

The Ghusl given by a Nurse

Q: Janaa'iz-22: Almost ninety nine percent of births here in Africa take place in hospitals. When a child is stillborn, the nurses bath the child and enshroud it, after which the child is taken directly to the graveyard for burial. However, Behisti Zewar quotes from Durrul Mukhtar that a proper Ghusl needs to be given. Please clarify.

Answer: The quotation from Durrul Mukhtar as quoted in Behisti Zewar is correct and is the most cautious approach. Nurul Idhaa and other books of Fiqh make it clear that stillborn children are to be bathed, wrapped in a cloth and buried without Janaazah salaah. While the bath given by a non-Muslim is valid (because being a Muslim is not a precondition), there are two problems with this; (1) their bath will not be according to the Sunnah and (2) the duty of preparing the body for burial is a duty of the Muslims, it is therefore necessary for the Muslims to bathe the body in the Sunnah method, whether it is done in the hospital or at home. And Allaah knows best what is most correct.

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