

The Signs of The Hour And What After Death



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English

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Before the Last Hour

The Appearance of the Dajjal
The Descent of the Prophet Esa
The Great Battel

علامات

الساعة وماذا بعد الموت

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The Dajjal or the false Messiah

The Dajjal or the false Messiah will appear as the end of the world approaches. The time he stays will be the time of immense trial for all humanity. Although all of Allaah's Prophets had warned their people about him, our Prophet Muhammed (May the Peace and Blessings of Allaah be upon him) was particularly concerned for his Ummah about him. This is because the Prophet ﷺ knew that since he is the last of the Prophets, the Dajjal will undoubtedly appear during the time of his Ummah. He said: "*There will be no greater tribulation on the face of the earth since the time Allaah created the children of Adam than the Dajjal. Verily, no Prophet was sent who did not warn his people from the Dajjal, and I am the last of the Prophets, and you are the last of the nations, and so he will inevitably appear from amongst you.*"¹

The state of Muslims before the appearance of The Dajjal

Just before the appearance of the Dajjal the Muslims will be at the peak of their military power, and it seems to be that his purpose will be to destroy this power. At that time, the Muslims will make a peace treaty with the Romans, and together they will conquer and win, but the Romans will break the treaty. The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ informed us: "*You will make a peace treaty with the Romans and together you will invade an enemy beyond Rome. You will be victorious and take much booty. Then you will camp in a hilly pasture when one of the Romans will come and raise a cross and say, 'Victory to the Cross', so one of the Muslims will come*

¹ Collected in Sunan Ibn Majah, Kitaab al-Fitan, 2/1363, Ibn Khuzaymah, and Al-Hakim.

*and kill him. Then the Romans will break the treaty and prepare for al-Malhamah (the great battle)."*²

The Great Battle with the Romans

This great battle between the Muslims and the Christians, which the previous Hadeeth mentioned, is also described in numerous other Hadeeths. There will be among the ranks of the Muslims a large number of men who will abandon Christianity to embrace Islam and become best of the Muslims, and the Christians will especially go after them. The Prophet ﷺ, *"The Hour will not come until the Romans (i.e. the Christians) camp at Al- A'maq or Dabiq. An army, composed of the best people on earth at that time, will come out of Madinah to meet them. When they arrange themselves with ranks, the Romans will say: "Do not stand between us and those who took prisoners from amongst us. Let us fight them." The Muslims will say, "No by Allaah, we will not stand aside and let you fight our brothers." Then they will fight. One third will run away, and Allaah will never forgive them, one third will be killed and will be the best of the martyrs in the sight of Allaah. Another third, who have never been subject to trials, will win and conquer Constantinople. After they hang their swords on the olive trees and begin to divide the booty. Satan will shout to them that the Dajjal has taken their place among their family. They will run out but will find that it is not true. However, when they reach Al-Sham³, the Dajjal will appear. While they are preparing to fight him, and drawing up their ranks, prayer time will come and then, 'Isa (عليه السلام) the son of Maryam will descend."*⁴

The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ has talked at length about *Malhamah* (or great battle) and how terrible it will be, and the great sense of sacrifice the Muslims will display. He ﷺ said, *"The Hour will not come until the people will not be able to divide inheritance, nor*

² Collected in *Sunan Abu Dawood, Kitaab al- Malahim*

³ present day Syria, Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon

⁴ Collected in *Saheeh Muslim, Kitaab al-Fitan, Hadeeth no.6924*

rejoice over booty." Pointing towards Al-Sham, he said: "An enemy will gather forces against the Muslims, and the Muslims will gather forces against them." A companion asked: "Do you mean the Romans?" He said: "Yes, and at that time there will be terrible fighting. The Muslims will prepare a detachment to fight to death, and they will not return unless they are victorious. They will fight until night intervenes, both sides will take booty but none will be victorious, and the detachment will perish. Then the Muslims will prepare another detachment to fight to death, and not return unless they are victorious. They will fight until night intervenes, both sides will take booty but none will be victorious... On the fourth day, the Muslims who are left will return to fight, and Allaah will make their enemy to be defeated. There will be a battle the like of which has never been seen, so that even if a bird were to pass their ranks, it will fall dead before it reaches the end of them. Out of a family of one hundred, only one man will survive, so how could he rejoice of any booty or divide any inheritance?"⁵

