

# *The Final Journey of My Beloved Mā rahimahallāh*

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at-tazkiyah

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by Shaykhul-Hadīth, Ḥaḍrat Mawlānā Muhammad Saleem Dhorat  
ṣāhib *dāmat barakātubum*

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At 12:58am on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> Rabī‘ul-Awwal 1446 corresponding to Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2024, I faced one of the saddest moments of my life; my beloved mother raḥimahallāh (who was known to everyone as Mā and to her grandchildren as Ammā) departed from this temporary abode to meet her Most-Merciful Creator. *Innā lillāhi wa innā ilayhi rāji‘ūn.*

*O Allāh! Forgive her and elevate her status amongst the guided ones. Take her place (by becoming a guardian) for her descendants who remain behind, and grant us forgiveness as well as her, O Rabb of the worlds! And make her grave spacious for her and fill it with nūr.*

*O Allāh! Forgive her, have mercy on her, pardon her and grant her ‘āfiyah. Make honourable her reception and make vast her place of entry (the grave). Cleanse her with water, snow and ice, and purify her from sins just as a white cloth is purified from filth. Exchange her home for a better home and her family for a better family. Protect her from the trial of the grave and the punishment of the fire. Āmīn.*

## **The Final Few Months**

My beloved mother *raḥimahallāh* had been a healthy, hardworking and very active lady her entire life. It was only in the last few years of her life that she became slightly weak and would experience pain in her knees when walking due to osteoarthritis. Despite that, she continued to handle all her tasks independently, refusing to take help from anyone, as she disliked causing even the slightest inconvenience to others. In Jumādal-‘Ūlā 1445/December 2023, she fell seriously ill and was diagnosed with sepsis. It was the first time in her life she was admitted into hospital, but *alḥamdulillāh*, Allāh ﷻ granted her recovery and she returned home. From that time, she became even more weak and frail, hence we decided to make a rota to ensure a family member remained with her during times when me and my wife were both engaged in teaching. I myself would remain awake the whole night in case she needed something, but she never asked for any help as it was not in her nature to take service from anybody unless it was absolutely necessary.

It was my habit to always seek permission from my beloved mother *raḥimahallāh* before deciding to travel anywhere abroad, and throughout my life, my beloved mother never let her motherly love stop me from any of

my Dīnī endeavours and travels. However, being aware of her wish to pass away in my presence and for me to perform her Janāzah ṣalāh, I put a halt to my travels abroad to ensure she does not feel uneasy and worried about the possibility of passing away while I was away. Travelling to deliver lectures and calling people towards Allāh ﷻ is a great opportunity to please Allāh ﷻ, but *alḥamdulillāh*, Allāh ﷻ granted me the understanding that looking after my beloved mother, giving her comfort and saving her from any type of worry was the demand of the time, and thus more pleasing to Allāh ﷻ. Moreover, even whilst at home my Dīnī work would continue at the Islamic Da‘wah Academy reaping the benefits of both serving my beloved mother and serving the Dīn. Therefore, prioritising my beloved mother, my travels abroad were put to a total stop and any invitations for lectures within the UK were only accepted when the hosts insisted, offering flexibility to cancel even at the last minute in case of an emergency at home.

In Dhul-Qa‘dah 1445/May 2024, when my beloved mother’s health improved, I informed her of my wish to perform ‘umrah, telling her that I would return in only five days. Worried that she would pass away whilst I was away, my beloved mother expressed her reluctance and said to me, ‘It is only a matter of a few months. Thereafter,

Allāh ﷻ will grant you many opportunities to perform ‘umrah.’ I reassured her that I will not go anywhere. Amazingly, her words came true. She passed away four months later, and *alḥamdulillāh*, I was blessed with visiting the Ḥaramayn Sharīfayn only six weeks after her departure.

In Muḥarram 1446/August 2024, just a month and a half before my beloved mother *raḥimahallāh* passed away, she suddenly became weak and confused. She was admitted to hospital to rule out the possibility of a minor stroke. Scans revealed that she had suffered a mild brain haemorrhage, along with three fractures in her pubic and sacral bones. From this time, I stopped accepting all invitations for lectures, even if they were in the UK. I thought to myself that if Allāh ﷻ lengthens my life, lectures will continue inshā’allāh, but if my beloved mother departs where will I get an opportunity to serve her? After spending three weeks in the hospital, she returned home. *Alḥamdulillāh*, she was able to walk with the support of a walking-frame, but experienced extreme pain due to the fractures. Despite this, her strong will and independent nature drove her to walk to the bathroom each time to relieve herself. *Alḥamdulillāh*, she also continued to perform all her ṣalāh until her final moments.

