

# LAVATORY RULES

## احكام التخلي

### Objectives >>>

#### Students should:

- Understand the importance of cleanliness and hygiene
- Know the rules of maintaining ritual cleanliness when using the toilet
- Discuss the etiquette of using the lavatory
- Understand the doubts of excessive doubt

JURISPRUDENCE

LEVEL 4

### Rules of Lavatory: Lesson 1

In the past, we have learnt the rules of using the washroom and the importance of cleanliness and hygiene in Islam. In this lesson, we shall briefly go over the importance of cleanliness in Islam specifically in relation to the rules for the lavatory. We will learn that Islam is a religion of moderation and Allah does not wish to place an unreasonable burden on us. The rules that Allah, the Exalted, has set are not difficult to follow as they are natural.

#### HYGIENE AND CLEANLINESS IN ISLAM

Islam deals with the rules we need for all aspects of our life, no matter how trivial they may seem. This is part of Allah's Mercy towards us.

We have learnt the importance of hygiene and cleanliness in order to avoid the spread of germs and other diseases. Islam introduced these concepts over 1400 years ago, and they are so wise that many western philosophers and scientists are finally beginning to understand and appreciate them!



Even the simple act of washing hands, which was only introduced in the western world in the late 1700 to reduce the spread of disease, was emphasized upon by the Prophet of Islam on numerous occasions.

It suffices therefore to mention that the Holy Prophet (saw) said:

"Try to be clean as much as you are able to. Verily, Allah has based the foundation of Islam on cleanliness; hence, only the one who is clean can enter paradise."<sup>iii</sup>

Allah (SWT) says in the Holy Qur'an

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَاتِينَ وَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ

"Surely Allah loves those who turn much (to Him), and He loves those who purify themselves." (2:222)

One of the main ways of remaining clean is to ensure that the rules and bathroom etiquette that our Imams (as) have introduced to us are followed. This includes the rules of how to wash oneself after using the toilet, how to sit when relieving oneself, what to recite and the most appropriate places for relieving oneself.

## **WASHING PRIVATE PARTS**

### **URINE:**

As you are aware, urine is one of the unclean (najis) things and one cannot pray or perform other acts of worship if there is urine on their body or clothes. The obligatory rules for washing the urinary organ are:

- We must use water to make the urinary organ Ṭāhir. No other thing can make it Ṭāhir. Tissues are not sufficient.
- If one uses kurr or running water, then washing the organ once will suffice, as long as all the particles of urine are removed.<sup>iii</sup>
- But, if one uses qalil water, then recommended precaution is to wash it twice, better still, three times.
- It is obligatory to conceal one's private parts in the toilet and at all times from adult persons even if they are one's near relatives.

This means that Muslim men are discouraged from using urinals as one cannot wash oneself when using urinals

and it is difficult to conceal one's private parts. Also, it is disliked (makrūh) to stand while urinating.

The following are some recommended rules when using the bathroom:

- Istibrā' - is a recommended act for men after urinating. Its object is to ensure that no more urine is left in the urethra. It is not meant for women, and if a woman any liquid and she doubts whether it is urine, that liquid is Ṭāhir, and it will not invalidate Wudhu and Ghusl. This is the method for Istibrā': the part between the anus and the root of penis should be pressed thrice, with the middle finger of the left hand. Then the thumb is placed on the penis, and the forefinger below it pressing three times up to the point of circumcision, and then the front part of the penis should be jerked three times.
- Istibrā' is also recommended after ejaculation to ensure no semen is left in the urethra. This is done simply by urinating.
- It is Mustaḥab to urinate before ṣalāt, before sleeping, before sexual intercourse, and after ejaculation

The following things are discouraged:

- It is makrūh to urinate while standing, or on hard earth, or in the burrows of the animals, or in stationary water.
- It is makrūh to not relieve oneself when one feels the need.

### **STOOL**

The obligatory rules of cleaning oneself after excreting faeces are:

- If the anus is washed with water, one should ensure that no trace of faeces is left on it. However, there is no harm if colour and smell remain. If the first wash removes all the faeces there is no need to wash again.
- The anus can be made Ṭāhir with stone, cloth, or tissue provided they are dry and Ṭāhir themselves.
- If one makes oneself totally Ṭāhir with a stone, tissue or cloth once, it will be enough, though it is better to do it three times. In fact, it is better to use three pieces. And if one does not get totally Ṭāhir after three times, they should continue until they

become Ṭāhir. However, there is no harm, if invisible, tiny particles are still there.

