ISLAMIC LIFE AND EDUCATION

ISLAMIC PURIFICATION

An Easy Guide to the Rules of Wudu, Ghusl, and Tayammum (Taharah)

Adapted and Organised from the Teachings of
Heavenly Ornaments (Behishti Zewar)

Written by
Islamic Life and Education

Preface

This book, **Islamic Purification**, explains the rules of **Taharah**. Taharah is the Islamic practice of keeping clean before worship. The book is an easy textbook for students who learn in class or on their own. The lessons are taken and arranged from classical Islamic books, especially the section on purification in Heavenly Ornaments (Behishti Zewar), a well-known book of Islamic knowledge.

The book has **four parts**:

- **Part One** covers the basics: how to use water correctly, how to clean yourself after using the toilet, and how to make impure things pure again.
- **Part Two** covers the two major acts of purification: wudu (the ordinary washing before prayer) and ghusl (the full bath).
- **Part Three** covers special situations: which water can and cannot be used, the rules for wells, purifying without water (tayammum), and wiping over leather socks.
- **Part Four** covers the rules for women during monthly bleeding and after childbirth. It ends with a chapter on the rewards of staying clean for the sake of Allah.

Each chapter follows the same pattern. It explains an idea, gives an example, and then ends with a chapter summary, a short list of key terms to help you remember what you learned, and review questions. Diagrams are included wherever a picture explains something better than words.

A note about how far this book goes: fiqh (Islamic law) sometimes has very detailed rulings for rare or complicated situations. This book focuses on the rules a student needs for everyday life. For anything unusual or difficult that is not covered here, always ask a qualified scholar.

— Islamic Life and Education

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PART ONE

WATER AND BASIC CLEANLINESS

CHAPTER 1

The Rules for Using Water

Water That Belongs to Everyone

The sea, rivers, ponds that are not on private property, and wells given as waqf (a gift given in Allah's name) belong to everyone. No one may stop another person from using this water. No one may use it in a way that harms the public. For example, a person must not drain a pond until it dries up, or take so much water that nearby land may flood.

Water on Someone's Private Property

If a person owns a well, pond, or spring, that person cannot stop others from doing these things, because everyone has some right to water:

- drinking from it
- giving water to their animals
- making wudu or ghusl
- washing clothes
- filling buckets to water their own trees and gardens

There is only one exception. If there is a real risk that the water will run out or the well will be damaged (for example, because too many animals drink there), the owner may say no. Even then, the owner is expected to help if there is no other water within about 1.6 kilometres. The owner can let the person draw water carefully, or draw it for them.

Some scholars also allow the owner to charge money for the use of private water, for example, water drawn for someone else's crops or land. So paying for it in such a case is permitted.

A Few More Everyday Rules

- If someone scoops water into his or her own container, it becomes that person's property. No one else may use it without permission. The only exception is a person in real danger from thirst. This person may take what he or she truly needs and pay for it afterward.
- Water kept aside for drinking should not be used for wudu or ghusl, unless there is plenty of it. The opposite is fine: water kept for wudu may be used for drinking.

Chapter Summary

- Water in seas, rivers, public ponds, and waqf wells belongs to everyone. No one may use it in a way that harms others.
- The owner of private water cannot stop people from ordinary uses, like drinking or making wudu, unless the water really risks running out.
- Water becomes the property of whoever collects it. But a person in real danger from thirst may still take what he or she needs.

Key Terms: Waqf · Najis (impure)

Review Questions

2. Why can't the owner of a private well normally stop people from drinking its water or making wudu with it?
3. When can an owner of private water actually stop someone from using it?
4. What happens to water once a person scoops it into his or her own container?

CHAPTER 2

Istinja: Cleaning After Using the Toilet

Washing Your Hands Before Touching Water

When you wake up, wash your hands up to the wrists before you put them into a container of water. Do this whether or not your hands are actually impure. This habit keeps a shared supply of water from becoming dirty by accident, because we cannot always be sure what our hands touched while we slept. In practice, this means:

- Do not dip your fingers straight into a large stored container, such as a drum. Scoop the water out with a small jug or cup instead.
- If the water is already in a small jug, use your left hand to pour the water over your right hand, and wash the right hand three times. After that, wash the left hand in turn.

What Istinja Means

Istinja means cleaning ourselves after using the toilet. There are two valid ways to do it:

- **With water.**
- **With pure tissue,** as long as the impurity has not spread.

If the impurity spreads, washing with water becomes necessary (wajib). Prayer will not be valid until the area is washed. If the impurity has not spread that far, cleaning with tissue alone is enough for the prayer to be valid. Even so, using water afterward is the better practice.

Manners of Using the Toilet

- Before going in, read the dua for entering: "**Allahumma inni a'udhu bika minal khubuthi wal khabaa'ith"** ("O Allah, I seek Your protection from the evil male and female jinn").
- After leaving, read the dua for leaving: "**Ghufraanaka, alhamdulillahil lazi azhaba 'anni al-adha wa 'aafaani"** ("O Allah, I ask for Your forgiveness. All praise is for Allah, who removed harm from me and gave me comfort").
- Enter with the left foot and leave with the right foot.
- Do not face the qiblah, or turn your back to it, while using the toilet.
- Do not stand while urinating unless you have a real reason.
- Do not talk. Do not carry anything that has Allah's name or Quranic verses written on it, unless it is safely inside a pocket or a sealed case.

- Clean yourself with the left hand, not the right.
- After you finish, rub or wash the hand you used for cleaning.
- Avoid being fully unclothed while inside. If you sneeze, say Alhamdulillah silently in your heart, not aloud.
- Avoid relieving yourself near a water source, under a shady tree, or anywhere people gather or pass by, such as a roadside. This is discouraged more strongly (makruh tahrimi) than most other items on this list, because it causes real trouble for others.

Chapter Summary

- Washing the hands after waking, before dipping them into stored water, keeps the water from becoming dirty by accident.
- Istinja can be done with water, or tissue if the impurity has not spread.
- The toilet has its own manners: entering and leaving with the correct foot, not facing the qiblah, and staying silent inside.