## **The Final Day**

On Monday 27<sup>th</sup> Rabī‘ul-Awwal/30<sup>th</sup> September, hours before my beloved mother *raḥimahallāh* passed away, she was totally fine. In fact, her health seemed better than usual. My brother, Mawlānā Ismail ṣāhib, would come at 1:00pm and it was his practice to recite one juz from the Glorious Qur’ān to my beloved mother. Due to her ill-health, she would usually listen whilst lying on her bed and many times slip into a light sleep whilst listening. On that day, she got up from the bed, sat on the sofa and then asked my brother, ‘Are you going to recite the Qur’ān?’ My brother jokingly said, ‘Mā, you fall off to sleep when I recite to you, so what is the benefit of me reciting to you?’ She replied, ‘*Inshā’allāh*, today you will see that I will remain awake throughout.’ Narrating the incident, Mawlānā Ismail ṣāhib says, ‘She listened to every part of the recitation very attentively.’ When my brother reached Sūrah Ar-Raḥmān and completed the first rukū‘, he paused for a short while. My beloved mother, assuming he had completed Sūrah Ar-Raḥmān, asked, ‘Have you completed the Sūrah?’ My brother replied in the negative. She said, ‘When you complete Sūrah Ar-Raḥmān, recite it again. Upon her request, my brother recited Sūrah Ar-Raḥmān, the ‘Bride (Beauty) of the Qur’ān’, twice to my beloved mother approximately three hours before she fell unconscious.



At approximately 3:00pm, she went to relieve herself. My elder brother, Ḥāfiẓ Ahmad Ali ṣāḥib arrived and Mawlānā Ismail ṣāḥib left informing him that beloved mother is in the bathroom. Ḥāfiẓ Ahmad Ali ṣāḥib noticed that my beloved mother was taking longer than usual and asked a few times at intervals if she was okay. Each time she replied, 'I am fine.' When more time passed, my brother became worried, so he peeped inside and saw her feet by the door facing the sink. It seems that after relieving herself, whilst performing wuḍū her legs gave way and thus she sat down on the floor. Despite being on the floor, she was trying to grab on to something to lift herself up. Even in that condition, she did not want to inconvenience my brother, hence, she kept on saying, 'I am fine'. Due to this nature of hers, she would always request others to make du‘ā that she depart with ‘Īmān and that Allāh ﷻ never make her physically dependent on anyone until her last breath, and Allāh accepted her du‘ā.

Upon seeing her in that condition, my brother immediately rushed to her, helped her into a wheelchair, and with Mawlānā Aḥmad ṣāḥib assisted her to her bed. I arrived just after this and found her in a semi-conscious state with incoherent speech. I kissed her on her forehead and tried to get her to recite a du‘ā after me. Rasūlullāh ﷺ

said regarding this du‘ā, ‘One who recites it during an illness and then passes away, will not be touched by the fire (of Jahannam).’ (At-Tirmidhī) The du‘ā is:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ  
وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ، لَا  
إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ

*There is no deity but Allāh, and Allāh is the greatest. There is no deity but Allāh alone. There is no deity but Allāh alone Who has no partner. There is no deity but Allāh; His is the Kingdom and for Him is All Praise. There is no deity but Allāh, and there is no power (to do good) and ability (to avoid bad) except with (the Help of) Allāh.*

I began dictating the words of the du‘ā:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ, then وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ, then لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ, then وَحْدَهُ. She followed me in this initial part of the du‘ā and to my amazement the words emanated clearly, despite her incoherent speech. However, due to its similarity with the fourth kalimah, she continued on her own and completed the fourth kalimah:

لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ، يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ بِيَدِهِ  
الْخَيْرُ، وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

*He has no partner. His is the Kingdom and for Him is All Praise. He grants life and causes death and in his hands is all goodness. He has power over everything.*

Due to her physical and mental weak state, I deemed it best not to compel her to say the remaining portion of the intended du‘ā. I express gratitude to Allāh ﷻ that even in this state of weakness and confusion, she was able to proclaim tawhīd on her own without me dictating.

I did not expect it to be anything serious as similar situations had occurred in the past. Our GP, Dr. Ishtiaq Sheikh was contacted who with his wife, who is also a doctor, always went above and beyond to care for my beloved mother. Their relationship with my beloved mother was like that of a mother and her children. They cared for her like children would, and in turn, my beloved mother showered them with her motherly love. May Allāh ﷻ reward them both abundantly. Āmīn. They arrived promptly and after conducting the initial check-up, Dr. Ishtiaq went himself to collect the prescribed medicine from the chemist and gave it to my beloved mother at

5:40pm. At around 6:00pm, her health deteriorated and she fell unconscious. At this stage, both doctors suggested that she be taken to hospital so the cause of her sudden unconsciousness can be determined and appropriate treatment can be administered. It occurred to me that this could possibly be my beloved mother's final moments, hence I sent a message to all the graduates of the Islamic Da'wah Academy asking them to make du'ā for my beloved mother and to request others to do the same. We also turned her bed towards the qiblah, as it is sunnah to turn the person who is in their final moments towards the qiblah. At times like this, seldom do our minds go towards adopting spiritual resources and implementing the teachings of our beautiful Dīn. I believe that it was the barakah of my beloved mother that Allāh ﷻ, through His Faḍl, guided me during this critical situation.

As her condition had worsened, we thought it would be best to contact her stroke consultant, Dr. Abdul Muqsit, who was always very helpful, trying his utmost to make sure my beloved mother received the best treatment. He came straight away and after assessing my beloved mother's condition agreed with our GP, Dr. Sheikh, that she should be taken to the hospital for a diagnosis. I also agreed but expressed my desire that she remains at home if

it seems that she has reached her final stage of life and is unlikely to recover.

