

The Burial

Following the janazah to the cemetery is a reminder of the hereafter and a recommended practice of great reward. It is permissible for those who have missed the first janazah prayer to pray it in the same manner at the cemetery when the body arrives. Two types of graves are used for burial, al-Shaqq which is a deep vertical hole or al-Lahd which has an additional horizontal carving in one end of the hole for the body to fit in. The grave should be perpendicular to the qiblah.

Only men are allowed to perform the burial. The deceased male relatives place the body in the grave. In the case of a female deceased her husband, father, sons and/or uncles may place her in the grave. It is recommended for those placing the body in the grave to say, "Bismil lahi wa 'ala millati rasulillah", meaning " In the name of Allah and in the faith of the turned toward the Qiblah. The ties at the head and feet can then be undone. Once the body is placed in the grave in this manner, it is recommended that followers take 3 handfuls of soil to be thrown into the grave. After the grave is covered it is recommended to pray for the deceased as the prophet Muhammad (pbuh) advised us, "*Supplicate for forgiveness for your brother and request steadfastness for him because he is now being questioned*".

It is important to note that the Islamic burial is a simple yet dignified procedure. There is no need to incorporate practices which are not from the Sunnah of the prophet Muhammad (pbuh). It is not allowed to sit on the grave, decorate the grave or face the grave in normal prayer. Other than duah and what is mentioned above nothing further is required to be said or recited.

Muslims are encouraged to be accepting of the will of Allah, to have patience and look forward to a reward from Allah. To Allah belongs what he takes and to Him belongs what he gives and for everything there is an appointed time. May Allah grant our believing deceased the highest rank in Jannah.