



A man's washing of the corpse of a woman

Fatwa No. 1759

Q: Is it permissible for a man to wash the dead body of a Mahram (spouse or unmarriageable relative) woman other than his wife?

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A: It is not permissible for a man to wash the corpse of any woman other than his wife whether they are Mahrams or not except for a young girl who is less than seven years old. If a woman dies in the presence of a group of men and there are no women or her husband among them, she has to undergo Tayammum (dry ablution) instead of Wudu' (ablution) or washing the whole body. This is in order to protect her against uncovering her private parts because it is necessary for the person who washes the body of a dead person to see parts of the 'Awrah (private parts of the body that must be covered in public). Moreover, he touches and turns her body in order to allow water to reach the whole body. Therefore, performing Tayammum for the woman who dies while there is no one but men is preferable in order to safeguard her 'Awrah. A slave girl who is not married is similar with regard to washing her corpse as a person's wife. Therefore it is permissible for her master to wash her corpse unless she is married or in the waiting period after being divorced.

May Allah grant us success! May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and Companions!

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