My beloved mother *raḥimahallāh* lived with me in a flat within the boarding premises of the students of ‘ilm. It was my desire that she breathes her last in Madīnah Munawwarah, and if Allāh ﷻ has decreed for her to pass away elsewhere, she passes away at home so that the mercies descending on the students of ‘ilm would also enshroud my beloved mother. The students had gone home for a long weekend after their Mid-Year examinations, but *alḥamdulillāh*, returned at 10:00pm, only about three hours before my beloved mother’s demise. Similarly, some building work was scheduled to begin in our residence on Monday to improve bathroom facilities for my beloved mother. To ensure she was not inconvenienced by the work, we intended to assess the situation that morning and offer her the option to temporarily stay at one of my siblings’ homes until the work was finished. However, through His Grace, Allāh ﷻ made circumstances such that the builders could not come that day, otherwise my beloved mother may not have been in close proximity of the students of ‘ilm at the time of her demise.

At around 8:15pm, four ladies of the family thoroughly cleaned my beloved mother *raḥimahallāh* assuming that

she would be taken to the hospital. However, at 10:00pm, Dr. Abdul Muqsit and Dr. Sheikh declared that she is on her final journey now and should not be sent to the hospital. I immediately agreed as it was my desire that she spends her final moments amongst her family in the comfort of her home in an environment of tilāwah, dhikr and du‘ā. It also gave me much solace that the students of ‘ilm who had just made the sacrifice of leaving their families and homes to acquire sacred ‘ilm, were also assisting my beloved mother through their du‘ās and recitation in their boarding facility connected to our residence.

At 10:30pm, I called my dear student and associate, Mawlānā Dr. Saleem, who is a respiratory consultant, together with another consultant and a dear associate of mine, Dr. Arsalaan of Canada, both of whom had come to spend a week by me. Amazing was the plan of Allāh ﷻ. Although they originally planned to come on Tuesday morning, I had asked them a day earlier to come on Monday, and they had arrived that very day at the time of ‘Ishā. In this way, Allāh ﷻ had destined our local GP and three consultants to be present at my beloved mother’s service. It was the Grace of Allāh ﷻ that after discussion, all four doctors present unanimously agreed that my

beloved mother should remain at home and the ambulance team also advised the same upon arriving.

## **News of Her Near Departure**

Upon observing my beloved mother *raḥimahallāh*, Mawlānā Dr. Saleem informed me in light of his experience that although it could not be said for sure, he would be surprised if she lived till the Fajr Ṣalāh. This news was unexpected and shocking for me. I did not expect it to be so soon. The true reality is that death comes at its appointed time unannounced and gives no respite. Allāh ﷻ says in the Glorious Qurʾān,

إِنَّ أَجَلَ اللَّهِ إِذَا جَاءَ لَا يُؤَخَّرُ

*Indeed, when the appointed time of Allāh (death) arrives, it is not delayed. (71:4)*

I immediately turned my attention towards Allāh ﷻ and supplicated, ‘O Allāh! Until this moment we, your creation, made every effort to give our beloved mother comfort. Now in these last moments of her life, I entrust her to You with full conviction that You, being our Most-Merciful, Most-Forgiving and Most-Loving Creator, will grant her comfort and save her from every difficulty and misfortune.’

A short while later, the men of the family were sent to the room next door whilst the womenfolk were given a chance to sit by my beloved mother's side. They all remained engaged in recitation of Sūrah Yā Sīn, dhikr and du'ā. *Alḥamdulillāh*, it brought me immense joy that after reading some guidelines I had written for the final moments of life, my wife recalled that Nabī ﷺ gestured for his teeth to be cleaned with a miswāk in his final moments, thus she cleaned my beloved mother's teeth with a miswāk, emulating the sunnah, while she was unconscious.

Similarly, I remembered that my beloved mother *raḥimahallāh* had given me some money to spend on her behalf in worthy charitable causes. As it was her wish that this deed be performed in her lifetime, I thought to myself that it should not be delayed. I assigned this task to Mawlānā Ahmad ṣāḥib (Teacher of Ḥadīth at the Academy) and Mawlānā Yaseen ṣāḥib (Administrator at the Academy) who are both very dear to me. They immediately fulfilled this wish and gave this money in worthy causes. Nabī ﷺ says,

إِنَّ الصَّدَقَةَ لِتُطْفِئَ غَضَبَ الرَّبِّ وَتَدْفِعَ مِيتَةَ الشُّوْءِ

*Indeed, ṣadaqah extinguishes the Wrath of your Rabb and repels a bad death. (At-Tirmidhī)*



At this critical time when Shayṭān makes every effort to mislead the believer and cause a bad death, Allāh ﷻ granted me the tawfīq to adopt a method of repelling a bad death from my beloved mother *raḥimahallāh*. On one side, sadaqah was being given for my beloved mother and at the same time my wife, with the same concern that Shayṭān could be exerting effort to mislead my beloved mother, whispered in her ears ‘Allāh, Allāh’. Amazingly, in this state of unconsciousness, she began saying *Yā Allāh! Yā Allāh! Yā Allāh!* (O Allāh! O Allāh! O Allāh!). Dr. Abdul Muq̣sit later informed me that when he came to check on my beloved mother, he noticed something unusual. He saw her tongue slowly moving up and down, and upon observing her tongue movements, he concluded that she must have been silently repeating *Allāh, Allāh*.

