

Chapter: The Rulings of Wudoo' 1

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Know Oh muslim! That ablution has conditions, obligations (الفروض) and recommended actions (السنن). And the conditions and pillars have to be fulfilled if (one) has the ability so that the ablution is correct.

As for those recommended actions then they perfect the ablution and in them is extra reward, and if they were left then this would not affect the correctness of the ablution.

The conditions are Islam, intellect, age of discretion and intention. So the ablution of a disbeliever is not correct and neither the insane, the young who is not able to make a clear judgment, nor the one who does not intend to make ablution but instead he intends to cool off or he washes the parts of his body to remove some impurity or dirt.

It is also a condition of ablution that the water is pure and purifying as has been mentioned earlier, as if it was impure it would not be acceptable. And from the conditions of ablution is that the water has to be permissible as if it were acquired unlawfully or it was obtained in a un-Islamic way, then the ablution would not be correct if this was used.

Also from the conditions of ablution is that it be preceded by the cleansing of the private parts by using either water or stones (istinjaa or istijmaar) which has been explained earlier.

And likewise from the conditions of ablution is the removal of anything which would prevent the water from reaching the skin. So it is obligatory upon the one making ablution to remove that which is on the body parts of ablution, whether it be clay or dough or candle (wax) or accumulated dirt or thick dye, so that the water may flow directly on the skin of that part of the body without any barrier.

As for the obligations (الفروض) of ablution - And they are its body parts - then they are six:

1 - Washing the whole face and the washing of the mouth and nose is part of this, so the one who washes their face and leaves off the washing of the mouth and

nose or either one of them then their ablution would not be correct because the face and nose are part of the face.

And Allaah The Most High said:

“Wash your face” [Al-Maa'idah:6]

So he commanded that the whole face be washed, so whoever leaves any of it then they would not be obeying the command of Allaah.

And (likewise) the Prophet Sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam used to wash his mouth and nose.

2 - Washing the two arms including the elbows due to the saying of the most High:

“And your arms up to the elbows” [Al-Maa'idah:6]

Meaning: including the elbows.

And because the Prophet Sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam would pass the water over his elbows and in another hadeeth “He used to wash his arms all the way up to the upper arm” which shows that the elbows are included in that which is washed.

3 - Wiping the whole head, and the ears are part of the head due to the saying of the most High:

“Wipe your heads” [Al-Maa'idah:6]

And the saying of the Prophet Sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam: “The ears are part of the head”²

So washing part of the head is not acceptable.

4 - Washing the two feet along with the ankles. Due to the saying of the most High:

“And your feet to the ankles” [Al-Maa'idah:6]

And the word (إلى) here means including (مع) and this is proven by Ahadeeth which are found describing the ablution of the Prophet and verily they establish that the ankles are included in that which is washed.

5 - Performing ablution in order (as mentioned in the verse), that one washes the face first then the two arms then wipes the head then washes the feet due to the saying of the most High:

"O you who believe! When you prepare for prayer, wash your faces, and your hands (and arms) to the elbows; wipe your heads; and (wash) your feet to the ankles [Al-Maa'idah:6]

And the Prophet used to perform his wudoo' in this order and manner. And he Sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam said: "That Allaah will not accept the wudoo' except like this"³

6 - Al-Muwaalaat, and the meaning of this is that each part of the body which has been mentioned be washed in succession in a manner where there is no gap between the washing of one body part from the body part which was washed previously rather their washing should be consecutive, one washed after the other if one has the ability.

These are the obligations of ablution of which it is binding that they be performed whilst making ablution in accordance to that which Allaah mentioned in his Book. The scholars differ concerning the ruling of the tasmiyyah (saying bismillaah) at the beginning of wudoo', if it is an obligation or a sunnah, but they all hold that it is legislated, so it is not befitting to leave it off.

As for anything which is additional to that which was mentioned in the description of the ablution of the Prophet Sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, then it is recommended (Mustahab), the one who performs it will receive an extra reward and the one who leaves it off then there is nothing preventing him from that. And that is why some of the Fuqahaa call these actions the sunan of wudoo' meaning those recommended actions. And the sunan of Wudoo' are:

1 - The Siwaak and an explanation of its excellence and its manner have been mentioned earlier. And its place is while washing ones mouth so that the mouth is cleansed due to this and the washing of the mouth to allow (an individual) to turn to worship and be in the correct state to read the Qur'aan and supplicate to Allaah the most Mighty and Majestic.

2 - To wash the hands three times before washing the face at the beginning of ablution due to the presence of Ahadeeth which (mention) this, because the hands are the tool which carries the water to the other parts of the body so by washing them is a precautionary measure for the ablution.

3 - To begin with the washing of the mouth and nose before washing the face due to them being started with in the ahadeeth. And one should exert in this if they are not fasting and the meaning of exerting in washing the mouth is moving the water all around the whole mouth and in washing the nose is to take water into the nose and breathe it in to the upper part.

4 - From the recommended actions of ablution is running water through the thick beard so that it reaches the inner part and washing between the fingers of the hand and the toes of the feet.

5 - At-Tayammun, which is starting with the right arm and foot before the left.

6 - Increasing on one washing (all the way up to) three, when washing the face, arms and feet.

These are the conditions, pillars and recommended actions of ablution and it is worthy that you learn them and you strive to implement them in every ablution so that your ablution is complete therefore being in accordance to the legislated description and so that you obtain the reward..

We ask Allaah that he increases us and you in both beneficial knowledge and righteous actions.

¹ Al-Mulakhas Al Fiqhi Volume 1 Pg. 31-35 (Summarised in places).

² Reported by Ibn Majah, Ad-Daraqutni and other than them.

³ Reported by Abu Dawud and other than him.