The features of the Dajjal

Although the Dajjal will claim that he is Allaah, and will perform mighty acts to convince people of his claim, he will have some physical features that will undoubtedly show his defects, and every true believer will not fail to recognize them. The Prophet ﷺ has described them at length. The Prophet said, "He is bulky, red face, with curly hairs, one eyed, his other eye looks like a floating grape... The man who looks closest to him is Ibn Qatan from Khuza'ah."⁶

The Prophet ﷺ has also said: "I have told so much about the Dajjal until I feared that you might not comprehend. The Dajjal is a short man, bowlegged, with curly hair, one eyed. His eye is extinguished, it is neither protruding nor deep-seated. If you are

⁵ Collected in Saheeh Muslim, *Ktab al-Fitan*, Hadeeth no.6927.

⁶ Collected in Sahih al-Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Fitan* vol.9. Hadeeth no.242

*confused, know that your Lord is not one eyed, and that you will never see your Lord (in this world)."*⁷

The Prophet ﷺ has extensively described the Dajjal's eye because it will be plain for everybody to notice. His other defect is obvious only to the believers, as Prophet ﷺ said, *"Allah did not send any Prophet but that he warned his nation of the one-eyed liar (Ad-Dajjal). He is one-eyed while your Lord is not one-eyed. And written between his two eyes is - Kaf, Fa', Raa ('Kaafir' or unbeliever)"*⁸

These words will be actually written between his eyes, and they not be an allusion, because the Prophet ﷺ has spelled them out, but they will be seen only by the believers whether they know how to read or not, as mentioned in the following Hadeeth, *"On his forehead will be written the word Kafir, and every believer, whether literate or illiterate, will be able to read it."*⁹

The Capabilities of the Dajjal in Spreading Turmoil

The Dajjal will claim to be Allaah, and he will be given certain extraordinary capabilities that will subject people to great trials. Some of his capabilities include:

1. He will move with great swiftness around the earth: The Prophet ﷺ described his movement to be: *"like a cloud driven by the wind."*¹⁰ He ﷺ also said: *"there is no place he will not visit except Makkah and Madinah."*¹¹

2. He will have a river of water and river of fire: The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ has informed us, *"He (the Dajjal) will have two flowing rivers. One will appear to be pure water and the other will appear to be flaming fire. Whosoever lives to see that,*

⁷ Collected in *Musnad of Imaam Ahmed & Sunan Abu Dawood* Hadeeth no.4306

⁸ Collected in *Sahih al-Bukhari* (Eng. Trans.) vol.9, Hadeeth no.505 and *Saheeh Muslim* and *Sunan at-Tirmidhee*.

⁹ Collected in *Saheeh Muslim, Kitaab al-Fitan* 4/2245

¹⁰ Collected in *Sahih al-Bukhari* vol.3, Hadeeth no.105

¹¹ Collected in *Sahih al-Bukhari* vol.3, Hadeeth no.105 and *Saheeh Muslim*

let him choose the river that seems to be fire, then let him close his eyes and drink from it, for it will be cold water.”¹² The Prophet ﷺ also said: “He has cool water and fire, but his water is fire and his fire is cool water.”¹³

3. He will get help from the devils: “He will say to a Bedouin: ‘What will you think if I bring your father and mother back to life for you? Will you bear witness that I am your Lord?’ The Bedouin will say, ‘Yes’, so the two devils will assume the appearance of his father and mother and will say: ‘O son, follow him, for he is your lord.’”¹⁴

This is another proof that Dajjal is a disbeliever and an evil man, because the devils do not lead their help except to the worst of evil men.