At around 12:15am, my beloved mother’s oxygen levels began to drop rapidly and suddenly everything on the oximeter displayed zero. She had stopped breathing, and it seemed as though she had passed away, but within seconds, she began to breathe again. Now, it became imminent that she may depart earlier than expected. Knowing this, it is obvious that I desired to remain by her side like every son would. However, Allāh ﷻ enabled me to do something more beneficial for my beloved mother. I

went into seclusion in another room and performed two rakāʿāt of ṣalāh, and prayed for her from the depth of my heart. I first sought forgiveness from Allāh ﷻ, lest my sins become an impediment from the acceptance of my duʿā, and then with tears flowing from my eyes, I beseeched Allāh ﷻ to grant my beloved mother a good departure with a very high stage of wilāyah (special friendship of Allāh ﷻ). I also said to Allāh ﷻ that I am taking responsibility of any obligations due on my beloved mother, whether they be in regard to Your rights or the rights of Your creation. *Inshāʾallāh*, I will fulfil all these obligations, should I become aware of them. Therefore, absolve her from all obligations and do not make them an obstacle from her acquiring a good ending.

Then I sent a message to more than 500 ‘Ulamā, informing them that my beloved mother *raḥimahallāh* was in her final stages, and asking them to make duʿā that:

1. Allāh ﷻ makes this phase easy for her.
2. Allāh ﷻ grants her a very high stage of wilāyah, ṣiddīqiyyah (the highest stage of wilāyah), and ḥusnul-khātimah (a good ending).
3. Allāh ﷻ grants the family courage and ṣabr and makes them a ṣadaqah jāriyah for her.

4. Allāh ﷻ enables us to take every step, from this stage until the very last stage in accordance to the sunnah of Nabī ﷺ and the Pleasure of Allāh ﷻ.

## **A Peaceful Departure**

At around 12:45am, Mawlana Dr. Saleem and Dr. Ishtiaq Sheikh went to check on my beloved mother again and found that she had returned peacefully to her Most-Merciful Creator. *Alḥamdulillāh*, my beloved mother had such a peaceful departure that those standing by her side did not even realise that her soul had departed. It was only discovered when Dr. Saleem checked her pulse and found that it had stopped. This was particularly surprising because the doctors had warned us that she could face immense difficulties in breathing in her final moments due to accumulation of secretions in the throat. *Alḥamdulillāh*, Allāh ﷻ saved her from this hardship and she had a very peaceful departure.

Dr. Saleem and Dr. Sheikh declared my beloved mother *raḥimahallāh* deceased in the early morning of Tuesday at 12:58am. Obviously, it was a very emotional moment for me, my siblings and their children, but *alḥamdulillāh*, through the Faḍl of Allāh ﷻ, my mind remained fully alert with regards to Dīnī obligations. Upon the declaration of

my beloved mother's demise, I firstly recited, *Innā lillāhi wa innā ilayhi rāji'ūn* with other masnūn supplications. Thereafter, in accordance to the Sunnah, I with my siblings closed my beloved mother's mouth and eyes and thereafter, straightened her arms and legs and put her arms by her sides. *Alḥamdulillāh*, the womenfolk also exercised immense patience, quietly sobbing and comforting each other. Not a single one of them wailed or cried out loud.

Pondering upon how events unfolded, I find much solace and contentment in the fact that Allāh ﷻ showered His Grace and Mercy upon her, inshā'allāh. *Alḥamdulillāh*, Allāh ﷻ created many means of assistance for her in her final moments and she left this world in a state of cleanliness and purity with her final words being, 'O Allāh! O Allāh! O Allāh!'.

## **Ghusl**

Preparations for the journey ahead began immediately and the desire was to ensure my beloved mother's final rites were carried out according to the way most pleasing to Allāh.

Our Beloved Nabī ﷺ emphasised that the deceased is buried as soon as possible. Rasūlullāh ﷺ said,

عَجِّلُوا فَإِنَّهُ لَا يَنْبَغِي لِجِيفَةِ مُسْلِمٍ أَنْ تُحْبَسَ بَيْنَ ظَهْرَانِي  
أَهْلِهِ

*Hasten (the funeral preparations and burial), for it is not befitting that the corpse of a Muslim be withheld among its family. (Abū Dāwūd)*

Therefore, we made arrangements with our GP, Dr. Sheikh, to initiate the process of obtaining the death certificate as soon as the offices opened in the morning. Many a time, if a delay is expected in the burial, the ghusl is also delayed. However, it is better to perform the ghusl and purify the body as soon as possible. Thus, arrangements were made for the ghusl to take place immediately.

Before my beloved mother's body was taken for ghusl, my dear student, Muftī Abdur Rahman Patel, gave me some water that he had recently brought from Madīnah Munawwarah to use during ghusl. This water was from the well of Ghars located in Madīnah Munawwarah. Nabī ﷺ drank from this well and also bequeathed that he be bathed with its water after his demise. I gave this water to my wife to be used during the ghusl along with some 'itr to be applied on my beloved mother after the ghusl. This 'itr was given to me by a resident of Madīnah Munawwarah

who informed me that the blessed hair of Nabī ﷺ had been dipped in it. Although I am unaware of proof that confirms this, there is also no proof to reject it. Therefore, I hoped that, if it were true, it would bring barakah for my beloved mother. At approximately 2:30am, my beloved mother's body was transported to the ghusl facility at Masjid An-Noor. I sat in the funeral van and accompanied her to the ghusl facility. The women of the family - daughters, daughter in laws and granddaughters - with selected Apas of Riyāḍus Sālīhāt conducted the ghusl in the guidance of my wife.

