22285 - Is it permissible to bury the dead at night?

the question

If a person dies before midnight, or after midnight, is it permissible to bury him at night? Or is it not permissible to bury him until after the sun has risen?

Detailed answer

It is permissible to bury the dead at night, because Ibn ‘Abbaas (may Allaah be pleased with him) narrated that “A man died whom the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) used to visit (during his illness). He died at night and they buried him at night, and when morning came, they informed him (the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him)). He said, ‘What kept you from telling me?’ They said, ‘It was night, and it was dark, and we did not like to disturb you.’ He went to his grave and prayed for him.” (Narrated by al-Bukhaari and Muslim). He did not rebuke them for burying him at night; rather he rebuked his companions for not telling him about that until the morning. When they gave him their excuses, he accepted them.

Abu Dawood narrated that Jaabir said: “Some people saw a fire in the graveyard, so they went to it, and saw the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) in the graveyard, saying, ‘Hand me your companion.’ He was the one who used to raise his voice in dhikr.” This happened at night, as indicated by the words of Jaabir, “Some people saw a fire in the graveyard…”

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) was buried at night. Imaam Ahmad narrated that ‘Aa’ishah (may Allaah be pleased with her) said: “We did not know that the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) had been buried until we heard the sound of the shovels at the end of the night.” Abu Bakr, ‘Uthmaan, ‘Aa’ishah and Ibn Mas’ood were all buried at night.

The reports which indicate that it is makrooh to bury the dead at night are to be interpreted as referring to cases where burying a person at night may lead to the prayers for him not being

offered properly, as was stated in the saheeh hadeeth, or his shrouding not being done properly, and it is easier for those who want to attend the funeral to do so during the day, and it is easier to bury him properly and to follow the Sunnah when placing the deceased in the lahd during the day. This is in cases where it is not essential to hasten to bury him. Otherwise we should hasten to bury him even if that is at night.

And Allaah is the Source of strength. May Allaah bless our Prophet Muhammad and his family and companions, and grant them peace.