4. Animals and objects will execute his order: “He will come to the people and invite them (to a wrong religion); they will affirm their faith in him and respond to him. He will then give a command to the sky: there will be rainfall upon the Earth and it will grow crops. Then in the evening, their pasturing animals will come to them with their humps very high, their udders full of milk and their flanks distended. He will then come to another people and invite them. But they will reject him so he will go away from them; they will have a drought and nothing will be left with them in the form of wealth. He will then walk through the desert and say to it: Bring forth your treasures. The treasures will come out and gather before him like a swarm of bees.”¹⁵

The Dajjal’s time will be a time of extreme trials as Allaah created him to be a test for people. Only those people whose faith is strong will resist the great temptation, and the might of the Dajjal. He will

¹² Related by Muslim, *Kitaab al-Fitan*, 4/2249, no. 2934

¹³ Collected in Sahih al-Bukhari, *Kitaab al-Fitan*

¹⁴ Collected in Sunan Ibn Majah, *Ibn Khuzaymah*, and *Al-Hakim*

¹⁵ Collected in *Saheeh Muslim*, Hadeeth no.7015

rule on earth for forty days but they would not be like the days we are accustomed to. When the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ was asked about Dajjal's stay on the earth, he ﷺ said, "*For forty days, one day like a year, one day like a month, one day like a week, and the rest of the days will be like your days.*" The Sahabah (the Companions of the Prophet) who were always concerned about matters of faith and worship asked, "O Allah's Messenger, will one day's prayer suffice for the prayers of the day equal to one year? Thereupon he ﷺ said: *No, but you must make an estimate of the time (and then observe prayer).*"¹⁶

This means that the day will be truly lengthened, and it will not be merely due to people's imagination. During these days he will roam the earth and visit every place except Makkah and Madinah, as the Prophet ﷺ said: "*Madinah will not see the terror of Dajjal, for it will have, at that time seven gates with every gate guarded by two angles.*"¹⁷

These two holy places will also be cleaned from all disbeliever who will then come out to follow Dajjal, as mentioned by the Prophet ﷺ, "*There will be no town that Dajjal will not visit, except Makkah and Madina, for all their gates will be guarded by angels surrounding them. So he will camp at the salt marsh (near Madina). Madina will be shaken by three tremors, after which every disbeliever and hypocrite will leave it.*"¹⁸

Most of the Dajjal's followers will be from the Jews, "*The Dajjal would be followed by seventy thousand Jews of Isfahan wearing Persian shawls.*"¹⁹

The reason is that the Jews will believe him to be a miracle from Allaah and will return to them their Kingdom. They will call him the Messiah, son of David.

¹⁶ Collected in *Saheeh Muslim Hadeeth* no.7015

¹⁷ Collected in *Sahih al-Bukhari, Kitaab al-Fitan*, vol.3, Hadeeth no. 103 & vol.9, Hadeeth no.240

¹⁸ Collected in *Sahih al-Bukhari* (Eng. Trans.) vol.3, Hadeeth no.105

¹⁹ Collected in *Saheeh Muslim* (Eng. Trans.) no. 7034

The Dajjal is alive and imprisoned in an isolated island

The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ once gathered the Muslims in the Masjid (mosque) and said: *"I have detained you here because Tamim Dari, a Christian who came and accepted Islam, told me something which agrees with what I was telling you about the Dajjal. He narrated to me that he had sailed in a ship with thirty men of Banu Lakhm and Banu Judham and had been tossed by waves in the ocean for a month. Then these (waves) took them (near) the land within the ocean (island) at the time of sunset. They sat in a small rowing-boat and landed on that island. There was a beast with long thick hair (and because of this) they could not distinguish his face from his back.*

They said, "Woe to you, who can you be?"

Thereupon it said, "I am al-Jassasah"

They said, "What is al-Jassasah?"