Upon receiving the news of my Beloved mother's demise, some teachers and graduates of the Islamic Da'wah Academy and other close associates left their homes to come and console me. I appointed someone to welcome them and look after them. After returning from the place of ghusl, I sat with these associates of mine who had sacrificed their sleep in the middle of the night to come and be with me at this moment of grief. I then dispersed the gathering before ṣubḥ ṣādiq to perform my Tahajjud and Witr ṣalāh.

At 5:00am, the body of my beloved mother *raḥimahallāh* was returned home. I asked my wife how the ghusl went and if she observed anything special during the

ghusl. My wife lived with my mother in the same home for approximately 17 years and was thus grieved upon her departure. Despite the grief, she smiled at me and said, 'Your mother looks like a bride! Go and see for yourself.' I went to see, and to my amazement, found that the face of my beloved mother was full of nūr with a distinct smile. Moreover, despite her normal brown complexion, she was now fair in complexion. She was 88 years old (85 according to the Gregorian calendar) at the time of her demise and thus had wrinkles on her face and puffy cheeks. However, after the ghusl, her face was completely free from wrinkles and her cheeks were normal again. She now looked like she was 20-25 years younger. When I reminisce this scene, it feels as though it was a dream.

Another extraordinary sign of her acceptance in the Court of Allāh ﷻ was her shahādah finger of the right hand declaring the belief of tawhīd. Upon her demise, I personally straightened her hands including the fingers and placed them on the sides. When the wuḍū was being performed before the ghusl, my niece noticed that the thumb and the fingers besides the shahādah finger were closed so she straightened them. However, later on during the ghusl, she noticed that they had closed again with the shahādah finger upright. She straightened the closed

fingers for a second time. Before closing the shroud, the shahādah finger was again found upright whilst the thumb and other fingers were closed.

## **Focusing on Helping the Deceased**

After performing my Tahajjud and Witr Ṣalāh, I sat by my beloved mother *raḥimahallāh* for a while, reciting Qurʾān and making duʿā. I then proceeded to the Masjid for the Fajr Ṣalāh. After the ṣalāh, an announcement was made of my beloved mother's departure. At that moment, the gravity of the loss hit me even more and I made duʿā once again, knowing the promise of our Beloved Nabī ﷺ that duʿās are accepted after the Farḍ Ṣalāh. Thereafter, I recited Sūrah Yā Sīn as per my daily practice and decided to remain in the Masjid until the time of ishrāq. I sent the reward of the acts of worship performed in this time to my beloved mother, with an intention to send much more before she is laid to rest in her grave.

It is only after departing from this world that duʿā and good deeds are truly appreciated as at that point the deceased enter a realm where they can no longer perform good deeds to earn reward and are in dire need of duʿā. Rasūlullāh ﷺ said,



مَا الْمَيِّتُ فِي الْقَبْرِ إِلَّا كَالْغَرِيقِ الْمُتَغَوِّثِ يَنْتَظِرُ دَعْوَةَ تَلْحَقُهُ  
مِنْ أَبٍ أَوْ أُمٍّ أَوْ أَخٍ أَوْ صَدِيقٍ فَإِذَا لَحِقَتْهُ كَانَ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ  
مِنْ الدُّنْيَا وَمَا فِيهَا

*The deceased in his grave is like a drowning person calling for help; he waits (with expectation) for a supplication that may reach him from his father, mother, brother or friend, and when it does reach him, it is dearer to him than the (whole) world and what it contains. (Shu‘abul Īmān)*

It is very common amongst even those who are religious that upon the demise of a loved one, excessive time is given to guests and no attention is given to helping the deceased. The bereaved will arrive in the Masjid at the last minute and leave straight after the Farḍ Salāh in case visitors are waiting for him, whereas a little more time could have been spent in the Masjid for the benefit of the deceased, engaged in du‘ā, tilāwah, istighfār, etc. Visitors should be given time, but there should also be a concern and effort to help and benefit the loved one who will be passing through the very critical stages of the Hereafter.

Before leaving the Masjid, I gave instructions that all the activities at the Islamic Da‘wah Academy including

the full-time ‘ālimiyyah classes and the evening maktab classes should resume as usual. *Alḥamdulillāh*, all the teachers and students, both male and female, remained engaged in learning and teaching throughout the day. Only Allāh ﷻ knows the value and reward of this lofty deed and how much it must have benefitted my beloved mother.

## **Mashwarah**

After ishrāq, I met the muṣallīs and associates who were waiting to console me, and then went into the room at the back for mashwarah (consultation) regarding the funeral arrangements. One important part of the consultation was the location for the Janāzah Ṣalāh. Initially, I believed that the prayer space in the Saffron Hill Cemetery and/or the car park area of the cemetery would suffice, but my close associates insisted that a larger gathering would be expected and thus the local Spinney Hill Park would be an adequate location. However, due to the wet and rainy weather conditions, the ground had become extremely muddy and congregating in the park would cause much difficulty and inconvenience to the attendees. Only one option remained: Islamic Da‘wah Academy’s Masjid.

