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Editor's Note

The IQRA' Editorial Committee continuously aims to educate and enlighten our fellow brothers and sisters. Our lives in this world can get eventful, often obscuring what our first and foremost goal is. The core reason for the production of this publication is mainly to remind our community of how fleeting the pleasures of this life are. Preparation for the afterlife should not be delayed as we are currently living in critical times where the world is changing and with that our faith is always being tested.

May Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ reward us immensely for our consistent search of knowledge and clarification of doubts. Aameen.

We are also pleased to inform that we are rotating Editorship duties our Committee members as part of skills development, capacity building, and empowerment. This Newsletter was handled by **Sister Na'eemah Pillay**. As always, we look forward our readers' feedback and contributions to continue improving our publications. Jazaakumullah Khayran.

Ijlal Afif
Editor

List of Arabic honorifics used throughout this publication, and their meanings:

- مَبْرُورٌ (subḥānahu wa-ta'ālā) - *Glorified and Exalted; used after mentioning the name of Allah.*

- صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ (ṣallā-llāhu 'alayhi wa-sallam) - *Peace and blessings of God be Upon him; used specifically after uttering the name of Prophet Muhammad.*

- عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام (Alay-hi 's-salām) - *Peace be upon him; applies to the Angels as well as any other Prophets.*

- عَلَيْهَا السَّلَام (Alay-hā 's-salām) - *Peace be upon her; applies to pious ladies preceding Prophet Muhammad.*

- رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ / رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا (Raḍīya 'llāhu 'an-hu/ Raḍīya 'llāhu 'an-hā) - *May Allāh be pleased with him/her; applied to companions of Prophet Muhammad.*

- رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ (Raḥmatu 'llāhi 'alay-hi) - *May Allah's mercy/ blessing be upon him; Applies to highly revered scholars.*



By Shahiud Rafeeq Melaine



Death! There is no other word that brings more sorrow to the heart and an end to the moments of happiness. As the cold breeze flirts through the cracks of a silent room, the loved one lies immobile.

Throughout history, death has been the only instance whereby people of all cultures, race and religion profess the same ability; that is the ability to die. And of these different cultures, race and religion the concept of death differs yet it showcases the same characteristic; the cessation of one's biological functions.

Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ says in the Quran:

“Every soul will taste death. Then to Us will you be returned”

Quran 29:57

“O Muhammad, live as you wish, for you will surely die. Work as you wish, for you will surely be repaid. Love whomever you wish, for you will surely be separated. Know that the nobility of the believer is in prayer at night and his honor is in his independence of people.”

Angel Gabriel

Source: al-Mu'jam al-Awsat 4410

Respectively, death is viewed as a gateway to another realm of existence; others suggest an unceasing interaction between the living and the dead; some cultures deem death as a circle of reoccurrence of deaths and rebirths; and yet some view death as a full stop, with nothing occurring and no requite. These

Continued on Page 2

different notions have notably influenced lifestyles, the degree to which we fear death, our keenness to die for a cause, our expressions of mourning and grief, and the nature of funeral rituals.

“Verily, to Allah we belong, and to Him is our return”

Qur'an, 2:156

The reminders of Allah (SWT) come in many ways, but those that serve as a means to redirect our attention to the reality of life and death are the biggest reminders of them all. In Islam, life and death is a matter which belongs to Allah (SWT) and it is He who dictates when a soul is ready to depart from this realm.

“Allah never delays a soul when its appointed time comes.”

Quran 63:10

Death is not a full stop, rather the start of the next life we call Akhirah (the hereafter). From the time of death, the events of the Akhirah start as it proceeds to the day of judgment - where the true requite will be established.

“Everyone shall taste death. And only on the day of resurrection shall you be paid your wages in full. And whoever is removed away from the fire and admitted to paradise, this person is indeed successful. The life of this world is only the enjoyment of deception.”

Qur'an 3:185

As Muslims, it is not death that we should fear, rather it is the state in which we will die. For the most part, the state we die in is a reflection of the life we lived.

