

Status of Condolence in Islamic Thoughts

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ABSTRACT

Death is the essential part of life. It is utmost important to know in the light of sharia how to condole over the death of a relative and how to heartily pray for the actual well-being of a dead persons. Today, new methods and traditions prevail among Muslim which relate to ignorant customs and rites. The ignorant customs of death are increasing instead of decreasing. Sins are committed to pursue virtues and Muslims perform them with great care. Due to this ignorance, most of our areas are the victims of false customs and traditions of Hindu and Christian religions which are caused by the conservativeness of the people. In order to bring this ignorance into considerations regarding condolence, I have collected sayings and orders those are derived from Quran and sunnah. In this article, I tried to eradicate evil customs spread by people in Islamic society in order to develop a society which is totally based on Islamic teachings.

KEY WORDS: Condolence, Islamic status

INTRODUCTION

In sharia, condolence is actually visiting the family of the dead person, praying for the comfort and lessen of grief, making them agree upon the belief that Allah will definitely reward those who are suffering, condoling the sufferers and praying for the blessing of the dead¹.

Status of condolence in sharia(Islamic):

It is obligatory for the relatives and neighbors of a dead person to condole over the death of that person's family to lessen their grief and to participate heartily in their grief and sadness. It is the duty of the neighbors and of those who are living in surroundings to arrange a lunch and a dinner for the family of the dead person. When Hazrat Jaffar (RA) and Hazrat Zaid Bin Haris(RA) martyred, Hazrat Muhammad(SAW) was there and people were coming to condole over the death of Hazrat Jaffar (RA), Hazrat Muhammad(SAW) ordered to prepare meal for the family of Hazrat Jaffar (RA) because they were busy to mourn over the death of Hazrat Jaffar (RA).

Similarly, according to sharia, a Muslim has rights over the other Muslims. One of them is that if a Muslim suffers, the other Muslim needs to help him during his sufferings and needs to try to remove his grief and sadness.

Words of condolence:

There are no proper words for condolence. However, any types of words can be used according to the situation. A Hadith tells about the words of condolence that Hazrat Muhammad (SAW)'s daughter Hazrat Zainab (RA)'s son died and the Holy prophet (SAW) condole over his death in the following words.

لله ما اخذوله ما اعطى وكل عنده باجل مسئى فلتصبروا والتحسب²

"What was taken that belonged to Allah. What was given that also belonged to Allah. Allah has his own standard for everyone. Therefore, be patient and hope for the goodwill".

Similarly, the following words are also used for condolence in Hadith

"اعظم الله اجرک واحسن جزاک وغفر لميتک³"

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"May Allah bless you with great reward and may Allah bestow upon you reward for your patience and may Allah forgive the sins of the dead."

Time for Condolence:

Condolence can be done before and after the funeral and burial of the dead. However, it is better to visit after funeral and burial because the relatives of the dead are busy in the arrangement before funeral and buried. But if the sufferings of the dead's family are severe, then it is also better to condole before burial.⁴

Gathering for Condolence:

It is just for the family of the dead to get together three days for condolence. But this order is only for males. Female are not allowed to get together for condolence.⁵

Where to get together for condolence:

It is obligatory to condole over the death of a Muslim. Therefore, an appropriate place should be chosen for get together to condole. Although, it is just to use mosque for this purpose but it is not an appreciable act to do. It is just to get together in Hujras. It is highly objectionable and awkward act to sit in front of the house of the sufferers or on roads.⁶

Who condoles to whom?

It is obligatory for male members and peaceful and chaste female members of relatives and neighbors to go for condolence of the dead's family and to condole to all members of the dead's family. However, young girls of the affected family should be condoled by those males who are Mehrrum (prohibited degree).⁷ For them, Muslims can condole the non-Muslims minority and non-Muslims minority can condole Muslims but Muslims should not pray for non-Muslim for his forgiveness.⁸

The condition of grief in Condolence:

It is a proper way to condole over the dead's family and to try to lessen their grief. It is not just to weep aloud with the dead's family to tear clothes, to pull hair and to pat thighs and faces because it has remained a custom of the people of dark age which is forbidden by the Holy prophet (SAW). However, if the grief is too heavy and tears come out of eyes then weeping without sound is just, because over the death of Hazrat Muhammad (SAW)'s son Hazrat Ibrahim (AS), the Holy prophet (SAW) wept and tears came out of his (SAW) eyes.

