

# Coronavirus Reminds Essence of Purification – Obligatory Physical and Spiritual Cleanliness of Muslims

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Coronavirus has forced people to practice some aspects of Islam. The whole world has embraced **quarantine** (no in or out from plague area), an old teaching of Muhammad (SWS) and **cleanliness**, another core practice of Islam. China's city of Shenzhen has banned eating cats and dogs which Islam prohibited long ago. These are some fresh examples of how practicing of Islamic *Shariah* can benefit mankind even if they are not Muslims.

Purification of body and attire are at the core of Islamic faith and prerequisites for fundamental worshipping (*salat*) of Muslims. Equally important is to purify heart, mind, soul and wealth of Muslims. Islam does not allow any impurity in any form or shape in the life of Muslims. Purification leads to successes and spiritual uplifting. As the Qur'an testifies, "He has certainly succeeded who purifies himself" (30:14).

Purification helps reduce the risk of contracting any contagious diseases including virus. Hands sanitization, washing hands with soap, keeping outer garments clean, and not coming in contact with any contamination of infected individual (social distance) are different means of keeping purified at the time of outbreak of virus. Muhammad SWS said, "Purification is half of the faith" (Sahih Musim). At the time of virus epidemic purification ensures prevention and protection from being infected and remain healthy.

Muslims remain clean by clipping nails, brushing teeth, shaving pelvic hairs, washing external impurities, taking daily bath/shower, cleaning home/bed, performing ablution (*wudu*), and avoiding any drops of urine and properly washing any excrement (faeces) after bowel movement. Even if your body is purified, you will need to make ablution before prayers (*salat*) if you are not already with *wudu*. This is so important that if you don't find water or using water is harmful to you, you must do *tiamum* (shorter version of ablution by using dry soil/stone) before *salat*.

Muslims are required to take food/drink that are *halal* (lawful) and *tayyeb* (good/excellent). This is to keep your body and soul free from impure, harmful and dangerous consumables. Wearing modest dress to cover body is another way of protecting you from external harmful objects and unclean environment. Exposed parts of the body (hand, face, feet, head) may become unclean and hence are required to be washed/wiped before performing *salat*.

For prayers all body garments must be clean, that is, they must be free from impurities or *najasaat*. Not only the garments must be washed properly but also they must be free from any spot of urine and faeces of human or other animals or birds. No matter your garment is old or new they all must be pure/clean for the validity of your *salat*. The place where you pray, including open ground, must be clean. Remember that in prayers we stand directly in front of Allah SWT so we must wear good and clean clothing in clean body.

Purification of inner-self (*nafs*) is as important as purifying body and garments. Every *ibadat* or worshipping in Islam is directed to the purification of soul or *rooh*. This is achieved by quitting all evil and engaging in good deeds for wellbeing of the creation of Allah SWT. Cleaning up of mind from doing or thinking to do any harm to anyone, and preparing for good acts of benefit to others will lead to purification of intent or *niyat*. This is important as Muhammad SWS said, "Surely all actions are but driven by intentions" (Sahih Bukhari).

Remembrance or *dhikr* of Allah is the best way to purify soul. This includes acting as per His teachings and be God-conscious all the time to avoid any sins and ensure increasing *hasanat*. Fasting in Ramadan enables Muslim to acquire this quality of *taqwa*. Similarly, giving the obligatory charity or *zakat* purifies our wealth. Five times payers keep us away from lewdness and evil deeds (29:35). Referring to five times *salat* (and ablution), Muhammad SWS said, "If there was a river at the door of anyone of you and he took a bath in it five times a day would you notice any dirt on him?" (Sahih Bukhari).