We, as humans, are forgetful and we let the illusions of this world blind us, and lead us away from our true purpose in life.

We should be mindful of the things we set forth into the world, whether it is our words

or actions, for nothing other than our deeds will shadow us upon our death. Not wealth, position, strength nor power.

We will no longer be referred to by our names, as we are placed into our graves; “Lower the body” they will say.

“Every servant will be resurrected upon the way that they died.”

**Prophet Muhammad,
Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim**

The same way we pamper ourselves upon meeting with the children of Adam of high status in the land, one can only aim to present himself better as we stand in front of the one who created the children of Adam; Allah (SWT), the Greatest!

Such is the mindset of a believer; to strive to attain the pleasure of Allah (SWT). With that being said, we pray that Allah (SWT) keeps us on the right path and gives us a good ending. Ameen



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Halloween

By Shahiid Rafeeq Melaine



Halloween is celebrated on the Eve of Samhain, better known as Summer. It is a celebration commemorating the beginning of winter and the first day of the New Year, which originates from the shores of the ancient pagans of the iron age, better known as the British Isles.

In Islam we have two celebrations each year, 'Eid al-Fitr and 'Eid al-Adha. The celebrations are based on the Islamic faith and religious way of life. There are some who argue that Halloween, at least, is a cultural holiday, with no religious significance. To clarify these misconceptions, we need to look at the origins and history of Halloween.

On this particular night, it was their belief that supernatural entities or forces gathered together to break the barrier separating the unseen-supernatural realm and that of the human realm. This enabled them to cross-over and visit the human realm during this time and roam about. During Samhain, the Celts celebrated a joint festival in honor of their proclaimed sun god and their proclaimed lord of the dead. The 'sun god' was thanked for the harvest and moral support obtained for the whole of winter. Animals and crops were sacrificed in order to please their gods.

It was also the Celts' belief that the 31st of October is the time their proclaimed lord of the dead gathers all the souls of the dead and gives them their form they would be taking for the next year.

While converting these pagans to Christianity, the missionaries tried to stir away the attention from this practice by inserting their own belief, trying to make it about saints but they both shared similarities such as commemorating the death

These attempts did not work, thus Samhain customs survived to what we have today as Halloween.

Halloween has made it to the list of top 10 holidays worldwide, allowing kids to dress up as monsters, spirits & goblins and going from house to house requesting candies and different other sweets, a practice of sugarcoating the satanic aspect of it.

Many Muslims take part in these celebrations without proper understanding of the history and the pagan connections, just because their friends and families are doing it. Islam views Halloween traditions as a pagan culture and they all are forms of idolatry (shirk). In contrast Islamic celebrations honor and uphold our faith and beliefs. How can we as Muslims worship Allah alone, the Creator, if we participate in pagan activities?

"When it is said unto them, 'Come to what Allah has revealed, come to the Messenger,' they say, 'Enough for us are the ways we found our fathers following.' What! Even though their fathers were void of knowledge and guidance?"

Qur'an 5:104

Islam is about knowledge, we need to educate ourselves about Tawheed and Islamic rulings on non-Islamic celebrations. While it may be tempting to participate in it, we must be careful to protect and preserve our own Islamic traditions and not allow our children to be influenced and corrupted by the seemingly innocent fun activities.

When tempted, we should remind ourselves that this is not Islamic and it has no benefit in getting closer to Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** and ask Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** to give us strength. Rather, educate and give more precedence to celebrating events between the two Eids. Children can still have their fun, and most notably, should learn that we only acknowledge holidays that have a religious significance to us as Muslims. Holidays are not just excuses to cave in and be reckless with our faith.

In Islam, our 'Eids represent a religious importance, while allowing proper time for celebration, fun, and games.

"Has not the time arrived for the believers, that their hearts in all humility should engage in the remembrance of Allah and of the Truth which has been revealed to them? That they should not become like those to whom was given the Book aforetime, but long ages passed over them and their hearts grew hard? For many among them are rebellious transgressors."

