

Published on Al-Islam.org (https://www.al-islam.org)

Home > Jurispudence Made Easy > Dialogue on Janabah

Dialogue on Janabah

Unusually, my father was present before me for today's session. When I joined in, at first my father did not notice my arrival. He was quiet and in a reflective far away mood.

As soon as he became aware of my presence, he said:

- I am starting today's dialogue with an introduction to the topic of janabah.

In the Dialogue on Najis Things, we discussed impurities that strip the human body and other things off their natural purity.

In the Dialogue on Ritual Purity (Taharah), we talked about the purifying agents that restore to our bodies and those of other things their usurped purity.

You may recall, we said that najis things are material things that are transient occurrences eminating either from the body itself or from outside sources.

There are, however, other intangibles that, if they occur, render the body impure. It would, therefore, require that which could reinstate its lost goodness.

There are two types: Major and minor.

Major occurrences comprise janabah, haydh, nifas, major istihadha, touching a dead body, and death itself.

Minor occurrences cover urine, excrement, breaking wind, sleep, minor istihadha, etc.

Major occurrences are purified by ghusl or wiped off by tayamum.

Minor occurrences can be removed by wudhu or tayamum. Our future dialogues shall cover these aspects one by one. This time, however, we will discuss janabah.

I said to my father.

- * How does janabah come about?
- It happens as a result of one of the following:
- 1. Seminal discharge that takes place as a result of either sexual intercourse, during a dream, masturbation, or any other means.
- * What are the characteristics of semen?
- A sticky liquid that smells like dough. Its colour is milky with a hint of either green or yellow. It is ejaculated when orgasm is reached, after which the body feels relaxed.
- * If you were not sure whether such liquid was semen?
- There must exist three characteristics for it to be called semen. They are: Sexual desire, ejaculation, and resultant relaxation of the body. In sick people, however, sexual desire is sufficient.
- * Do women have semen as men?
- Yes, secretion from the woman's vagina at the climax of sexual activity is akin to man's semen. This could happen when the woman is either awake or asleep.
- 2. Sexual intercourse, irrespective of whether or not it led to ejaculation. It's sufficient for sexual intercourse to be termed as such when only the part of penis that contains the foreskin is thrust into the female's vagina.
- * What if the semen is secreted or a sexual intercourse takes place?
- Janabah occurs to both parties, where applicabe, irrespective of age and state of mind.
- * If this was the case, then what?
- Ghusl becomes obligatory, so that you can, for example, perform prayer, or do tawaf (Circumambulation turning seven times around the Ka'ba) for hajj. That is, prayer and tawaf cannot be deemed valid without the ghusl. As for how to do ghusl, this I'll explain to you in the Dialogue on Ghusl.

However, certain acts become unlawful if you are in a state of janabah, such as:

- 1. Touching the writing of the Holy Qur'an.
- 2. Touching the Name of the Almighty, i.e. the Arabic name, Allah [and other names and adjectives attributed to Him, such as "al-Khaliq" The Creator].
- 3. Recitation of the four verses of "as-Sajdah" in Chapters "Iqr'a, an-Najm, as-Sajdah, and Fussilat" of the Holy Qur'an.

- 4. Entering mosques and/or staying in them, taking anything out or putting anything in them [albeit from the outside or when passing by]. It is permissible, however, for a person in a state of janabah to pass through, such as entering from one door and making an exit from another, except in the case of the Grand Mosque at Mekkah and the Holy Mosque of the Prophet at Medina. [The same rule applies in the case of the holy shrines of the Infallibles].
- * Are the forecourts and corridors, when they are not considered part of the well-defined area of the mosque, covered by the same rule?
- No, they are not.
- * Since we are on the subject of janabah, I still have a burning desire to ask you a question, but I feel rather embarrassed.
- Ask whatever you like. The maxim has it, "There shall be no embarrassment in matters of religion".
- * Sometimes, when I am sexually aroused, I notice a rather sticky, transparent and white liquid secreted from my penis.
- Yes, this type of liquid is tahir. You are, therefore, not required to perform ghusl or wudhu when you experience it. There is another type of secretion that sometimes follows urination. This too is tahir.
- * What about masturbation?
- It is haraam. You must avoid it. It suffices to mention that, in some narrations, Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a.s.) "An acronym for Alaihis Salaam meaning, may peace be with him", described it as a form of adultery.

Source URL:

https://www.al-islam.org/jurispudence-made-easy-sayyid-ali-hussaini-sistani/dialogue-janabah#comment-0