

The Demise of My Beloved Grandmother

By Mawlānā Muhammad Dhorat (Teacher at Madrasah Baytul Ilm)

Demise

In the early hours of Tuesday 1st October 2024, my beloved grandmother returned to the mercy of Allāh Ta'ālā. The evening prior, she fell into unconsciousness at around 6.00pm. Little was it known at the time, that it was a sleep she would not wake up from. She muttered the words, 'Ya Allāh' four times in this state. These were her final words and she never regained consciousness after this.

After many hours of uncertainty, she passed away peacefully, surrounded by the women of the family. Her final breath briefly before 1.00am was so gentle, it was unnoticeable. Alhamdulillah, the women did not wail aloud. Rather, keeping in mind the teachings of our deen, they shed quiet tears, mourning the loss of the family's most beloved member. After a few moments, the women stepped out of the room and the men of the family entered. Her sons wept silently while their tongues were busy with masnoon prayers and supplications.

The Ghusl

The time for her ghusl (ritual washing) was set for 2:30am. She was taken for the ghusl and thereafter returned to the home where she had spent her final days. After the ghusl, the women revealed an amazing observation; during the ghusl, the fingers of her right hand were gently closed with only her index finger raised, almost as if she left this world displaying her shahādah (declaration of faith).

Her face looked more beautiful and radiant than ever. There was such noor, that although she was 86 years old, she appeared significantly younger. There was a remarkable glow to her face, something indescribable that could only be appreciated by seeing it personally. People gathered and took turns to see her one last time, spending a few final moments in her presence. Her body was surrounded by the murmur of Surah Yāseen and various other verses, tasbeehāt and prayers.

The Janāzah Salāh

As the morning passed, everyone waited in anticipation for the announcement of her janāzah salāh. Hundreds of women gathered at the Al-Khayr building for a final glimpse of her beloved face. Men, in large numbers, gathered at the Islamic Dawah Academy offering their condolences to the family members. The brightness of her face was progressing by the hour and a serene smile was visible to all. She looked so peaceful as if she were merely asleep.

Despite all efforts, it was not possible for the janāzah salāh to be performed on that same morning due to legal formalities. Bound by the circumstances, the janāzah salāh had been delayed, yet it offered the chance to attain her presence a few moments more. Eventually, when the time for the janāzah salāh arrived, the household women spent their final moments with her reciting the Glorious Qur'ān and other tasbeehāt. With a heartfelt farewell, they then left the room so that the men could enter in order to take her to the masjid. We carried her on our shoulders to the Islamic Dawah Academy, a short walk yet a very emotional one.

Upon arrival, we saw that the masjid was filled to capacity. It was estimated that around 6,000 people were in attendance. It is not custom for the janāzah salāh to be performed in the masjid. However, the severe weather conditions and the anticipation of attendees in their masses demanded an alternate option to the smaller cemetery prayer hall or the local park.

Following the janāzah salāh, she was taken to the Saffron Hill Cemetery. Here she was laid to rest in her grave, allotted next to the grave of her husband, a reunion after 33 years of separation. Rahimahumallāh (May Allāh have mercy on them both). The large number of attendees, more so flourished with people of Ilm and Deen, struck hope in all our hearts that this was indeed a beloved servant of Allāh entering the eternal happiness of the life hereafter.

Preparing Ourselves

These were the events at the time of my grandmother's passing. And this is an inevitable reality for all of us. We will all depart this world one day. Allāh Ta'ālā has mentioned, "Every soul shall taste death." (3:185)

The question is; will we be leaving behind a legacy of goodness like my beloved grandmother or departing in an unfavorable state? It is essential that we live our lives in accordance with the teachings of Islām, preparing for that unknown time and leaving behind loved ones who will continue to benefit us through their work of deen and their prayers until the Day of Judgement.

With this I conclude, and I humbly request everyone to recite Surah Ikhlās at least three times and send the reward to my beloved grandmother. If you are able to do more, she - and we - will be eternally grateful. Jazākumullāhu Khayrā.