage nor is it possible to make water reach the wound without any harm, then the adjoining parts must be washed and wet hands passed over the bandaged affected parts.
- (e) If the wound or its bandage is *najis*, but it is possible to remove the bandage, and if water is not harmful for the wound, he should remove the bandage, make the wound *paak* and should make water reach the wound.
- (f) If the wound or its bandage is *najis* and cannot be made *paak*, then *tayammum* should be performed.

- (g) If something is stuck on the part of *ghusl*, and it is not possible to remove it, or its removal involves unbearable pain, then one should perform *tayammum*. But, if the thing which is stuck is medicine, then rules relating to *jabira* will apply to it.
- (h) If there is no wound or fractured bone in the parts of *ghusl*, but the use of water is harmful for some other reason, one should perform *tayammum*.
- (i) If the *Jabira* has covered unusually more space than the size of the wound, and if it is difficult to remove it, then one should perform *tayammum*.
- (j) There is no *jabira ghusl* for *Ghusl* of *Meyyit*.
- (k) If a person cannot decide whether he should perform *Tayammum* or *jabira ghusl*, the obligatory precaution is that he should perform both.
- (l) If a person who has to pray with *jabira ghusl* knows that his excuse will not be removed till the end of time for Namaz, he can offer prayers in the prime time. But if he hopes that his excuse will be removed before the Namaz becomes *Qazaa*, it is better for him to wait, and if his excuse is not removed by then, he should offer prayers with *jabira ghusl*. And if, however, he prayed in the prime time, and his excuse was removed before the end of Namaz time, the recommended precaution is that he should do *ghusl*, and repeat the prayers.

MUSTAHAB GHUSLS

In Islam, a number of *Ghusls* are *Mustahab*. Some of them are listed below:

- *Ghusl-e-Jumuah*: Its prescribed time is from Fajr to sunset, but it is better to perform it near Zuhr. If, however, a person does not perform it till noon, he can perform it till dusk without a *Niyyat* of either performing it on time or as *Qadha*. And if a person does not perform his *Ghusl* on Friday it is *Mustahab* that he should perform the *Qadha* of *Ghusl* on Saturday at any time between dawn and dusk. And if a person knows that it will not be

possible for him to procure water for his Ghusl on Friday he can perform the Ghusl on Thursday with the Niyyat of Raja', that is, as a desirable act. And it is Mustahab to recite the following supplication while performing Friday Ghusl: *'Ash hadu an la ilaha il lal lahu wahdahu la sharika lah wa ash hadu anna Muhammadan 'abduhu wa Rasuluh. Alla humma salli 'ala Muhammadin wa Ali Muhammad waj'alni minat tawwabina waj'alni minal mutatahhirin.* (I testify that there is none to be worshipped but Allah alone, Who has no associate and Muhammad is His servant and Messenger. O Allah! Bless Muhammad and his Progeny. And make me one of those who are repentant and pure).

- Taking baths on the 1st and 17th nights and in the earlier part of the 19th, 21st, 23rd nights and 24th night of the holy month of Ramadhan.
- Ghusl on Eidul Fitr day and Eidul Azha day. The time of this Ghusl is from Fajr up to sunset. It is, however, better to perform it before Eid prayers.
- Ghusl on the 8th and 9th of the month of Dhul-Hijj. As regards the bathing on the 9th of Dhul-Hijj it is better to perform it at noon-time.
- Ghusl by a person who has touched a dead body after it has been given Ghusl.
- Ghusl for Ihram (pilgrim's dress).
- Ghusl for entry into the haram of Makkah.
- Ghusl for entry into Makkah.
- Ghusl for visiting the holy Ka'bah.
- Ghusl for entry into the holy Ka'bah.
- Ghusl for slaughtering an animal and for shaving one's head (during pilgrimage).
- Ghusl for entry into Madinah, and its haram (sanctuary).
- Ghusl for entry into the Mosque of the holy Prophet.
- Ghusl at the time of bidding farewell to the sacred shrine of the holy Prophet.
- Ghusl for Mubahala (imprecation) with the enemy.
- Ghusl to a new-born child.
- Ghusl for Istakhara .
- Ghusl for offering Istisqa' - invocation for rains.

After having taken the Mustahab Ghusl listed above one can perform acts (e.g. prayers) for which Wudu is necessary. However, it is better to do Wudu as a recommended precaution.

The *Fuqaha* have mentioned many more *Mustahab Ghusls*, some of which are as follows:

- *Ghusl* on all odd nights of the month of Ramadhan and on each of its last 10 nights and in the last part of its 23rd night.
- *Ghusl* on the 24th day of Dhul-Hijj.
- *Ghusl* on the day of Eid-i-Nawroz and 15th of Sha'ban and 9th and 17th of Rabi'ul Awwal and the 25th day of Dhul-Qa'dah.
- *Ghusl* by a woman who has perfumed herself for someone other than her husband.
- *Ghusl* by one who slept in a state of intoxication.
- *Ghusl* by a person who went to witness the hanging and saw the hanged person. However, if his eyes fell on him by chance or helplessly, or if he had gone for example, to give evidence, *Ghusl* will not be *Mustahab* for him.
- *Ghusl* for the Ziyarat of the Masoomen (A.S.) whether from near or far.

As a precaution, these *Ghusls* should be done with the Niyyat of 'Raja', (i.e. with a hope that it might be a desirable act).

***Ghusl* performed with the Niyyat of 'Raja' do not suffice for Wudu (i.e. Wudu has to be performed).**

NOTE: If a person wishes to perform a number of *Mustahab Ghusls*, one *Ghusl* with the *Niyyat* of performing all the *Ghusls* will be sufficient.