Qur'an 57:16

JANAAZAH: A GUIDE TO THE ISLAMIC FUNERAL PROCESS

By Ijlal Afif



1

Bathing the body (Ghusl):

The corpse is washed (ghusl), with the purpose to physically cleanse the deceased. Bathing the dead body is an essential ritual of the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. This should occur as soon as possible after death, preferably within hours. Those performing the ghusl are commonly adult members of the immediate family, who are of the same gender as the deceased. However, the husband or wife of the deceased are also allowed to take part in the preparations. In cases of violent deaths or accidents, where the deceased has suffered trauma or mutilation, morgue facilities mend the body and wrap it in a shroud to minimise fluid leakage prior to surrendering it to mourners for washing.



2

Shrouding:

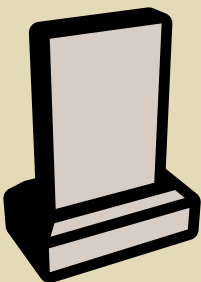
Once cleaned and prepared, the deceased is covered in a white sheet and is laid upon three large white sheets of material. The deceased is wrapped in the sheets and secured with ropes; one tied above the head, two tied around the body, and one tied below the feet.



3

Janaazah (funeral) prayer:

It is required for every Muslim adult male to perform the Janaazah prayer upon the death of any Muslim. However, if the Janaazah is performed by even a few people it alleviates that obligation for all Muslims.



4

Burial:

Following the Janaazah prayer, the deceased is taken to the cemetery for burial. Only men are allowed to attend the burial. The grave should be perpendicular to the direction of the Qibla (i.e. Makkah) so that the body lying on its right side when placed in the grave faces the Qibla. Grave markers should be raised so that the grave will neither be walked nor sat on, and should be simple as outwardly lavish displays are discouraged in Islam.

Abu Huraira reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **“Whoever follows the funeral of Muslim, in faith and seeking reward, and he remains with it until the prayer is offered and the burial ceremony is finished, then he will return with two great rewards. Each reward is like the size of Mount Uhud. Whoever offers the funeral prayer and returns before the burial, then he will return with one great reward.”**

If you need more information pertaining to a Janaazah, please contact any of the following representatives of the local Janaazah Committee:

(Shaheer Oreddy: 2575532), (Abdu-Rahman Heneka: 2783393) & (Ahmad Francourt: 2593328)



PROTECTING YOUR ISLAMIC BURIAL RIGHTS

By Ijlal Afif

Individuals living in a predominantly Muslim country will be accustomed to the process of performing the Janaazah (Islamic funeral) on a deceased Muslim. In countries such as Seychelles where Islam is a minority religion, non-Muslim relatives and friends usually learn of the process under sensitive and emotional circumstances upon the death of a loved one, and sometimes involves their reluctance to allow the deceased to be buried as by Islamic teachings.

In Islam, burial is a simple and straightforward process. The funeral is conducted as soon as possible, except in special cases where determination of the cause of death is required before burial or otherwise. In summary, the Janaazah process involves (1) bathing of the deceased; (2) enshrouding the deceased in a white cotton or linen cloth; (3) a brief funeral prayer; and (4) burial of the deceased in a grave.

صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ The Prophet Muhammad said: “Hurry up with the dead body. If it is a righteous one, you are forwarding it to a good thing, and if it was otherwise (not righteous) then you are putting off an evil thing down your necks”.

(Bukhari & Muslim)

Non-Muslims that are new to the Janaazah process find it challenging to understand after the loss of a loved one, especially after being used to the current culture of having the body of the deceased being preserved for a few days to allow family members to view and bid farewell to their departed loved one before burial. In such situations, challenges are known to have risen on numerous occasions that prove hard to resolve at such a delicate moment during a period of mourning.