It said, "O people, go to this person in the monastery as he is very much eager to know about you."

He (the narrator) said, "When it named a person for us we were afraid of it lest it should be a Devil". Then we hurried on till we came to that monastery and found a well-built person there with his hands tied to his neck and iron shackles gripping his legs by the ankles.

We said, "Woe to you, who are you?"

He said, "You soon come to know about me, but tell me who you are".

We said, "We are people from Arabia and we embarked upon a boat but the waves had been driving us for one month and they brought us near this island. We took to the rowing-boats and landed on this island." [The travelers then explained that they were sent by al-Jassasah (the beast) to the cave] So we came to you in hot haste fearing that that might be the Devil.

He (that chained person) said, "Tell me about the date-palm trees of Baysan".

We said, "In which respect do you seek information about it?"

He said, "I ask you whether these trees bear fruit or not".

We said, "Yes"

Thereupon he said, "I think these will not bear fruit"

He then questioned, "Inform me about the lake of Tabariyyah?"

We said, "What do you want to know about it?"

He said, "Is there water in it?"

They said, "There is an abundance of water in it"

Thereupon he said, "I think it will soon dry up"

He again said, "Inform me about the spring of Zughar."

They said, "What do you want to know about it?"

He (the chained person) said, "Is there water in it and does it irrigate (the land)?"

We said to him, "Yes, there is an abundance of water in it and the inhabitants (of Medina) irrigate (land) with its help."

He said, "Inform me about the unlettered Prophet; what has he done?"

We said, "He has left Mecca and has settled in Yathrib (Medina)"

He said, "Do the Arabs fight against him?"

We said, "Yes"

He said, "How does he deal with him?"

We informed him that he had overcome those in his neighborhood and they had submitted themselves before him.

Thereupon he said to us, "Had it actually happened?"

We said, "Yes"

*Thereupon he said, "If it is so that is better for them that they show obedience to him. I am going to tell you about myself. I am the Dajjal and will be soon permitted to leave. So I shall leave and travel in the land, and shall not spare any town where I shall not stay for forty nights except Mecca and Medina: these two (places) are prohibited (areas) for me and I shall not attempt to enter either of them. An angel with a sword in his hand will confront me and bar my way and there will be angels to guard every road leading to it."*²⁰

The Dajjal will finally be destroyed by Prophet 'Isa ؑ who will descend to earth and spread peace.

The Descent of Isa ؑ

Prophet 'Isa ؑ (Jesus) son of Maryam, was raised up to heaven when the Jews wanted to crucify him. His ascension to heaven and his future return to earth are mentioned in the Qur'aan, *"That they said (in boast): We killed the Messiah Isa ؑ, the son of Maryam, the Messenger of Allaah', but they killed him not nor crucified him, but the resemblance of Isa ؑ was put to another man (and they killed that man), and those who differed from them are full in doubts. They have no certain knowledge, they follow nothing but conjecture. For surely, they killed him not, but Allaah raised him up unto Him. And Allaah is ever all-powerful, All Wise. And there is non-of the people of the Scripture but must believe in 'him before his death. And on the Day of Recurrence, he ('Isa) will be a witness against them"*²¹

'Isa ؑ will return at the end of time, as stated in the Qur'aan, *"And he (Jesus) shall be a Sign of the Hour"*²²

Prophet 'Isa ؑ will descend at a time when the Muslims are experiencing the great hardships. He will come to their help and

²⁰ Collected in *Saheeh Muslim* (Eng. Trans.) Hadeeth no.7028

²¹ Soorah An-Nisa', (4):157-159

²² Soorah al- Zukhurf, (43): 61

make the religion of Allaah prevail on earth. The Muslims will recognize him by the features, which Prophet Muhammed ﷺ described him. He said, *"I am the closest of all the people of Isa, son of Maryam, for there is no Prophet between him and myself. He will come again and when you see him, you will recognize him. He is of medium height and his complexion is reddish-white, he will be wearing two garments, and his hair will look wet, although no water had gone through it."*²³

The time Prophet Isa ﷺ will descend

The coming of Isa ﷺ will be a glad tidings for the Muslims who stood firm and fought for the cause of Allaah and did not succumb to the temptation of Dajjal. At that time, the only two options for humanity will be to embrace Islam or die.