- Only clean materials with no value, such as water, tissue should be used for istinja. **Key Terms:** Istinja · Wajib

Review Questions

1. Why should a person wash his or her hands before dipping them into stored water after waking up?
2. What two methods can be used for istinja? When does washing with water become necessary?
3. Name three manners a Muslim should follow when using the toilet.

CHAPTER 3

Purifying Things That Become Impure

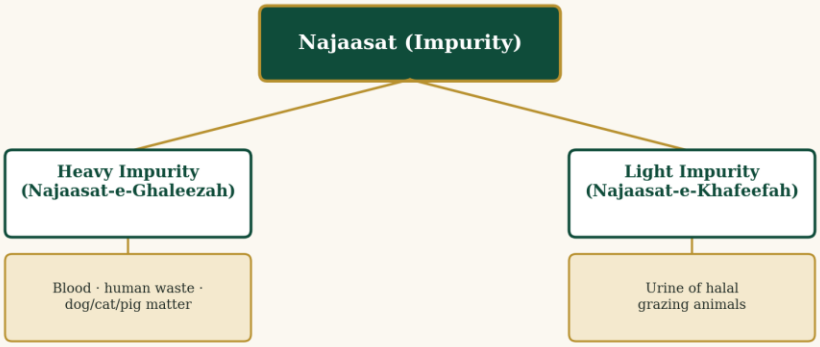
Two Kinds of Impurity

Islamic teaching divides impurity (najaasat) into two kinds:

- **Heavy impurity (najaasat-e-ghaleezah)** includes blood, human waste, alcohol, the waste of cats and dogs, everything from a pig, and the droppings of most animals.
- **Light impurity (najaasat-e-khafeefah)** includes the urine of halal grazing animals, such as goats and cows.

The droppings of most halal birds, like pigeons and sparrows, are actually pure. There are a few exceptions, such as chickens and ducks.

Figure 3.1 — The Two Kinds of Impurity



How Much Impurity Is Excused

Islamic law allows small amounts of impurity that are hard to avoid:

- **Heavy impurity:** If a small amount, no larger than a small coin, gets onto the body or clothing, prayer without washing it off is still valid. But washing it off is still better. If it is larger than that, it must be washed off before prayer.
- **Light impurity:** It is excused as long as it covers less than a quarter of the piece of clothing or the part of the body it falls on.

How to Clean Different Impure Things

The general rule is simple: an impurity is purified once every sign of it (colour, smell, and texture) is gone. Beyond that rule, a few practical methods cover most situations:

- A visible stain, such as blood, should be washed until no trace is left. There is no fixed number of washes, but washing three times is better.
- An impurity that cannot be seen, such as dried urine on cloth, should be washed three times. Wring the cloth firmly each time.
- Things that cannot be wrung out, such as a mat, jewellery, or shoes, should be washed and then left until the water stops dripping. Repeat this three times.
- Solid ground becomes pure once an impurity on it dries completely in the sun and leaves no colour or smell. But this ground still cannot be used for tayammum.
- Smooth metal items, such as mirrors, knives, or jewellery, can usually be purified by simply wiping or scraping the impurity off. But if the impurity has settled into an engraved or rough part of the surface, it must be washed.

> ***Did You Know?*** *According to Islamic teaching, the smoke and ashes left after something impure is burned are actually pure. This is why the ash from burning dung, for example, is not considered impure.*

Chapter Summary

- Impurity is divided into heavy (najaasat-e-ghaleezah) and light (najaasat-e-khafeefah). Most animal droppings are heavy. But the urine of grazing animals and most bird droppings are treated more easily, with fewer restrictions.
- Small amounts of impurity that are hard to avoid are excused for the purpose of prayer.
- The general rule for purifying something is simple: every visible and noticeable trace of the impurity must be gone.
- Different materials (cloth, solid objects, ground, and sticky substances) each have a practical method for becoming pure again.

Key Terms: Najaasat-e-Ghaleezah · Najaasat-e-Khafeefah

Review Questions

1. What is the difference between najaasat-e-ghaleezah and najaasat-e-khafeefah? Give one example of each.
2. How much heavy impurity is excused on the body or clothing before prayer is affected?
3. Describe how to purify a piece of cloth with a dried, invisible impurity on it.
4. How can solid ground become pure again? What limit still applies to it?

CHAPTER 4

More Rules About Purity and Impurity

Everyday Situations Explained

Besides the main rules already covered, Islamic teaching also speaks about many small, everyday situations. Learning a few of them helps us see how the general rules of purity are used in real life.

- Food, utensils, and clothing that belong to a non-Muslim are not assumed to be impure, unless there is real evidence that they are.
- Ordinary mud and dirty water on roads are excused, as long as no actual impurity can be seen on the body or clothing.
- Smoke and gas rising from something impure are pure. Food that is stale or smells bad is not impure just because it smells unpleasant, although it may not be wise to eat it.
- A dog's saliva is impure, but If a dog only touches a person's clothing and there is no visible dirt, the clothing does not become impure.

Musta'mal Water (Already-Used Water)

Water that has already been used to complete an act of worship is called **musta'mal** (used) water. An example is the water that drips off your limbs during wudu or ghusl.

Musta'mal water is not impure. But it cannot be used again for another wudu or ghusl. It can only be used for other purposes, such as washing away an impurity.

Chapter Summary

- Everyday situations, such as ordinary road dirt, a non-Muslim's food, or smoke from something impure, are treated with ease unless real impurity is actually present.
- A dog's saliva is impure, but its dry body is not. Do not confuse the two.
- Water already used to complete wudu or ghusl (musta'mal water) is pure, but it cannot be used again for another wudu or ghusl.

Key Terms: Musta'mal

Review Questions

1. Why is a non-Muslim's food not automatically treated as impure?
2. Explain the difference between a dog's saliva and a dog's body in terms of purity.
3. What is musta'mal water? What can it be used for, and what can it not be used for?

PART TWO

WUDU AND GHUSL

CHAPTER 5

Wudu: The Method and Its Rules

Why We Make Wudu

Wudu is the ordinary washing that a Muslim does before prayer and before several other acts of worship. It is one of the first practical skills every Muslim learns. Getting it right matters, because prayer without valid wudu is not accepted.