Pray for the forgiveness of the dead during condolence:

The specialized words for condolence in Hadiths consist of words of forgiveness as well. Therefore, the religious scholars are agreed to glorify the dead with pray for forgiveness and to say these words with raised hands because the Holy prophet (SAW) had prayed with raised hands for Hazrat Obaidabi Aamir (RA) on the news of his death.

"اللهم اغفر لعبيدك أبي عامر اللهم اجعله يوم القيامة فوق كثير من خلقك من الناس"⁹

"O; Allah, forgive Obaidabi Aamir and bless him over all human beings on doomsday"

To condole by post:

As a person can condole to the dead's family by visiting himself, the case is also the same if a person is not present or he has some unavoidable circumstances to come to condolence, he can condole by sending a letter or he can use telephone or mobile (any sources of communications) to condole, because Hazrat Muhammad (SAW) condoled Hazrat Maaz Bin Jabal (RA) by sending a letter over the death of his son.¹⁰

Condole in Graveyard:

To condole in graveyard is abominable because in graveyard, it is intended to recite the Holy Quran and to pray for forgiveness of the dead. Condolence is not intended in graveyard.¹¹

Eating of dead's home:

It is just for the guests of faraway areas to eat meal at dead's home. However, it is abominable for the local people to eat there because it is not just to demand for something to eat in the days of sufferings. However, feeding the miserable is just. Feeding all the people is not just because it is instructed to prepare meal for the dead's family rather to eat from them. Hazrat Jareer bin Abdullah (RA) says that it is considered moaning to gather and eat in dead's house and moaning is not just in Islam. So, eating there is not also just.¹²

Duration of condole:

The purpose of condolence is to gather in the grief to provide comfort to dead's family. The scholars are agreed upon that condolence for three days provides a great comfort to dead's family. Therefore, condolence must be for three days and condolence after three days refreshes the grief, therefore it is not just to condole after three days. However, if someone cannot come within three days, he is allowed to condole after three days.¹³

Re-condolence

The act of condolence is obligatory in sharia but if a person condoles once, he needs not to condole again and again because it is just a custom then which should be avoided.¹⁴

Order of silence for some moments during condolence:

Now a days, whenever a government official dies, there is silences for some moment on his funeral which is the custom of Jews and Hindus which is not just in Islam. This act has no evidence in Islam.¹⁵

Reciting for the well-being of the dead:

Condolence means making comfort for the dead's family and pray for forgiveness of the dead. Therefore, it is just to recite the Holly Quran and repeat Azkaar for the well-being of the dead or to preach according to the teaching of Quran and Hadiths for the comfort of the dead, are acceptable acts. For the comfort of the dead, physical, spiritual and financial worships are just.¹⁶

Recitation near the dead on condolence:

If the dead is clean it is bathed and coffined, then recitation near it is vastly just. However, recitation in this methods before bath is abominable. In many books, it is quoted that dead is always clean even before bathed, therefore, recitation near dead is just in Islam.¹⁷

A condolence meeting for the dead:

Here is a method to day that if a member of any Muslim are religious group dies, a meeting of that group is arranged. Recommendations are given for the condolence and prays for forgiveness. It is mostly done after three days. It is said that this meeting is not according to sharia but actually it is a symphatic meeting which provide comfort and patience to the dead's family. So, it is just in sharia.¹⁸

Re-visit for condolence on eid:

It is a custom of our region that all the people visit dead's family on eid day and pray for dead's forgiveness. In some families, women also visit for the same purpose and begin to mourn there. It is an abominable act because condolence is prohibited in Islam after three days because condolence after three days refreshes the grief. Therefore, it is not just to go for condolence on eid.¹⁹

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