*"It will at this very time that Allah will send Christ, son of Mary. He will descend at the white minaret on the eastern side of Damascus, wearing two garments lightly dyed with saffron and placing his hands on the wings of two Angels. When he lowers his head, there will fall beads of perspiration from his head, and when he raises it up, beads like pearls will scatter from it. Every non-believer who smells the odour of his body will die and his breath will reach as far as he is able to see. He will then search for him (Dajjal) until he catches hold of him at the gate of Ludd and kills him. Then a people whom Allah had protected will come to Jesus, son of Mary, and he will wipe their faces and inform them of their ranks in Paradise. It will be under such conditions that Allah will reveal to Jesus these words, "I have brought forth from among My servants such people against whom none will be able to fight; you take these people safely to Tur"*²⁴

He will descend when the Muslims who gather to fight the Dajjal are preparing their ranks for Fajr (morning) prayer, and their Imam had advanced to lead them. The Imam will then step back and ask

²³ Collected in *Musnad of Imaam Ahmed* 2/406

²⁴ Collected in *Saheeh Muslim* (Eng. Trans.)

Isa to advance and lead the prayer, but he will refuse. Prophet Muhammed ﷺ informed us, *"While their Imam is going forward to lead them in Fajr prayer, 'Isa son of Maryam will descend. The Imam will step back to let Isa lead people in prayer, but Isa will place his hands between the mans shoulder and say, "Go forward and lead the prayer for the iqamah (call to commence the prayer) was made for you, and so the Imam will lead people in prayer."*²⁵

This symbolic gesture from 'Isa ﷺ to let the Imam lead the prayer will be to show that he will be following the true religion, Islam, and will not bring forth any rules different from the Islamic Shari'ah.

Armageddon and the destruction of the Dajjal

The first thing Prophet 'Isa ﷺ will accomplish, will be to kill the Dajjal with his own hands, *"Afterwards (i.e. after the Imam finishes the prayer), 'Isa will say, "Open the gate". They will open it and behind it will be the Dajjal and seven thousand Jews, each bearing a sword and a shield. When the Dajjal sees 'Isa, he will begin to dissolve like salt in water and will run away. 'Isa will say, "You will remain alive until I strike you with my sword." Isa will catch up with him at the eastern gate of Ludd and kill him, and the Jews will be defeated with the help of Allaah."*²⁶

Therefore the first person to be killed at the hands of Isa ﷺ will be the Dajjal. The Jews will be defeated with the help of Allaah. There will be no place for them to hide; they will not be able to hide behind any stone, wall, animal or tree-except the Box-thorn²⁷ (al-Gharqadah), for it is of three trees.

²⁵ Collected in *Sunan Ibn Majah*, *Kitaab al-Fitan* 2/1363, no.4077, *Ibn Khuzaymah* and *Al-Hakim*

²⁶ Collected in *Sunan Ibn Majah*, *Ibn Khuzaymah*, and *Al-Hakim*

²⁷ Any one of various ornamental shrubs of the nightshade family, some of which are grown for their bright red or orange berries. [*World Book Dictionary*]

The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said, *"The Last Hour would not come unless the Muslims will fight against the Jews and the Muslims would kill them until the Jews would hide themselves behind a stone or a tree and a stone or a tree would say, 'O Muslim (or the servant of Allah) there is a Jew behind me, come and kill him; but the tree Gharqad would not say, for it is the tree of the Jews.'"*²⁸

After killing the Dajjal and relieving people of his oppression, Isa عليه السلام will concentrate on the task he was sent to accomplish. This task will be to rule people with justice and equity by applying the Islamic Shari'ah, with which our noble Messenger, Muhammed ﷺ was sent to establish. He will abolish all practices that did not confirm to the Shari'ah, *"By the one Whose Hand my soul is, surely the son of Maryam will come down among you as a ruler. He will break the cross, kill the swine and abolish the Jizyah. Wealth will be in such abundance that no one will care about it, and the single Sajdah (prostration) will be better than the world and all that in it."*²⁹

Isa عليه السلام will fight the disbelievers, and abolish all other religions until everybody worships Allaah.