Upon the death of an individual, the next-of-kin has the right over the deceased in order to organise the necessary burial arrangements. This is usually an issue if the deceased is a Muslim revert from a non-Muslim family; the family may not accept to adhere to Islamic practices for funerals and may bury the individual by following non-Muslim rituals. Some known cases have resulted in deceased Muslims having undergone procedures which are forbidden in Islam such as cremation or embalmment.

Under these circumstances, individuals from the local Janaazah authorities will try to negotiate with the deceased's family to allow the burial to be carried out as per Islamic teachings. More often than not, the family may refuse to accept such requests despite efforts by Muslim representatives to sensitize the family.

A solution to help ensure your Islamic rights upon death are protected is by way of an Affidavit drafted during your lifetime, which has to meet the following requirements:

- Your name, NIN, and address
- A declaration that outlines your wishes in respect to your burial rites to be in line with Islamic burial procedures
- An indication as to an individual or a relevant authority which shall have authorisation to assume responsibility of your burial rites and process
- Oath taken before a Notary Public or an authorised person of the Registrar Supreme Court (the Registrar or Assistant Registrar)
- Notarial stamp or seal of the Supreme Court depending on who the Affidavit is signed before
- Drafted in at least 2 copies, one of which to be kept with the relevant Islamic Authorities.

Possession of such an affidavit serves as a proof of declaration of acceptance to Islam, helping to facilitate legal proceedings for their burial as per Islamic practices regardless of whether they come from a non-Muslim background.

However, the responsibility of getting these documents secured and endorsed lies solely with each individual Muslim. The local Janaazah committee reminds all Muslims to be aware on the different circumstances that may come into play once we depart this Earth, and to ensure any necessary arrangements are planned ahead as soon as possible before we are called upon by Allah. سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى

صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ Abdullah ibn ‘Umar reported that Prophet Muhammad said:

“Be in this world as if you were a stranger or a passing traveller.”

(Al-Bukhāri)



TIME IN THE GRAVE

BY NA'EEMAH PILLAY & RAMLAH HENKA

“Every soul will taste death.” (Qur'an, 3:185)

Death is an inevitability that we cannot escape. At times we can absentmindedly let the events of this life preoccupy us and blur the reality of what is most important - the afterlife (akhirah). Our time in this life is limited, so much so that it is barely anything compared to the next. As Muslims, it is part of our faith to constantly remind ourselves of death, the occurrences that we should expect afterwards and that Jannah is our ultimate goal - which is why we always need to take responsibility for our actions.

The time that we will spend in our graves before the Day of Resurrection is of much significance. It will be during that time that the first indications of where we are going will be revealed to us.

The moment someone begins to die the Angel of Death comes to take the soul out of the body. For those who led a life of dishonesty and disobedience of Allah ﷻ, the removal will be painful and difficult.

On the contrary, for those who lived righteous lives, the soul yearns to meet its Lord and leaves the body with ease, described to be similar to a drop of water pouring out.

After some time in the grave you will be visited by two angels; Munkar and Nakir. They are angels assigned with the task of testing the faith of the dead in their graves. When they arrive, they will sit you up in your grave and ask you three questions in total; “Who is your Lord? Who is your Prophet? And what is your faith?”. While it may seem like three easy questions that any Muslim should be able to answer without hesitation, it is believed that only those who lived an honest and righteous life in this world, in accordance with the teachings of Islam, will be able to answer correctly.

In a hadith narrated by Jabir bin Abdullah رضي الله عنه, it is said that a believer is shown Paradise when he provides the right answers and he is shown what Hell looks like and told

that he has been spared from it. Then the believer asks for permission to inform his family about his wonderful fortune, but it is not permitted. The non-believer is asked the same questions, but he offers no response. Therefore, he is shown a glimpse of Paradise and his abode in Hell, along with the explanation that he has been denied entry to Paradise.

The Angel of Death then puts the soul in a temporary place called the Barzakh. In simple terms, it is the realm that separates this world and the hereafter, it is the place where souls shall be kept until the Day of Resurrection. It is not like the life of this world, only Allah ﷻ knows the true reality.

"(There) is a barrier before them till the Day they are raised up (from their graves for judgement)"

(Qur'an, 23:100).

