

## Chapter 6: Concerning The Ghusl And Its Cordial Disciplines

“The people of knowledge” [*ahl-i ma'rifat*] say that the (state of) *janābah* (major ritual impurity) is getting out of the homeland of servitude and entering exile [*ghurbat*]. It is “declaring lordship” [*izhār-i rubūbiyyat*] and claiming l-ness and entering within the frame [*hudūd*] of the Patron [*mawḷā*] and acquiring the quality of mastery [*siyādāt*]. The *ghusl* (ritually washing the whole body) is a purification of this filth and a confession of the shortcoming. One of the religious personalities has enumerated one hundred and fifty states, in ten chapters, saying that the *sālik* should purify himself from them during his practicing the *ghusl*. Most of them, or rather all of them, stem from might [*izzat*], power [*jabarūt*] and haughtiness of the soul, selfishness, and self-conceit.<sup>1</sup>

The writer says that the (state of) *janābah* is vanishing [*fanā'*] in nature and neglecting spirituality. It is the ultimate end of the complete sovereignty of animality and bestiality, and falling down to the lowest of the low. The *ghusl* is purging from this sin, turning away from the rule of nature, and attaining the divine authority and power. This is brought about by cleansing the whole kingdom of the soul, which has vanished in nature and been afflicted with Satan's conceit.

So, its cordial disciplines are that the traveler to Allah, at the time of *ghusl*, should not stop at the outer purification and washing the body, as it is a low superficial crust and belongs to this world. His paying attention to the *janābah* of the inside of the heart and the secret of the spirit and purifying them from that impurity should be more important to him.

Therefore, he must avoid letting his bestial soul and animal concern [*shāh*] overpower the human soul and the divine concerns [*shu'n-i rahmān*], and to repent of Satanic impurity and arrogance, and to purify the inside of the spirit which is a divine blow breathed in him by “the Breath of the Compassionate” [*nafas-i rahmān*], from Satanic tastes, which mean paying attention to other than Allah, being the root of the forbidden tree, so that he may deserve his father Adam's Paradise.

He must also know that eating of this tree of nature, desiring this world and attending to multiplicity are

the origins of *janābah*, and, unless he purifies himself from this *janābah* by immersion in, or by complete purification with, the water of Allah's mercy, which flows from the pillar [sūq] of the Divine 'Arsh and is free from Satan's intrusion, he will not be fit for the *Salat*, which is the reality of ascension to (Allah's) proximity, as there can be no *Salat* without purification.<sup>2</sup>

This is referred to in the noble *hadīth* in *al-Wasīl*, quoting Shaykh as-Sadūq (may Allah be pleased with him), who said with authorities:

“A group of Jews came to the Messenger of Allah (s). The most learned among them asked him some questions. Among his questions was: “What for did Allah command that one should perform *ghusl* because of the *janābah*, but He did not command it after relieving oneself from feces and urine? The Messenger of Allah (s) said: “When Adam (‘a) ate from the (forbidden) tree, it crept into his veins, hair and skin.” During sexual intercourse water would come out of every vein and hair in his body. So, Allah made it incumbent upon his offspring to perform the *ghusl* of the *janābah* till the Day of Resurrection...”<sup>3</sup> as the narrative goes.

In another narrative, Imām ar-Ridā (‘a) said: “They were ordered to perform the *ghusl* because of the *janābah*, but they were not ordered to do it after the *khalā’* (relieving oneself from feces and urine), though it is filthier than the *janābah*, because the *janābah* pertains to the soul of man, and what comes out is something from the whole body, while the *khalā’* does not pertain to the soul of man, and what comes out is the food that goes in through an inlet and comes out from an outlet.”<sup>4</sup>

The appearance of these *Hadiths* to “the people of the appearance” [*ashab-i zahir*] denotes that as the semen is from the whole body, the whole body needs the *ghusl*, and this coincides with the opinion of a number of physicians and natural philosophers. But giving it the cause of eating from the tree, as in the first *hadīth*, and ascribing the *janābah* to the soul, as in the second *hadīth*, open a way to information for the people of knowledge and allusion, because the question of the 'tree' and Adam's eating of it are of the secrets of the sciences of the Qur'an and the infallible *Ahl al-Bayt* (‘a), in which many sciences are occult.

For this reason in the noble *Hadiths* the causes of legislating many rituals are ascribed to the said case of the 'tree' and Adam's eating of it, such as the *Wudu’*, *Salat*, *ghusl*, fasting during the month of Ramadān and its being thirty days, and many of the *hajj* rituals. The writer has for many years been thinking of writing a thesis on this subject, but other engagements have prevented that. I ask Allah, the Exalted, success and happiness.

Generally speaking, you are an offspring of Adam, a seed for meeting (Allah) and created for knowing (Him). Allah, the Exalted, has chosen you for Himself and has shaped you with His two hands of Beauty and Majesty, and told the angels to fall down bowing to you, and caused *Iblīs* to envy you.

So if you want to get out of the state of the *janābah* of your father, who is your origin, and to be worthy to meet the Beloved [*hadrat-i mahbūb*] and to become ready to attain “the state of familiarity” [*maqām-i*

uns] and “the Presence of the Divine Sanctity” [*hadrat-i quds*], you are to ritually wash the interior of your heart with the water of mercy, and to repent from attending to this world, which is of the manifestations [*mazḥir*] of the forbidden tree, and to completely wash your heart, which is the meeting place of the Beautiful and the Beauty of the Majestic, from loving the world and its evil affairs, which are Satanic impurities, for the paradise of meeting the *Haqq* (Allah) is a place for the pure: “No one enters Paradise except the pure.”<sup>5</sup>

“Wash yourself, then walk to the tavern.”<sup>6</sup>

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1. He refers to Shaykh Muhyi 'd-Dīn ibn al-'Arabī in his *al-Futuhūt al-Makkiyyah*, vol. 1, p. 363.

2. *Wasā'il ash-Shāh*, vol. 1, “Book of Purification,” sec. on “Wudū',” ch. 4, hadīth 1, p. 261.

3. *Ibid.*, sec. on “Janabah,” ch. 2, hadīth 2, p. 466, quoted from *Man lā Yahduruh al-Faqīh*, vol. 1, p. 22; *Al-Majlis*, p. 115; *Al-'Ilal*, p. 104.

4. *Ibid.*, hadīth 4, quoted from *al-'Ilal*, vol. 1, p. 281 and *'Uyūnu Akhbār ar-Ridā*, p. 291.

5. “Paradise is not entered except by the good.” *Usūl al-Kāfī*, vol. 3, “Book on Faith and Disbelief,” sec. on “Sins,” hadīth 7, p. 371.

6. Wash yourself, then walk to the tavern,  
That this ruined convent may not be polluted by you.

Hafiz Shirazi

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