- It is Ḥarām to use things which are sacred and revered, like, a paper on which the names of Allah and the Prophets are written to clean oneself.

## Review Questions

### Q1. Washing the urinary organ with water is:

- a. Obligatory
- b. Recommended
- c. Discouraged

### Q2. The purpose of Istibrā is:

- a. To ensure no faeces remains around the anus
- b. To ensure no urine is left in the urethra
- c. It is an alternative to using water

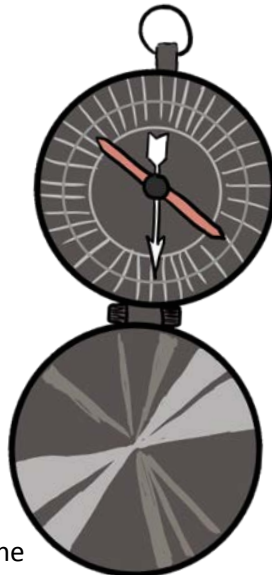
## Rules of Lavatory: Lesson 2

In the last lesson, we learnt the major rules we must adhere to when relieving ourselves. In this lesson, we will learn some of the etiquettes and recommended rules.

- 1- It is not permissible to keep the front or back toward the Qibla whilst relieving oneself. Knowing the direction of the Qibla therefore is not only necessary for offering prayers, it is also necessary before using a bathroom

- 2- It is Ḥarām to relieve oneself at the following four places:

- a. In blind alleys, without the permission of the people who live there.
- b. On the property (land) of a person who has not granted permission for the purpose.
- c. At a place dedicated for certain uses (e.g. a mosque or school)
- d. Sacred places which might be disrespected if a person relieve d himself there.



- 3- It is also Makrūh to eat while relieving oneself, or take longer than usual time, or to wash oneself with the right hand.
- 4- Talking is also Makrūh unless necessary. However, to recite words of Allah is recommended.
- 5- It is mustaḥab to enter the toilet with the left foot forward, and come out with the right foot.
- 6- It is also Mustaḥab to cover one's head or face.
- 7- It is mustaḥab to wear shoes or slippers to the lavatory.



### SOME ADDITIONAL ETIQUETTE:

- Do not splash water on the floors or walls. This has the potential to spread najāsah.
- Do not use too much toilet paper- Isrāf is also a sin
- Clean up after yourself, wipe the seat for the next person –even at home.
- Flush the toilet before leaving, if there is some air freshener, use it.
- Ensure you leave the washroom as you found it (if not BETTER).
- Be a true role model of a Muslim even in the use of the lavatory.

### EXCESSIVE DOUBT

As much as it is important to be clean and maintain ṭahārah, it is equally important not to become paranoid. Some people become obsessed with rules of Ṭahārah and spend hours in the toilet cleaning again and again. Allah wishes to make religion easy for us. Excessive doubt is a disease of the soul and is a result of obeying Satan.

It is important that we do not exceed the limits of what Allah has set, for instance, when you wish to urinate, you are required to wash yourself twice, not more than this.

When we do have a doubt about Tahārah and Najasah, Islam has set certain simple rules for us to allow. Here are the most commonly used ones:



- 1- Everything is Ṭāhir for you unless you come to know for sure that it is Najis. This means that for instance it is permissible to use public toilets unless there is visible najāsah.
- 2- If something has definitely become najis, and a person doubts whether he has made it Ṭāhir, it is necessary that he should go back and make sure he has done so.
- 3- When a person doubts after ṣalāt, whether he made the private part Ṭāhir before he started the prayers, the ṣalāt already prayed will be okay and does not need to be repeated, but for the following prayers, he has to make himself Ṭāhir for certain.

## Review Questions

### Q1. Everything is:

- a. Ṭāhir until proven Najis
- b. Najis until proven Ṭāhir
- c. Neither of the above

### Q2. Facing the Qiblah while relieving oneself is:

- a. Discouraged
- b. Permissible
- c. Forbidden

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<sup>i</sup> For details refer to article by Sayyid Muhammad Taqi Hakim which can be found at: <http://www.imamreza.net/eng/imamreza.php?id=5446>

<sup>ii</sup> *Kanz-ul-'Ummal*, Tradition 26002

<sup>iii</sup> Most maraj'e say that washing the urinary organ once is sufficient. Ayatollah Sistani is of the opinion that it needs to be washed once to remove the najāsah, then washed once more.