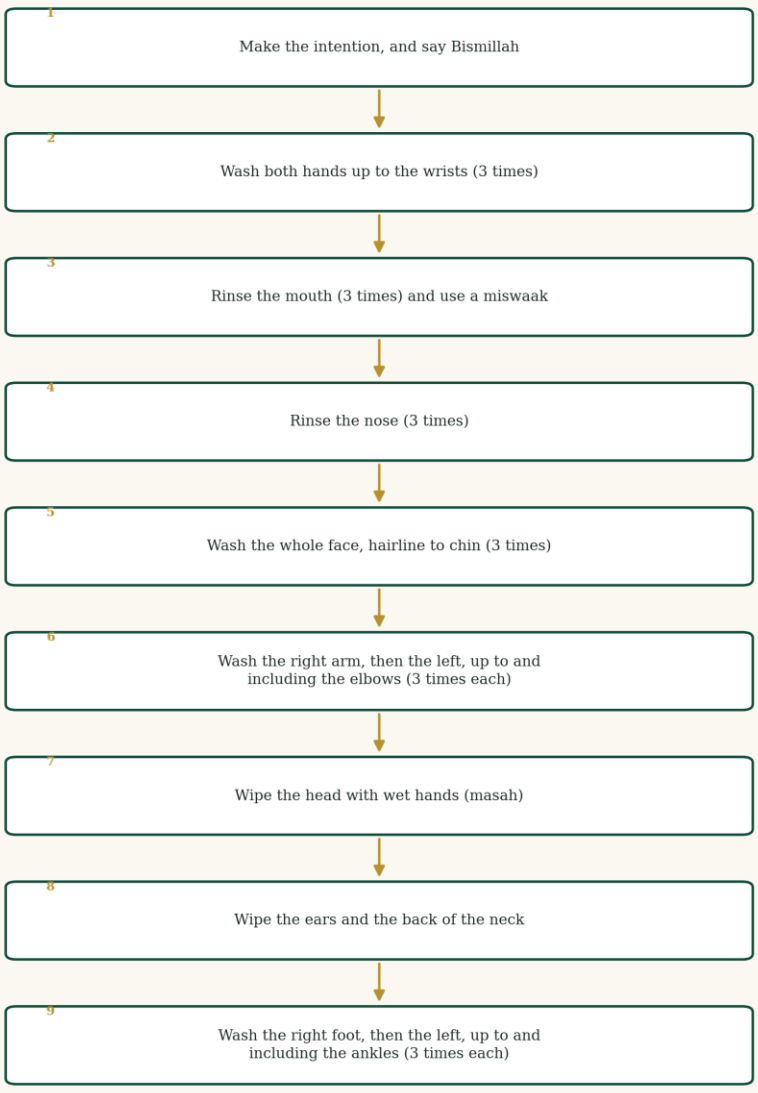
This chapter also introduces some words that are used throughout the rest of this book. They tell us how important an act is:

- **Fard** means compulsory. If you leave it out, the whole act is not valid. Examples: the five daily prayers, fasting in Ramadan, giving zakat, and Hajj.
- **Wajib** means necessary. It is close to fard, but it has a slightly different basis. Examples: the Witr prayer after Isha, the two Eid prayers, and a sajdah of recitation when you read a verse of prostration.
- **Sunnah** means strongly encouraged, following the Prophet's own practice. Examples: the extra rak'ahs prayed around the fard prayers, using the miswaak, and smiling or greeting others with salaam.
- **Mustahab** means a good extra practice. It is rewarded, but it is not required. Examples: helping others, feeding the poor, showing kindness to parents and animals, and extra dhikr.
- **Makruh** means discouraged, though not sinful in itself.

The Steps of Wudu

The full method of wudu, in the correct sunnah order, is as follows (see Figure 5.1):

Figure 5.1 — The Steps of Wudu



Wash each part quickly after the one before it, before the earlier part dries. It is also sunnah to pass a wet hand over each part as you wash it, so that no spot is left dry.

Here are some points of technique that are worth knowing:

- It is sunnah to sit on clean or raised ground, facing the qiblah. Begin by saying “Bismillahir Rahmaanir Raheem” (“In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate”).
- Clean the mouth with a miswaak if possible. If there is none, use a clean cloth or your finger.

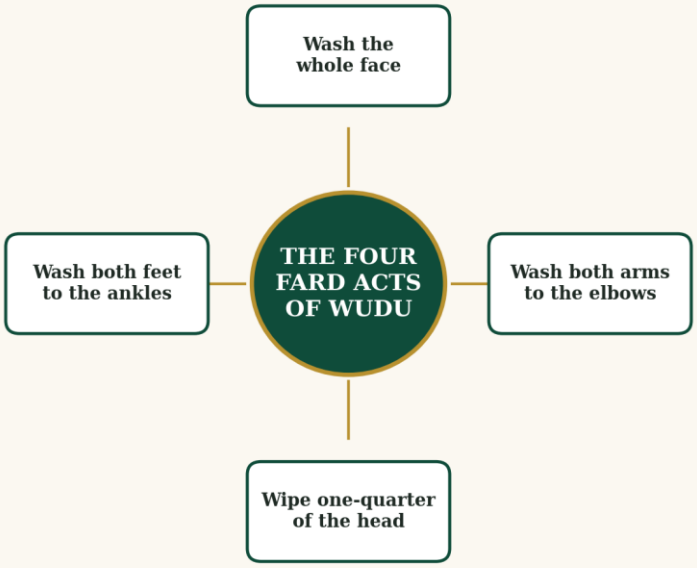
- A person who is fasting should rinse the mouth and nose gently. Do not gargle deeply or sniff water far up the nose, so that no water is swallowed.
- When washing the hands and feet, run the fingers and toes through each other (khilaal) to make sure water reaches between them.
- Remove any rings, or move them, so that water reaches the skin underneath.

The Four Fard Acts

Out of everything above, only four actions are fard. This means wudu is not valid at all without them, even if just one of them is missed:

- Washing the whole face once.
- Washing both arms up to and including the elbows once.
- Wiping at least one-quarter of the head once.
- Washing both feet up to and including the ankles once.