There is a difference of opinion regarding the ruling of performing the Janāzah Ṣalāh in the masjid. Some

respected Muftīs are of the opinion that it is makrūh taḥrīmī (reprehensibly disliked) while others regard it as makrūh tanzīhī (disliked). Personally, I believe that the Janāzah Ṣalāh which is one of the final rites of the deceased should be conducted, if possible, in a way that is free from any dislike, according to all views. Upon consulting the respected Muftīs regarding this, they gave the verdict that if the adverse weather conditions and the park grounds remain as they are, then due to there being no other suitable location, the Janāzah Ṣalāh in the masjid would be permissible without any dislike according to all. Therefore, to rule out the park grounds and ensure that the Masjid was truly the only viable option, we obtained permission from the council to hold the Janāzah Ṣalāh in the park and then continued to monitor the situation.

Another matter that needed to be decided was the seating arrangement for women who would be coming for ta'ziyah. Due to her loving and caring nature, my beloved mother *raḥimahallāh* was a motherly figure to many. Thus, we anticipated that a large number of women would visit, and the little space in our home would not be sufficient. Consequently, we decided to accommodate them in the Al-Khayr building opposite my residence, while the men would be accommodated in the Islamic Da'wah Academy's Masjid building.

During the mashwarah, we also discussed that if the Janāzah Ṣalāh was to be held in the Masjid, we would need to ensure the roads surrounding the Islamic Da‘wah Academy do not become blocked. I also raised my concern that if all the cars would be making their way from the Masjid to the cemetery at the same time, it could be challenging to transport the janāzah on time for the burial. Upon expressing this concern, one of my colleagues informed me that it would be possible to arrange a police escort to ensure the timely arrival of the janāzah. However, I declined, knowing that my beloved mother *raḥimahallāh* was a simple and humble woman who would have disliked such a formality and I too, am of the same nature.

## **Tilāwah and Meeting Visitors**

I returned home at 8:45am and sat by my beloved mother *raḥimahallāh* with my sisters and nieces, and engaged in the recitation of the Glorious Qur’ān. As the visiting time for women began, the women of the family left and I sat for a while with my brothers. At 1:00pm, I managed to get some rest for a short while as Ṣalāh was at 1:55pm. Visitors had begun arriving for ta‘ziyah. Many from outside of Leicester had arrived too, eager not to miss the Janāzah Ṣalāh if it were to take place that day on short notice, and

if the Janāzah Ṣalāh were not to take place that day then to meet me and my family for ta‘ziyah. The flow of visitors in large numbers kept me occupied in the Masjid until after ‘Ishā. I somehow managed to return home at 10:00pm and sat by my beloved mother’s side, engaged in the recitation of the Glorious Qur’ān. I had hoped to recite much more throughout the day, but got occupied with visitors. Nevertheless, I remained engaged in dhikrullāh and understood, in light of the Aḥādīth, that ta‘ziyah is also a rewardable act and thus I sent the reward of my role in facilitating this to my beloved mother. Only Allāh ﷻ knows whether my reciting the Glorious Qur’ān would have been more beneficial for my beloved mother or meeting the Muslim brothers who came to fulfil the sunnah act of ta‘ziyah.

## **An Issue with the Grave’s Location**

I had some food at 12:45am. My youngest brother, Ḥāfiẓ Abdullah, arrived whilst I was having food and discussed with me an issue regarding the grave of my beloved mother *raḥimahallāh*. I had previously reserved a grave for her adjacent to the foot-side of my beloved father’s grave, in case my wish for her to pass away in Madīnah Munawwarah did not materialise. My intention was that since people

frequently visit my beloved father's grave due to his esteemed status, my beloved mother would benefit if her grave was near his as she would also receive a share of their prayers and īṣāluth-thawāb (sending reward). My beloved mother was also aware of this and was extremely happy. My brother informed me that the records indicate that the reserved grave is not the one adjacent to the foot-side of my father's grave. I explained to him that I was certain this was the grave I had reserved, and it seemed to be an administrative error. My brother said he would try to address the issue, but given that it was already 2:00am, it seemed highly unlikely that it would be resolved before the burial scheduled for 11:00am. After he left, I went to my beloved mother's side and spent some time in recitation until 4:00am. Thereafter, I tried to get some rest before the Fajr ṣalāh, knowing that I would need strength for the demanding schedule the following day.

## **The Janāzah Ṣalāh**

As mentioned earlier, the Islamic teaching and ethos is to bury the deceased as soon as possible. For this reason, we tried our utmost to have the funeral as soon as possible, but nationwide changes to the process of receiving a death certificate and permission for burial, had made the process

longer and despite all efforts, we were unable to proceed the same day. After the ‘Isha Ṣalāh, the Janāzah Ṣalāh was announced for 9:30am on Wednesday and the burial at 11:00am with the location of the Janāzah Ṣalāh still to be confirmed. We continued to monitor the weather and the park grounds until the morning, but the rainfall continued with more expected, and the park grounds had become even more muddy.

After the Fajr Ṣalāh, a short mashwarah took place in which we concluded that the Janāzah Ṣalāh will be held at the Islamic Da‘wah Academy’s Masjid. This was announced at 7:30am with the Janāzah Ṣalāh due to take place in only two hours at 9:30am. After the mashwarah, I returned home again and sat by my beloved mother *raḥimahallāh* for the last time and engaged in recitation of the Glorious Qur’ān. The women of our family were then given a final opportunity to sit by my beloved mother. In the meantime, I performed ghusl in preparation for the Janāzah Ṣalāh.

