



The ruling on washing and burying the body of one unjustly murdered in a tribal feud

Fatwa No. 5346

Q: Some tribes practice different customs throughout the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In many of these

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tribes old customs are still practiced these days. One of these customs is that when a petty feud breaks out between members of one tribe, someone has to be killed to end the feud. Claiming that the murdered person is a martyr, they bury him in his clothes without washing his body or covering him with a shroud. Is it true that such a person is a martyr? Is it permissible to bury him this way?

A: Whoever is killed while protecting his property or defending his life or his honor shall be granted a reward equal to that of a martyr. However, unlike one who is martyred on the battlefield, his body has to be washed, covered with a shroud, and a funeral Prayer has to be offered for him. This is based on the authentic narration reported in the Sunan (Hadith compilations classified by jurisprudential themes) of [Abu Dawud](#) on the authority [Sa'id Ibn Zayd](#) who said: "I heard the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) say: ﴿ ["He who is killed while defending his property is a martyr; he who is killed in defence of his own life is a martyr; and he who is killed in defense of his faith is a martyr; and he who is killed in defence of his family is a martyr."](#) ﴾ [Al-Tirmidhy](#) classified the above Hadith as Sahih (authentic). Moreover, `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) was unjustly killed and the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) (may Allah be pleased with them) washed his body and offered a funeral Prayer over his body. The same also happened to `Uthman and `Aly (may Allah be pleased with them) who were also blamelessly murdered and whose bodies were washed and prayed over by the Sahabah (may Allah be pleased with them).

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

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