Figure 5.2 — The Four Fard Acts of Wudu



Suppose these four acts happen without any intention at all. For example, a person is caught in heavy rain and the whole body gets soaked. The wudu is still technically complete. But no reward is earned unless the person intends to purify himself or herself for prayer.

Good Manners While Making Wudu

- Do not waste water, even where it is freely available. Also, do not use so little that the parts cannot be washed properly.
- Wash your own limbs yourself. Do not ask someone else to do it for you, unless you have a genuine reason why you cannot.
- Avoid ordinary conversation while making wudu. Recite Bismillah and the kalimah instead.
- It is also recommended to recite the dua for after wudu:
  - اللّٰهُمَّ اجْعَلْنِيْ مِنَ التَّوَّابِيْنَ وَاجْعَلْنِيْ مِنَ الْمُتَطَهِّرِيْنَ وَاجْعَلْنِيْ مِنْ عِبَادِكَ الصَّالِحِيْنَ

  O Allah! Make me among those who repent, who stay clean, and who are Your good servants.
- Then pray two rak'ahs known as Tahiyyatul Wudu.

Chapter Summary

- Wudu is the ordinary act of purification before prayer. It follows a set method of nine steps.
- Only four acts are fard: washing the face, washing both arms to the elbows, wiping part of the head, and washing both feet to the ankles.
- The words fard, wajib, sunnah, mustahab, and makruh tell us how important a rule is. They are used throughout the rest of this book.
- Good manners while making wudu include not wasting water, doing it yourself, and following it with the recommended dua and prayer.

Key Terms: Wudu · Fard · Sunnah · Mustahab · Masah

Review Questions

1. List the nine steps of wudu in the correct order.
2. Which four acts of wudu are fard? What happens if even one is left out?
3. Explain the difference between fard and sunnah, using examples from this chapter.
4. Why should a person avoid ordinary conversation while making wudu?

CHAPTER 6

What Breaks Wudu

The Basic Causes

Once wudu is made, some things make it break. This means a fresh wudu is needed before the next prayer. The most common causes are:

- Using the toilet, or passing wind.
- Falling into a deep sleep: lying down, or leaning on something so that you would fall if the support were taken away.
- Losing consciousness, or becoming so intoxicated that you cannot walk steadily.
- Laughing out loud during prayer, so loudly that the person praying and someone nearby can hear it.
- Blood, pus, or a similar fluid that actually flows out of a wound, beyond its edge.
- Vomiting a mouthful of food, water, or bile.

Some situations are often misunderstood. These do **not** break wudu:

- Blood or pus that stays at the edge of a wound and does not flow.
- A small amount of vomit, less than a mouthful.
- Falling asleep while sitting upright in prayer, without leaning on anything.

Touching the Quran

A person without wudu may not touch the Arabic text of the Quran directly. But some things are permitted:

- Touching it through a cloth that is not being worn at that moment.
- Reciting the Quran from memory.
- Reading it with your eyes, without touching the page.

This rule also covers things like a charm (amulet) with Quranic verses written on it. Touching earlier revealed books, such as the Torah or the Gospel, without wudu is makruh (discouraged). But it is less strict than touching the Quran itself.

Chapter Summary

- Wudu breaks through causes such as using the toilet, deep sleep, loss of consciousness, loud laughter in prayer, flowing blood or pus, a mouthful of vomit.

- Blood or pus that does not actually flow beyond the wound, and vomit that is less than a mouthful, do not break wudu.
- A person without wudu should not directly touch the Arabic text of the Quran. But reciting from memory is always allowed.

Key Terms: Hadath (a state that breaks purity)

Review Questions

1. List four common things that break wudu.
2. Explain why blood at the edge of a wound might not break wudu, even though flowing blood does.
3. Is it permitted to touch the Quran without wudu? Explain any exceptions.

CHAPTER 7

Rules for the Ma'zur (A Person With a Continuous Excuse)

Who Is a Ma'zur?

Some people live with a medical condition that keeps breaking their wudu almost all the time. Examples are a nosebleed that will not stop, a wound that keeps bleeding, or a condition that causes constant dripping of urine.

A person is classified as a **ma'zur** (someone who is excused) only when a whole prayer time passes and the person cannot find even a moment to pray in complete purity.

How a Ma'zur Prays

Once someone is classified as a ma'zur, the rule becomes simpler:

- They make a fresh wudu at the start of each prayer time.
- That wudu stays valid for the whole of that prayer time, no matter how many times their condition causes bleeding or dripping during it.
- With this one wudu, they may pray any number of fard or nafl prayers until the time ends.
- If something unrelated to their condition breaks their wudu, such as using the toilet, they must make wudu again in the ordinary way.
- If a whole prayer time later passes with no symptoms at all, the person is no longer treated as a ma'zur. The ordinary rules of wudu apply again.

Blood on clothes: Suppose the condition stains the person's clothing with blood, and the clothing will probably be stained again during the prayer itself. Then it does not need to be washed before praying. Otherwise, it should be washed first.

Chapter Summary

- A ma'zur is a person whose medical condition keeps his or her wudu broken for a whole prayer time, so there is no chance to pray in complete purity.
- A ma'zur makes one wudu for each prayer time. It stays valid for that whole time, even with the ongoing condition.
- Ordinary things that break wudu, and are not related to the condition, still apply and need a fresh wudu.

Key Terms: Ma'zur

Review Questions

1. What must happen before someone is classified as a ma'zur?
2. How is wudu different for a ma'zur compared to an ordinary person?
3. If a ma'zur uses the toilet during the prayer time, does the wudu stay valid? Explain.