People started arriving for the Janāzah Ṣalāh from 8:00am. By 8:30am, half of the main prayer hall was filled. Many of those who arrived early were students of ‘ilm, ‘Ulamā and pious individuals. With Qur’āns easily accessible on the shelves, nearly everyone engaged in the

recitation of the Glorious Qur’ān. The sound of recitation filled the masjid, creating an encouraging and peaceful atmosphere which those arriving later also embraced. Nobody was seen engaged in chatter which has become extremely common nowadays in funerals. As the time of the Janāzah Ṣalāh neared, the people had to queue outside the Masjid due to the large number of attendees. The Masjid, balcony and the second floor all were in use. A large portion of the congregation consisted of ‘Ulamā and students of ‘ilm including distinguished Mashāyikh of the UK. When Shaykhul-Ḥadīth, Ḥaḍrat Mawlānā Ayyub Bande Ilaahi ṣāhib *ḥafīẓahullāh* later came for ta’ziyah, he acknowledged this and said, ‘When I came to the janāzah and saw the large number of people, the thought crossed my mind that this is not only ‘Janāzatun maghfūrah (a forgiven janāzah)’ rather it is ‘Janāzah mashhūdatun lahā bil-Jannah (A janāzah which has been given testimony of Jannah)’. Thereafter, when I saw senior Mashāyikh, students of Qur’ān and Ḥadīth and pious individuals also present, the thought crossed my mind, ‘Janāzah mashhūdatun lahā bi-darajātil-Jannah (a janāzah which has been given testimony of the high levels of Jannah)’.

The women of the family stayed by my beloved mother’s side until 9:15am when they were asked to leave the room so that the men may come in to take the janāzah.



The janāzah was scheduled to be taken to the Masjid at 9:15am. However, volunteers at the Masjid advised us to wait, allowing time for those in the queue to enter the Masjid. Finally, the janāzah was lifted and taken to the Masjid at 9:40am. It was placed in the miḥrāb area which is not part of the shar‘ī Masjid and the first few rows were formed there. Before the Janāzah Ṣalāh, I entered the Masjid and greeted all the attendees with salām and expressed my heartfelt gratitude on behalf of the entire family for their presence, despite it being for most, a busy working day with bad weather conditions. Seeing a large attendance gave me immense comfort. Despite being unworthy, the duty of leading the Janāzah Ṣalāh came upon my shoulders as per the wish of my beloved mother *raḥimahallāh*. As per my practice before every janāzah I have to lead, I had been seeking forgiveness from Allāh ﷻ, fully conscious of my unworthiness.

## **Heading towards the Cemetery**

After the Janāzah Ṣalāh, the body was carried to the boarding car park where the funeral van was parked, to be able to leave without facing any congestion. A few police officers including the chief inspector had been present outside the Masjid from before the Janāzah Ṣalāh. Later,

the chief inspector visited me and during the visit revealed that his intention was to pay his respects and participate in the ceremony. He was greatly impressed by how the funeral was organised, in particular how the students and volunteers made sure no cars were parked on the main road. Although there was sufficient time, he also offered to provide a police escort to ensure the janāzah reached the cemetery on time. However, aware of my wish, my dear student, Mawlānā Yaseen šāḥib, who had played a leading role in coordinating the funeral, politely declined the offer.

The funeral van was the first vehicle to leave for the cemetery. We gave my youngest brother, Ḥāfiẓ Abdullah šāḥib, the opportunity to sit in the funeral van and accompany our beloved mother *raḥimahallāh* to the graveyard as his health condition would not allow him to enter the grave at the time of burial. Our car followed the funeral van. Amazingly, Allāh ﷻ made circumstances such that it appeared as though my beloved mother was being escorted, even though there was no formal escort. The road ahead of the funeral van remained clear all along the route. I have taken this route to the cemetery for funerals dozens of times, but I have not seen it so clear.

## **At the Cemetery**

*Alḥamdulillāh*, we reached the cemetery ahead of the scheduled time. Upon arrival, it brought me joy to learn that the issue concerning the location of the grave had surprisingly been resolved and my beloved mother's grave had been dug adjacent to the foot-side of my beloved father's grave. *Alḥamdulillāh*, Allāh ﷻ made what seemed impossible, possible and fulfilled another wish of my beloved mother and this insignificant one. As we waited, I asked Mawlānā Yaseen ṣāḥib to share some words of advice with the gathering. Mawlānā imparted beneficial advice to those present.

The van was parked at a distance to give everybody the opportunity to carry the janāzah to the grave. The attendees began to form rows to be blessed with this opportunity. A good number of people came all the way to the graveyard which is a 20 minute drive from the Academy, despite the bad weather. Many 'Ulamā, Mashāyikh and students of 'ilm, were also present whose hands lifted the janāzah of my beloved mother *raḥimahallāh*. Finally, my beloved mother was lowered in her final resting place beneath my beloved father's grave and was laid to rest with the entire body facing the Qiblah as per the sunnah method. Then after the immediate

family members, the ‘Ulamā and students of ‘ilm were given the opportunity first to put soil into the grave as I considered this to be a source of blessings for my beloved mother. Thereafter, other attendees were also given the opportunity.

Due to the adverse weather conditions, the burial took approximately one and a half hours. However, it was remarkable to see all the attendees waiting patiently, with the majority of them silently engaged in dhikr or recitation. Similar to the Janāzah Ṣalāh at the masjid, everyone remained focused and concerned for the deceased and nobody was observed engaged in conversation.

