



Washing a stillborn baby

Fatwa no. 4884

Q1: Some people put stones or bricks at the opening of the Lahd (a crevice on the side of a grave facing the direction faced for Prayer) before the burial, and they fill the Lahd in with mud, is this permissible or not?

Q2: If a baby is stillborn, should it be washed and enshrouded as adults are, and should it be named or get buried without doing so? Some people do not enshroud a baby in the usual white shroud; instead they bury it in a black cloth, especially those who experience the death of a newborn for the first time. I hope that you will enlighten us about this.

A: **Firstly:** It is prescribed, on putting the deceased in their Lahd, to put bricks and the like above it, and to fill in between them with mud to prevent earth getting onto the deceased.

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Secondly: If a baby is born out of the mother's womb dead after the soul has been breathed into it, it should be washed, enshrouded, and people should offer the Funeral Prayer for it, and then it should be buried. The baby should be named. It is Sunnah (the example of the Prophet) to use a white shroud, but a black one would suffice the purpose, although it is not in conformity with the Sunnah. However if a black shroud is used, out of pessimism or to express dissatisfaction, it is Haram (prohibited) to use it, as it contradicts the obligation of being patient with Allah's Decree and Predestination.

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

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