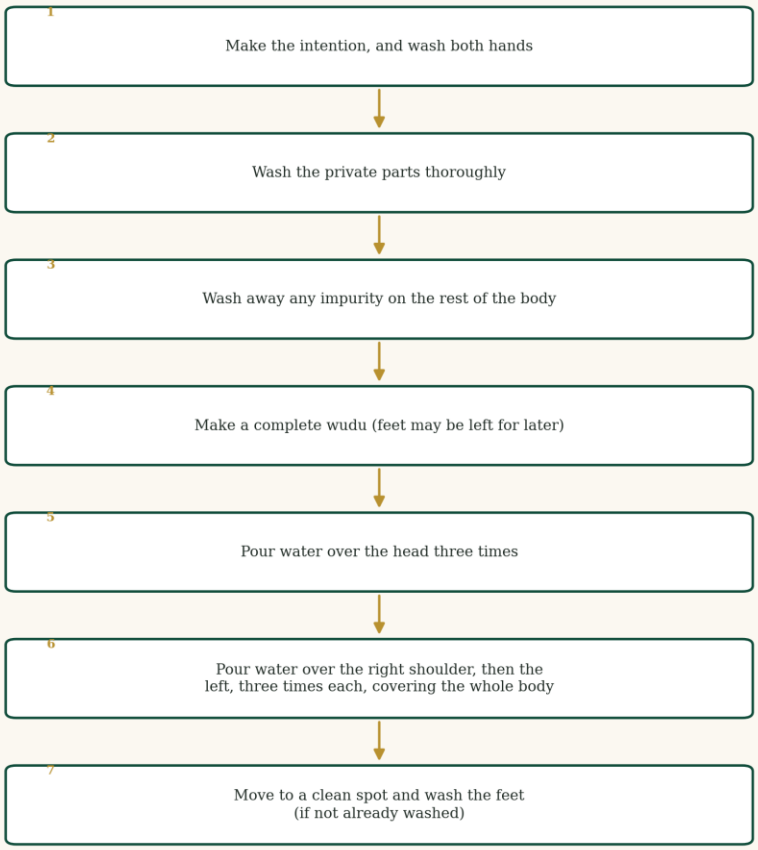
CHAPTER 8

Ghusl: The Full Bath

The Method of Ghusl

Ghusl is the full ritual bath. It is required after certain conditions, which are described later in this chapter. The sunnah method follows a clear order (see Figure 8.2):

Figure 8.2 — The Steps of Ghusl



The Three Fard Acts of Ghusl

Out of the steps above, only three are fard. Without them, ghusl is not valid:

- Gargling the mouth so that water reaches every part of it.
- Rinsing the nose up to the soft part of the nose.

- Pouring water over the whole body, so that not even a hair's width is left dry.

Ghusl should be done in a private place, without facing the qiblah, and without talking. Keep your modesty as much as you can, even when you bathe alone.

Before you start, remove anything that could stop water from reaching the skin:

- Rings, earrings, and hardened dirt are the obvious examples.
- Nail polish and make-up or lipstick can do the same thing, and they are easy to forget.

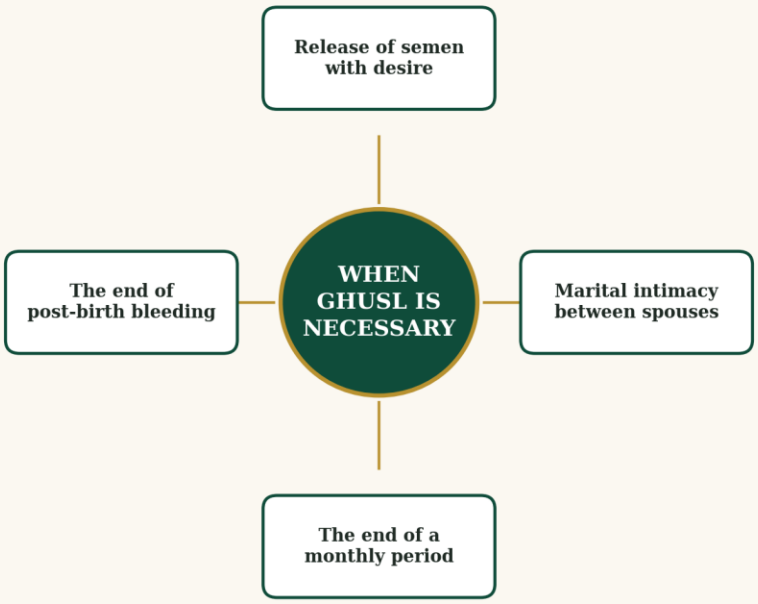
Also make sure of these things:

- The hair must be completely wet, and the water must reach the roots, even where the hair is braided.

What Makes Ghusl Necessary

Islamic teaching names four situations that make ghusl obligatory (necessary):

Figure 8.1 — The Four Things That Make Ghusl Necessary



1. **Release of semen with sexual desire,** whether awake or asleep.
2. **Marital intimacy between husband and wife.** This makes ghusl necessary for both of them, even if no fluid is released.
3. **The end of a woman's monthly period (haid).**

4. **The end of bleeding after childbirth (nifaas).**

The last two are explained fully in Part Four of this book.

Outside these four situations, ghusl is not obligatory. For example, suppose semen is released without any desire at all, because of illness or a sudden shock. Ghusl is not necessary in this case, but it does break wudu.

When Ghusl Is Sunnah or Recommended

Beyond the obligatory causes, ghusl is **sunnah** in these cases:

- before the Jumu'ah prayer
- before the Eid prayers
- when putting on ihram for Hajj or Umrah
- before tawaf
- for a person who has washed a deceased body (after washing it)

What Is Not Allowed During Major Impurity

Once ghusl becomes necessary, a person may not do these things until ghusl is complete:

- enter a masjid (except in genuine necessity, using tayammum)
- touch or recite the Quran
- perform prayer

Chapter Summary

- Ghusl follows a clear method. It has three fard acts: gargling the mouth, rinsing the nose, and pouring water over the whole body.
- Ghusl becomes necessary in four situations: release of semen with desire, marital intimacy, the end of a monthly period, and the end of bleeding after childbirth.
- Ghusl is sunnah before Jumu'ah, Eid, and ihram, and mustahab on several other occasions.
- A person who needs ghusl may not enter a masjid, touch the Quran, or pray until ghusl is complete.

Key Terms: Ghusl · Haid · Nifaas

Review Questions

1. What are the three fard acts of ghusl?
2. List the four things that make ghusl necessary.
3. Name two occasions when ghusl is sunnah.
4. What is a person not allowed to do once ghusl becomes necessary for him or her?

