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A woman washing her dead husband

Fatwa No. 2273

Q: Is it permissible for a woman to see her husband after he dies, or is it Haram (prohibited) for her to see him? Can she wash him, if there is no one else to wash him?

A: It is permissible for a woman to see her husband after he dies, and to wash him. According to the soundest scholarly opinion, either spouse may wash the other after death, even if there is someone else who can wash them. `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said, (If we could go back and change anything, no one would have washed the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) but his wives) Related by Abu Dawud. Abu Bakr Al-Sidiq (may Allah be pleased with him) ordered that he should be washed by his wife Asma' bint `Umays and she did so. Abu Musa was washed by his wife Um `Abdullah. It is also permissible for a man to wash his wife when she dies, according to the soundest scholarly view, because it was narrated by Ibn Al-Mundhir that `Aly ibn Abu Talib washed Fatimah (may Allah be pleased with them) after she died. This judgment was well known among the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet - may Allah be pleased with them) and no one denounced him for that, thus there was a consensus on this point.

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

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