178535 - The Sunnah is to make the grave deep, but is there a difference between the grave of a woman and the grave of a man?

the question

What is the reason for the difference in grave depth between males and females?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

It is recommended to make the grave deep, whether it is for a male or a female, an adult or a child, because of the report narrated by Ahmad (22368) from an Ansari man who said: We went out with the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) for the funeral of an Ansari man, and I was a young boy with my father. The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) sat at the edge of the grave and started instructing the digger: “Make it wider at the place of the head and make it wider at the place of the feet.” Classed as authentic by Shaykh al-Albani (may Allah have mercy on him) in *Ahkam al-Jana’iz*.

It was narrated that Hisham ibn `Amir said: We complained to the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) on the day of Uhud. We said: O Messenger of Allah, digging [a grave] for every man is difficult for us. The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “Dig, make it deep and do it well.”

Narrated by an-Nasa’i (1983); classed as authentic by al-Albani in *Irwa’ al-Ghalil*, 743.

Secondly:

The scholars (may Allah have mercy on them) differed as to whether making the grave deep is

obligatory or recommended. Most of them are of the view that it is recommended, but Ibn Hazm said that it is obligatory, and Shaykh al-Albani (may Allah have mercy on him) favoured that view.

Ibn Hazm (may Allah have mercy on him) said: Making the grave deep is obligatory, and burying the Muslim is obligatory… Then he quoted as evidence what we have mentioned above, and said: The Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) did not excuse them from making the grave deep.(A*l-Muhalla*, 3/338).

Shaykh al-Albani (may Allah have mercy on him) said: It is obligatory to make the grave deep and wide, and to do it well. Two hadiths were narrated concerning that…(*Ahkam al-Jana'iz*, 1/142).

The correct view is that what is required is whatever will make it a real burial, protect the deceased from wild animals, and prevent any smell emanating from the grave, which would disturb the living and put them off visiting the grave. There is no specification regarding that in Islamic teachings; rather it varies according to the circumstances, but what goes beyond that and makes it perfect is recommended, but is not obligatory.

Al-Bahuti (may Allah have mercy on him) said: The Sunnah is to make the grave deep and wide, without any specific dimensions, because the Prophet (lettings and peace of Allah be upon him) said regarding the graves for the slain of Uhud: "Dig, make it deep and do it well." … What is sufficient is that which will prevent wild animals reaching the body and will prevent any smell coming out, because that fulfils the purpose. It is the same for both men and women.(*Daqa'iq Uli an-Nuha*, 1/372).

In *Bulghat as-Salik* (1/578), which is a Maliki book, it says: The minimum depth of the grave is that which will prevent any smell coming from the body and will protect it from wild animals. There is no limit to the maximum depth, but it is recommended to make it deep. End quote.

Shaykh Ibn `Uthaymin (may Allah have mercy on him) said: Making the grave deep is Sunnah, so it should be dug deeply. What is required is that which will prevent wild animals from eating the body and prevent any smell from coming out. The fact that it must prevent wild animals and smells is by way of respect for the deceased, and lest that bother the living and contaminate the

air with the smell. This is the minimum that is required, but if the grave is made deeper, that is better and more perfect, but there is no text to specify how deep it should be. Some of the scholars stated that the depth should be the height of a man, but this is difficult for people.(A*sh-Sharh al-Mumti`*, 5/360).

There is no difference in that regard between the grave of a man or the grave of a woman, or the grave of a child or the grave of an adult, because the sanctity of all is the same, and the purpose of burial is the same in all these cases.

And Allah knows best.