CHAPTER 12

Tayammum: Purifying Without Water

When Tayammum Is Allowed

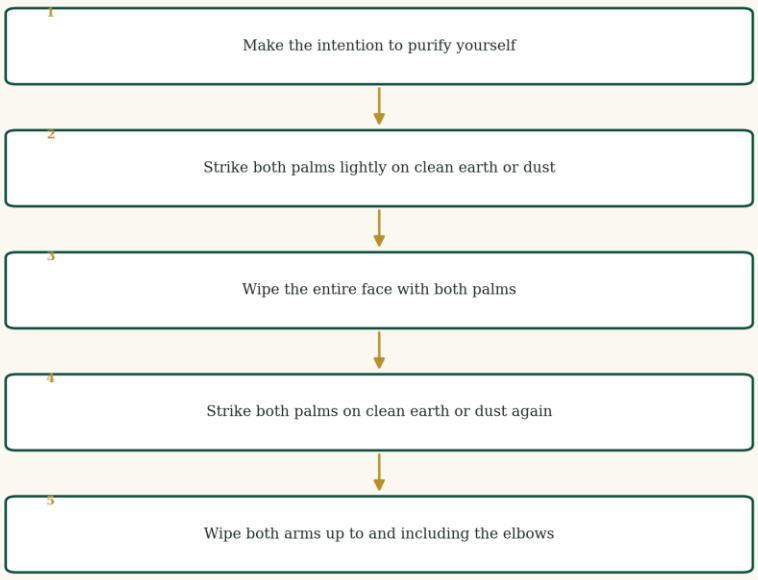
Tayammum is a way of purifying yourself with clean earth or dust. It is allowed when water cannot be used. This includes situations such as:

- No water can be found near by within about 1.6 kilometres.
- Using water would make an illness worse, or slow down recovery.
- It is extremely cold, and there is no way to warm up safely after bathing.
- Water is available to buy, but the price is unreasonably high.
- More than half of the body is wounded or affected by a skin illness.

If it is known that water is within 1.6 kilometres, tayammum is not allowed. The water must be fetched instead. This applies to everyone equally. Shyness alone is not a valid reason to avoid fetching water.

How to Perform Tayammum

Figure 12.1 — The Steps of Tayammum



After striking the ground, lightly dust off the hands before wiping the face and arms. This way, the hands do not become dirty or untidy.

What Can Be Used for Tayammum

Tayammum can be done with soil, sand, stone: anything with the natural qualities of earth. It cannot be done on metal, wood, cloth, unless there is enough dust on top of these things.

What Breaks Tayammum

Anything that breaks wudu also breaks tayammum. Also, tayammum breaks the moment usable water is found. This is true whether the tayammum was made because of illness, cold, cost, or simply because there was no water nearby.

Chapter Summary

- Tayammum is allowed when water cannot be reached, would make an illness worse, or is unreasonably expensive, among other genuine reasons.
- The method is to strike the palms on clean earth twice: once to wipe the face, and once to wipe the arms up to the elbows.
- Only earth-like materials (soil, sand, stone) can be used for tayammum.
- Tayammum breaks for the same reasons that wudu breaks. It also breaks the moment usable water becomes available.

Key Terms: Tayammum

Review Questions

1. List three situations in which tayammum is allowed.
2. Describe the two main steps of performing tayammum.
3. Can tayammum be done on a wooden table? Explain your answer.
4. What happens to a person's tayammum the moment he or she finds usable water?

CHAPTER 13

Masah on Leather Socks

What Is Masah?

Instead of washing the feet at every wudu, a person wearing leather socks (khuffain) may simply wipe wet hands over the top of the socks. This is called **masah**. Masah is valid only if the socks were put on while the person already had a complete wudu, including washed feet.

Even when masah is valid, it is better to take off the socks and wash the feet as usual. Masah is a concession (rukhsah), not the preferred method. The same rules apply to leather boots, and to leather socks worn over an ordinary pair of cotton or wool socks. It is the leather layer that is wiped.

The Conditions and Time Limit

- The socks must cover the ankles.
- A person at home may use masah for one full day and night (24 hours). A traveller may use it for three days and three nights (72 hours).
- The time is counted from the moment the wudu first breaks after the socks were put on, not from the moment they were put on.
- Masah is only for the feet. It cannot be used in place of washing or wiping anything else. It is not valid on a face-veil, gloves, a hat, or a turban.
- If the socks simply get wet from rain or wet grass, a masah that was already done is not affected.

How to Make Masah

Here is how to make masah:

- Wet your fingers with water. Place them flat on the front of the sock, near the toes, and draw them upward toward the ankle.
- For each foot, the wiped area must be at least as wide as three fingers.
- Do it once for each foot. Do not repeat it three times like the other parts of wudu.
- Wipe only the top, upper surface of the sock. Never wipe the sole, the heel, or the sides.

Masah on Ordinary Socks

Ordinary socks made of cotton or wool do not normally qualify for masah, because water passes through them. Masah is valid on them only if at least one of these is true:

- The sock is thick and firm enough to stay up on its own without being tied, and firm enough to walk about four to six kilometres in without wearing through.
- The sock is covered by a layer of leather.
- The sock has a leather sole.

An ordinary sock that meets none of these conditions must be taken off, and the feet must be washed as usual.

What Breaks Masah

- Removing the socks.
- The time limit ending (24 or 72 hours).
- The socks tearing, so that an area three fingers wide or more of the foot can be seen.
- Enough water getting inside the sock to wet most of the foot, for example by stepping into a puddle.

If masah breaks for any of these reasons, take off the socks and wash the feet. There is no need to repeat the whole wudu, unless wudu itself has also broken. If only one sock is removed, the other one must be removed too, and both feet must be washed. Masah cannot continue on just one sock.

Changing Travel Status During Masah

A person's masah period can change if his or her travel status changes partway through:

- **From home to travel:** Suppose someone at home begins masah and then sets out on a journey before the first 24 hours are over. The masah period is extended to the full 72 hours allowed for a traveller.
- **From travel to home:** Suppose a traveller returns home before the first 24 hours are over. The masah period is shortened to the ordinary 24-hour limit. Once that shorter time passes, the socks must be removed and the feet washed, even though 72 hours have not yet passed.