The treatment received while within the space of Barzakh is entirely dependent on the deeds and actions that we performed in this world. It is believed that if an individual was a firm and devout servant of Allah ﷻ in this life, then they are expected to receive many pleasures during this middle stage. However, if a person has committed many sins or is amongst the disbelievers, they will not be at peace.

Those who have been righteous believers will be treated like kings. They will be welcomed by hundreds of angels, who will surround them in scent and engulf them with light. They will be led to Allah ﷻ in an angelic caravan of light. The disbelievers and oppressed will be terrified from the minute they see the hereafter unfolding. They will be engulfed in fire, be in the presence of repulsive black angels, and a foul smell until judgement day. Their souls will be torn from their bodies and hurled to Allah ﷻ. From this treatment we know that the grave will either be one of the gardens of Paradise or one of the pits of Hell. The torment or blessing will happen to the body as well as the soul in the grave, and also in the Hereafter - in either Paradise or Hell.

يَلْ أَدْخُلُوا أَبْوَابَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا قَبْسَ مَثْوَى
الْمُتَكَبِّرِينَ

[To them] it will be said, “Enter the gates of Hell to abide eternally therein, and wretched is the residence of the arrogant.”

[surah zumar, verse 72]

“As for those whose faces shall be black, it will be said to them: ‘Did you disbelieve after believing? Taste, then, the punishment because you disbelieved. And as for those whose faces will be white, they will be in the mercy of Allah, therein shall they abide.’”

[Al Qur’an 3:106]

The time that we will spend in our graves, as well as our life in the hereafter should be a recurring thought in our minds. The Prophet ﷺ encouraged us to frequently visit graveyards as a means to remind ourselves of the passing on from this world and onto the hereafter.

Anas narrates that the Prophet ﷺ said,

“I forbade you to visit the graves then it appeared to me that they soften the heart, bring tears to the eyes, and remind one of the hereafter.”

(Ahmad)

At the end of each day take a moment to self reflect. Would you be satisfied with yourself if you were to pass at this very second?



Community Activities

Eid-ul-Adha 1443-2022:

This year, Eid al-Adha was celebrated on 9th of June 2022 corresponding to 10th of Dhul Hijjah 1443. Eid Prayer was held on Mahe, Praslin and La Digue.



After the prayer, individuals and groups carried out the act of Qurbani which consists of slaughtering an animal as a sacrifice to commemorate Prophet Ibrahim's devotion to Allah ﷻ and his readiness to sacrifice his son, Ismail. At the very point of sacrifice, Allah ﷻ replaced Ismail with a ram, which was to be slaughtered in place of his son.

Similarly, the festival of sacrifice took place at the Sheikh Muhamed bin Khalifa Al Nahyan Mosque, Victoria, and several places on Mahe and other islands.



Hajj 1443-2022:

A group composed of 23 Seychellois men and women went to perform Hajj this year sponsored by the NMCS. They were led by Sheikh Ibrahim Lebon. A series of training for Hajj were conducted at Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan Mosque, Beaufond Lane.

May Allah ﷻ accept their Hajj. Ameen.



International Exams (I.O.U):

The ISOS welcomed the first international exams after the years of Covid-19. The exams were done online during a period of seven days at the Sheikh Muhamed bin Khalifa Al Nahyan Mosque's library. The Islamic Open University (formally known as the Islamic Online University) accredited the Islamic Society of Seychelles as a center for exams since 2014.



Run Blue:

Madrasah boys and girls participated in an international run day. The theme for this year was 'Zero Waste Run'. Run Blue is an International Organization campaigning for water conservation globally. The madrasah teacher who led the meeting group was sister Hasina Antete.



Special Hifdh Quran Class:

During the school holiday a group of Madrasah boys attended classes for memorisation of the last Juz (part) of the Noble Quran at the Mosque. The program was initiated and conducted by Sheikh Moosa Muhammad.

May Allah ﷻ accept such effort

