

Death & Burial Services In the Islamic Faith

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Agenda

- Death in Islam
- The Hereafter
- Last Moments
- Death & Burial
- Muslim Resources in Austin, TX.

Death in the Islam

- Islam encourages its followers to always remember death:
  - To remind us to seek God's forgiveness
  - To remind us that this life is a time of *"Test"* and the hereafter is the Final Abode.
  - To remind us that we will meet God and that we will be asked about our deeds in this life.

- Al-Quarn ch3: v185 "Every soul shall taste death, and you shall be paid fully your reward on the day of judgment; then whoever is removed away from the fire and is made to enter paradise he indeed successful; and the life of this world is nothing but a provision of vanities"

- Al-Quran Ch 6 v61 "And He is the Supreme, above His servants, and He sends keepers over you; until when death comes to one of you, Our messengers cause him to die, and they are never fail their duty"

- Al-Quran and the Tradition of the Prophet mention death in many other places

The Hereafter

- Believing in the Day of Judgment (*Yaqm ul Qiyamah*) & the hereafter is important part of the faith.
- Al-Quran talked in many verses about that day. (Chapter 75 is called Al-Qiyamah)
- Muslims believe in Paradise and Hell.
- Muslims believe that each soul is responsible for its own actions, and it will be judged accordingly.

Last Moments …

- Discussing death with the patient or family member:
  - Repentance to God
  - Seeking forgiveness from the people
  - The Will
    - It's recommended that one has a Will.
    - The Will needs to be written
    - The will should not violate Islamic Law.
  - With Family Members:
    - It's a God Command that each soul shall die / taste death.
    - No one lasts in this universe except God – He is the First and the Last & He never dies.
    - Reminder about Patience and Perseverance.
    - Make Dua (Supplication) for the Dying Person – especially from his Children.
- No priests nor non Muslim faith leaders should attend – this might cause discomfort to the dying person. No special needs to a Muslim Imam neither. The Muslim Imam presence is OK and might give comfort to the dying person and his family – but not required.

Last Moments …

- Some Family Members might recite Quran. (especially Chapter *Yasin*) – or maybe play a Quran CD. This is OK as long as it does not discomfort the dying person and is done before death occurs.
- The dying person should not be forced to say anything. The people around him/her are encouraged to say the Kalima (*La Ilaha Illa Allah, Mohammad Rasoolu Allah*) in a soft and comforting manner. The dying person should be repeating it – but should not be forced to do so.
- No music should be played or song near the dying person

Last Moments …

- Privacy of the dying person is paramount and should be observed at all times.
  - *Especially if the dying person is a female.*
- No gender mixing should occur in the room – except for immediate members & physicians/Staff
- Any one whose presence discomforts the dying person should leave the room.
- No special Foods/Drinks are required at the time of Death. All foods and drinks must be Lawful (*Halal*).

Death & Burial

- Contact the Mosque or the Islamic Center ASAP. (even before death if possible).
- Burial Services should occur immediately to bury the body. ASAP.
- Wailing, loud crying, slapping the face or the chest is forbidden in Islam. It discomforts the deceased!
- The body should NOT be:
  - Cremated
  - Frozen if possible.
  - Transferred to another city.
  - No autopsy to be performed. Follow the law if it is required.

Death & Burial …

- The body must be washed and dressed with *Kafan* according to Islamic Tradition.
- Prayers on the body are usually conducted in the Mosque or the Islamic Center.
- Prayers must be done after the body Wash.
- After the body wash, the body should not be touched by non-immediate relatives – especially from different genders.

Death & Burial …

- The body must be buried in a Muslim Cemetery
- The body must be placed in the grave in a certain way according to Islamic Tradition.
- Usually, the Mosque or the Islamic Center handles the burial procedures.
- Usually the Islamic Burial is free of charge. Some centers might charge to recover the price of the cemetery land.

Resources in Austin, TX

- Islamic Center of Greater Austin, ICGA
  - http://www.AustinMosque.org
  - State licensed to perform Burial Services.
  - Low Cost Burial Services to all Muslims. (The only costs involved are associated with Ghusul/Wash, burial, and grave digging)
  - Must be contacted before or immediately after the death.
  - ICGA has body wash facility, transportation facility and prayer hall facility.
  - ICGA has its own free cemetery for Muslims only.
  - Family members must fill required paper work.

Resources in Austin, TX

- North Austin Muslim Community Center, NAMCC.
  - http://www.NAMCC.org
- Imam is available for religious counseling
- No facility to wash the body. Prayers can be held at the center if the body is already washed.
- Masjid Ibrahim: www.MasjidIbrahim.org
- Muslim Community Support Services, MCSS
  - http://www.MCSSAustin.com
  - Has its own cemetery
  - Deceased must purchase the grave lot
- Islamic Ahlul Bayt Association (IABA) – *Shia Center*
  - http://www.iaba-austin.org

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