Chapter Summary

- Masah lets a person wipe wet hands over leather socks instead of washing the feet at every wudu, if the socks were put on while the person was already in wudu.
- The time limit is 24 hours at home and 72 hours while travelling. It is counted from when wudu first breaks after putting on the socks.
- Masah is done by drawing wet fingers from the toes toward the ankle, once for each foot.
- Masah breaks when the socks are removed, the time limit ends, wudu breaks, the socks tear badly, or water soaks through to the foot.

Key Terms: Masah · Khuffain

Review Questions

1. In what state must a person be when putting on the leather socks for masah to be valid?
2. What is the time limit for masah at home, and while travelling?
3. Describe how masah is done on the socks.
4. Give two things that break masah.

PART FOUR

RULES FOR WOMEN

CHAPTER 14

Haid and Istihaadha (Monthly Bleeding and Irregular Bleeding)

What Is Haid?

Haid is the monthly bleeding that a woman has. It usually begins around the age of nine and stops around the age of fifty-five.

- The shortest period of haid is three days and three nights.
- The longest period of haid is ten days and ten nights.

Bleeding that is shorter than three days, or that goes beyond ten days, is not haid. It is called **istihaadha**, which means irregular bleeding caused by some other reason. It is treated very differently. For example, bleeding that starts on a Friday morning and stops by Sunday sunset is istihaadha and not haid, because it does not reach three full days.

How a Woman's Pattern Is Used

Each woman usually has her own regular pattern, or "habit," for how many days her haid lasts.

- If her bleeding lasts longer or shorter than usual in a certain month, but is still between three and ten days, all of those days count as haid.
- If her bleeding goes beyond ten days, only the days that match her usual pattern count as haid. The extra days are istihaadha.

Example 1: A woman usually bleeds for four days. One month she bleeds for six days. All six days are haid.

Example 2: The same woman bleeds for twelve days. Only the first four days (matching her habit) are haid. The other eight days are istihaadha.

A Woman's First Period (Menarche)

A girl's very first bleeding has no earlier habit to compare with. So it is judged by length alone. If it lasts ten days or fewer, all of it is haid. If it lasts longer than ten days, only the first ten days count as haid, and the rest is istihaadha. This same ten-days-and-the-rest pattern is used again for any further months of continuous bleeding, until her bleeding settles into a regular length. That length then becomes her recognised habit.

The Minimum Gap Between Periods

Two periods of haid must be separated by at least fifteen days of purity. There is no upper limit on how long the gap can be. This helps us tell real haid from istihaadha when bleeding comes back soon.

Here are some examples:

- **Example 1:** Three days of bleeding, then fifteen days pure, then another three days of bleeding. This counts as two separate periods of haid. The fifteen days in between are purity.
- **Example 2:** One or two days of bleeding, then fifteen days pure, then one or two more days of bleeding. Both times are istihaadha, because a period this short does not reach the three-day minimum for haid.
- **Example 3:** A day of bleeding is followed by fewer than fifteen days of purity, and then bleeding starts again. The whole stretch is treated as continuous. Only the first three days count as haid. The remaining days are istihaadha, because the gap in between was too short to count as a real break.

What Changes During Haid

- Prayer is completely excused during haid. A woman does not pray, and she does not need to make up these prayers later.
- Fasting is not excused in the same way. A woman does not fast during haid, but she must make up any missed fasts after her period ends.
- Marital intimacy is not permitted during haid.
- A woman may not enter a masjid, and she may not touch or recite the Quran directly. But she may still recite the kalimah, durood, and other dhikr.
- Everyday things like eating, drinking, and sleeping in the same bed together are completely fine.

> ***Did You Know?*** *Islam treats haid as a natural, expected part of life, not something shameful. The exemption from prayer during this time is a real relief, not a punishment. This is also why missed prayers during haid, unlike fasting, never have to be made up.*

Rules Concerning Istihaadha

A woman with istihaadha is treated like the ma'zur described in Chapter 7:

- She continues to pray and fast as usual.
- She makes a fresh wudu for each prayer time.
- Marital intimacy remains permitted.
- If continuous bleeding lasted beyond ten days and is later judged to be istihaadha, any prayers missed beyond the normal haid period must be made up (qada).

- When it is not yet clear whether the bleeding is haid or istihaadha, the safer way is to stop praying at first. Then decide which it is once the pattern becomes clearer. Do not guess either way.
- Bleeding during pregnancy is istihaadha, no matter how many days it continues. Bleeding just before delivery stays istihaadha until more than half of the baby has been delivered.
- If bleeding begins in the middle of a fard prayer, that prayer is excused and does not need to be made up. If it begins during a voluntary or sunnah prayer, that prayer must be made up. A fast broken this way must also be made up.

Chapter Summary

- Haid lasts at least three days and at most ten days. Bleeding outside this range is istihaadha, not haid.
- A woman's own regular pattern is used to judge unusually long bleeding.
- During haid, prayer is fully excused and does not need to be made up. But missed fasts must be made up later.
- A woman with istihaadha is treated like a ma'zur. She continues to pray and fast as usual.

Key Terms: Haid · Istihaadha

Review Questions

1. What are the minimum and maximum lengths of haid?
2. A woman who usually bleeds for five days bleeds for thirteen days one month. How many days count as haid, and how many as istihaadha?
3. Name two things that are not permitted during haid, and one everyday thing that remains permitted.
4. Why does a woman not need to make up missed prayers after haid, while she does need to make up missed fasts?

CHAPTER 15

Nifaas and Rules Shared With Haid

What Is Nifaas?

Nifaas is the bleeding that follows childbirth. Unlike haid, it has no minimum length at all. Even half an hour of bleeding counts as nifaas. Its maximum length is forty days. If bleeding continues beyond forty days, the extra days are istihaadha, and ghusl and prayer should begin again at that point.