Once the grave was filled with soil, my dear brother, Mawlānā Ismail ṣāḥib, recited the opening verses of Sūrah Al-Baqarah, and then my very dear student and companion at home and in my travels, Mawlānā Aḥmad ṣāḥib, recited the final verses of the Sūrah. Thereafter, the du‘ā took place. After the du‘ā, myself, my siblings, nephews, relatives and students along with the majority of the attendees, remained at the graveside beseeching Allāh ﷻ to grant my beloved mother *raḥimahallāh* steadfastness during the questioning of the grave whilst also engaging in recitation of Sūrah Yā Sīn, other portions of the Qur’ān and dhikrullāh. This is something that requires our

attention as what is normally observed in this day and age is people turning to the bereaved and consoling them as soon as the du‘ā is over without any concern for the deceased.

## **Condolences and Īṣāluth-Thawāb**


I could not remain for more longer despite my desire as we had to make it back for the Ṣuḥr Ṣalāh. After the Ṣuḥr Ṣalāh, I became occupied with visitors again. Over the next few days, the flow of visitors continued, including ‘Ulamā and Mashāyikh, while many more extended their condolences through text messages, voice messages, emails and letters. *Alḥamdulillāh*, I was overwhelmed by the love shown by so many people, especially senior Mashāyikh and ‘Ulamā who sent text and voice messages and letters of condolences, showering my beloved mother with du‘ās.

The greatest condolence for a believer is his loved ones receiving much reward through Īṣāluth-thawāb at a time when they themselves can no longer perform good deeds and earn reward. Many people informed me of the Īṣāluth-thawāb they carried out for my beloved mother *rahimahallāh* which gave me immense solace. Within the first three days alone, the Qur‘ān completions that I was informed of, reached 250. Some associates who were in

Makkah Mukarramah at the time performed ‘umrah on her behalf. One dear associate alone recited ṣalāt ‘alan-Nabī ﷺ 66,000 times, another recited ṣalāt ‘alan-Nabī ﷺ 150,000 times and students of one particular madrasah recited ṣalāt ‘alan-Nabī ﷺ 1 million times as īṣāluth-thawāb. My beloved mother was also fortunate that some luminaries of our times who have always shown immense love and affection towards this insignificant one, including Shaykhul-Islām, Ḥaḍrat Muftī Muhammad Taqī ṣāhib Uthmani ḥafīẓahullāh and Shaykhul-Ḥadīth, Ḥaḍrat Muftī Ahmad ṣāhib Khanpuri ḥafīẓahullāh were in Madīnah Munawwarah when they received the news of the demise of my beloved mother and made du‘ā for her from there with īṣāluth-thawāb.

Allāh ﷻ made arrangements for a Janāzah Ṣalāh to be performed for her in Al-Masjidul-Ḥarām too. One of my very affectionate and respected seniors, Ḥaḍrat Mawlānā Sayfur Raḥmān ṣāhib ḥafīẓahullāh who was previously the Shaykhul-Ḥadīth of Madrasah Ṣawlatiyyah in Makkah Mukarramah, told some of his shāfi‘ī students there to perform Ṣalātul-Janāzah for my mother raḥimahallāh in Al-Masjidul-Ḥarām. Performing Janāzah Ṣalāh when the body of the deceased is not present is permissible in the Shāfi‘ī school of thought.

## **Glad Tidings**

Another honourable and affectionate associate of mine, Sayyid Jaleel ṣāḥib, who resides in Madīnah Munawwarah and is the grandson of the great luminary, Mawlānā Badre ‘Ālam Mīrthī , shared with me a dream his wife had in Madīnah Munawwarah. She had not yet received the news of my beloved mother’s demise when she saw the dream. After considering the time difference, I speculated that she had the dream around the time my beloved mother passed away. In the dream, she saw a janāzah being brought into Madīnah Munawwarah from abroad in a coffin. The deceased was a woman dressed in green clothing and green gloves. After narrating the dream, Sayyid Jaleel ṣāḥib said to me, ‘My heart tells me that this was your mother’. Although interpretations of dreams are not definitive, they definitely have a place in our Dīn and it has been the practice of our pious predecessors to take glad-tidings from them. Other relatives and friends also shared dreams of my beloved mother in a joyful state, accompanied by my beloved father and other relatives in Jannah.

The radiant smiling face, the shahādah finger proclaiming tawḥīd, the large congregation at the Janāzah Ṣalāh, the attendance of senior Mashāyikh and ‘Ulamā,

the attention and du‘ās of numerous Mashāyikh and ‘Ulamā, the abundance of ‘iṣāluth-thawāb, Janāzah Ṣalāh in Al-Masjidul-Ḥarām, glad tidings in dreams and the praises on the tongues of many, all indicate towards her forgiveness and acceptance in the Court of Allāh ﷻ, *inshā’allāh*. It is only after her departure that I came to realise that my beloved mother was not the ordinary woman we assumed her to be. The numerous positive signs noted and the virtuous deeds that came to light after her demise show she was a walīyyah (special friend of Allāh ﷻ), *inshā’allāh*.

May Allāh ﷻ illuminate her grave, grant it vastness, shower His Special Mercies upon her and make me, my siblings and all those who have benefitted from us a ṣadaqah jāriyah for both my parents and a means of bringing immense joy to their souls. Āmīn.