Special Notes

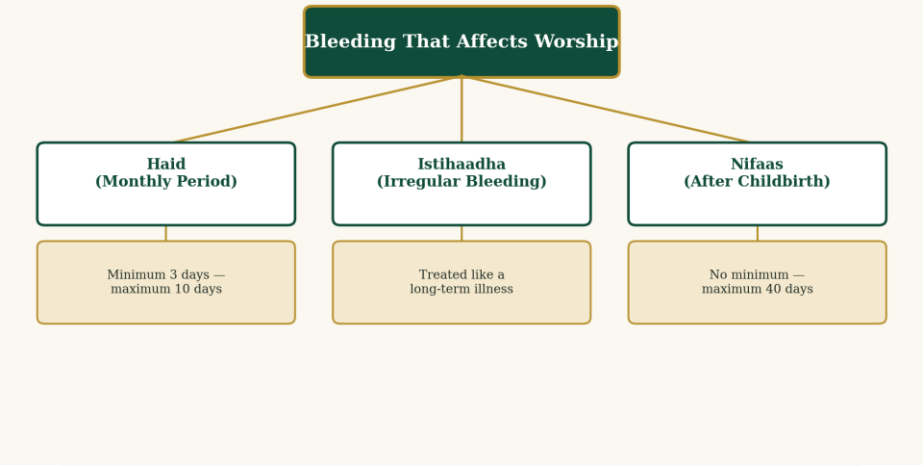
- If no bleeding happens at all after childbirth, ghusl is still required.
- If a woman miscarries, and some parts of the baby's body had already formed, any bleeding afterward is treated as nifaas. If no parts had formed yet, the bleeding is judged as either haid or istihaadha, depending on how long it lasts.
- If a woman gives birth to twins some time apart, the forty days are counted from the birth of the first child, not the second.
- If bleeding after a first childbirth continues past forty days, the first forty days count as nifaas and the rest as istihaadha. Ghusl becomes wajib so that prayer can begin again. For any later childbirth, a woman's nifaas follows her own settled habit from before, in the same way that a habit is used for haid.

Rules Shared by Haid and Nifaas

Nifaas follows almost exactly the same rules as haid, which were covered in the previous chapter:

- Prayer is fully excused, and it does not need to be made up afterward.
- Fasting must be made up later.
- Marital intimacy is not permitted.
- Entering a masjid or touching the Quran directly is not permitted until ghusl is done.

Figure 14.1 — Three Kinds of Bleeding, and How Long Each Lasts



Chapter Summary

- Nifaas is the bleeding after childbirth. It has no minimum length and a maximum of forty days.
- Ghusl is required after childbirth even if there is no bleeding at all.
- Nifaas follows the same worship rules as haid: prayer is excused, fasting must be made up, and marital intimacy and touching the Quran are not permitted until ghusl.

Key Terms: Nifaas

Review Questions

1. What are the minimum and maximum lengths of nifaas?
2. What happens if a woman does not bleed at all after giving birth?
3. In what way do the worship rules of nifaas match those of haid?

CHAPTER 16

The Virtues and Rewards of Wudu and Ghusl

Wudu as a Path to Forgiveness

This closing chapter turns from rules to reward. It looks at why Muslims are encouraged to take purification seriously. Here is what the hadith tell us about wudu:

- One hadith describes a person who recites the correct duas while making wudu and afterward. The eight doors of Paradise are opened for that person, and he or she may enter through whichever door they choose.
- Another hadith explains that as each limb is washed in wudu, the minor sins committed with that limb are washed away with the water. The eyes, the hands, and the feet are each mentioned by name.
- A further hadith sums this up simply: "Whoever performs wudu properly, his sins will be forgiven with every drop of water."

The Reward of Ghusl and Staying in Wudu

In a hadith to the Companion Anas (radiallahu anhu), the Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) explained that washing thoroughly during ghusl, reaching the roots of every hair and cleaning the body properly, leaves a person free of minor sins when he or she leaves the place of bathing. In the same hadith, he encouraged us to stay in a state of wudu as much as possible. He added that a person who dies while in wudu receives the reward of a martyr.

A Closing Thought

This chapter, and this book, end with the same idea they began with. Purification is not only about being physically clean. It prepares the whole person, body and heart together, to stand before Allah in prayer. The many detailed rules in this book are not meant to make worship hard. They exist so that a Muslim can come to every prayer with real confidence that he or she is properly prepared, and can focus fully on the prayer itself.

Chapter Summary

- Hadith describe great reward for wudu done properly, including forgiveness of the minor sins connected to each limb that is washed.
- Thorough ghusl and staying in a state of wudu are both linked in the hadith with great reward.

- Purification prepares both body and heart for prayer. This is the real purpose behind the detailed rules in this book.

Key Terms: Thawaab (reward)

Review Questions

1. According to the hadith in this chapter, what happens to a person's minor sins as he or she washes each limb in wudu?
2. What did the Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) tell Anas (radiallahu anhu) about washing thoroughly in ghusl?
3. In your own words, explain why this book ends by connecting the detailed rules of Taharah back to the purpose of prayer.

Glossary of Terms

This glossary lists the key Arabic and Islamic terms used in this book, for quick reference.

Fard — A compulsory act. If it is left out, the whole act of worship is not valid.

Ghusl — The full ritual bath required after certain conditions, such as marital intimacy or the end of a monthly period.

Haid — A woman's monthly bleeding, lasting between three and ten days.

Hadath — A state that breaks a person's purity, such as using the toilet or sleeping deeply.

Istihaadha — Bleeding outside the pattern of haid, caused by illness and not by the monthly cycle.

Istinja — Cleaning oneself after using the toilet.

Khuffain — Leather socks that cover the ankles. Masah may be done on them.

Ma'zur — A person excused from the ordinary rules of wudu because of a constant medical condition.

Makruh — Discouraged in Islamic teaching, though not sinful to do.

Masah — Wiping wet hands over something, such as the head in wudu or leather socks.

Musta'mal — Water already used to complete an act of worship. It cannot be used again for another wudu or ghusl.

Mustahab — A good, recommended practice. It is rewarded if done, but not sinful if left out.

Najaasat — Impurity.

Najaasat-e-Ghaleezah — Heavy impurity, such as blood or human waste.

Najaasat-e-Khafeefah — Light impurity, such as the urine of halal grazing animals.

Najis — Impure.

Nifaas — Bleeding after childbirth, lasting up to forty days.

Sunnah — A strongly encouraged practice, following the example of the Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam).

Tayammum — Purifying with clean earth or dust when water cannot be used.

Thawaab — Spiritual reward.

Wajib — A necessary act, close to fard in importance.

Waqf — Something given permanently in Allah's name for public benefit, such as a well or a building.

Wudu — The ordinary washing done before prayer and other acts of worship.