Peace on Earth

Before the end of the world, there will be last and decisive battle between the truth and falsehood. Truth will be triumph, and peace and prosperity will prevail on earth. In this great battle, Prophet Isa عليه السلام and the Muslims will be on one side, while the disbelievers, led by Dajjal will be on the other side.

The Prophet ﷺ said: *"During his (Isa's) time, Allaah will end every religion and sect other than Islam, and will destroy the Dajjal. Then peace and security will prevail on earth, so that the lions will*

²⁸ Collected in *Saheeh Muslim* (Eng. Trans.) Hadeeth no.6985

²⁹ Collected in *Sahih al-Bukhari* (Eng. Trans.) vol.4, Hadeeth no.657

graze with camels, tigers with cattle, and wolves with sheep. Children will be able to play with snakes without coming to any harm. Isa will remain on earth for forty years, then he will die, and the Muslims will pray on him."³⁰

It will indeed be forty years of exceptional life on earth as portrayed by this Hadeeth, *"Peace will prevail and people will use their sword as sickles. Every harmful beast will be made harmless. The sky will send down rain in abundance, and the earth will bring forth its blessings."*³¹

*"Hatred will disappear. Every harmful animal will be made harmless, so that the infant will put his hand into the snake's mouth without being harmed, and the little girl will be able to make the lion run away from her, the wolf will go among the sheep as if it were a sheep-dog. The earth will be filled with peace as a container is filled with water. People will be in complete agreement, and only Allaah will be worshipped. The earth will be like a silver basin, and it will produce fruits so abundantly that a group of people will gather to eat a bunch of grapes or one pomegranate and will be satisfied. A bull will be worth so much of money, but a horse will be worth only a few Dirhams."*³²

People's activities will concentrate on plowing the land and bringing forth crops, and they will abandon fighting, to the point that the horse, which is used in the wars, will be much cheaper than the bull, which is used to plough the land. For forty years, humanity will experience such prosperity and peace it had never experienced before. Then Isa ~~will~~ will die, and mankind will again plunge into the abyss of ignorance and apostasy to the end of time when the Hour will come upon the worst of people and destroy them.

³⁰ Collected in *Musnad of Imaam Ahmed* 2/406

³¹ Collected in *Musnad of Imaam Ahmed* 2/482,483

³² Collected in *Sunan Ibn Majah, Kitab al-Fitan*, 2/1363, Hadeeth no.4077.

How to protect oneself from the Dajjal

The Dajjal will come at a time when the Muslims emerge victoriously from the Supreme Battle. His purpose will be to destroy the Islamic military power that will have defeated the strongest power on earth at that time, namely the Christians. However the Muslims will not put down their arms but they will prepare themselves to fight the Dajjal if he lives to witness him, by joining the Muslim forces under the banner of *Jihaad* for the sake of preserving the Deen. By no means the Muslim should come near the Dajjal even if he was sure of himself, because the Dajjal has so many temptations and tricks that could shake any strong faith. The Prophet ﷺ, warned us, *"Whoever hears about the Dajjal, should stay away from him, for by a man could come to him believing he is a strong Mu'min (believer), but then he follows him because of the doubts he will spread."*³³

The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ has described the physical features, the deeds and the power of the Dajjal in great length so that it will be easy to recognize him. He has shown us the means to protect ourselves from the Dajjal. They are:

1. Seeking refuge with Allaah from the tribulation of the Dajjal

The Prophet ﷺ commanded the Muslims to seek refuge with Allaah from the Dajjal in every prayer. He himself used to say this supplication at the end of each prayer after the last tashahhud, *Allahumma ini a'udhu bika min 'adhabi-l-Qabr, wa min 'adhabi-nnar, wa min fitnati-l-mahya wa-l-mamat, wa min fitnati-l-masih ad-dajjal."* Which means: O Allah! I seek refuge with You (O Allaah) from the punishment in the grave and from the punishment of the Hell fire and from the afflictions of life and death, and the afflictions of Al-Masih Ad-Dajjal."³⁴

³³ Collected in *Sunan Abu Dawood* Hadeeth no.4305

³⁴ Collected in *Sahih al-Bukhari* vol.6, Hadeeth no.230

2. Memorizing the first verse of Surat 'Al-Kahf':

Whoever sees the Dajjal should recite the first ten verses of Surat 'al-Kahf' (Soorah 18 of the Qur'aan) as a protection from him. The Prophet ﷺ commanded the Muslims to do so, saying: *"Whoever lives to witness the Dajjal, let him recite the opening verses of Surat Al-Kahf."*³⁵

He ﷺ also said, *"Whoever memorizes the first ten verses of Surat Al-Kahf will be protected from the Dajjal."*³⁶

3. Taking refuge in Makkah or Madina:

The Dajjal will never be able to enter Makkah or Maddina. These two places are sanctuaries and are safe from the Dajjal, for the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said: *"There will be no town the Dajjal will not visit, except Makkah and Madina, for all their gates will be guarded by angels that will be surrounding them."*³⁷

And he also said; *"Madina will not see the terror of Dajjal, for it will have seven gates with every gate guarded by two angels."*³⁸

³⁵ Collected in *Saheeh Muslim* Hadeeth no.7015

³⁶ Collected in *Saheeh Muslim* Hadeeth no.1766

³⁷ Collected in *Sahih al-Bukhari* vol.3, Hadeeth no.105

³⁸ Collected in *Sahih al-Bukhari* vol.9, Hadeeth no.240



"And the agony of death comes with the truth. That is what you used to flee from!"¹



Death is the separation of the soul from the body, and we all know that it is inevitable. It is an event that marks our transition from this world into the Hereafter.

When the *Sahabee*, Uthman ؓ stood by the side of a grave, he wept and he wept so bitterly that his beard became wet with tears. It was said to him: You do not weep over the discussion of Paradise and Hell, but you weep over it (grave). Whereupon he said that Allaah's Messenger ﷺ had said, *"Verily the grave is the first step in the stages of the Hereafter; if one finds salvation (at this stage) the succeeding (stages) become easy for him, and if he does not find salvation in it, what follows this stage is very hard upon him. Allaah's Messenger also said: I have never seen a site more horrible than that of the grave."*²

Belief in the events following death is an integral part of Islamic creed. Although the existence of the Hereafter may be rationally proved, the exact details of it can only be acquired through instructions from the Creator, for these events fall in the realm of the Unseen (al-Ghayb). Thus, all one requires as proofs in this matter are verses of Qur'aan and Hadeeth from the authentic Sunnah. Having become convinced of the truthfulness of the Prophet Muhammed ﷺ, the believer should feel no reservations in accepting what he has conveyed.

As mentioned earlier, death marks the separation of the soul from the body. The precise nature of the soul is beyond our comprehension. The Prophet ﷺ was asked about the soul twice, once in Makkah by the Quraysh (as related by Ahmed) and once in Medina by the Jews (as related by *Bukhari & Muslim*).

¹ Soorah Qaaf (50): 19

² Collected in *Ibn Majah & Sunan at-Tirmidhee* Hadeeth # 132 (The Alim Islaamic Software ver. 4.5)

Narrated by Ibn Masood ؓ: "I was with the Prophet at one of the farms of Medina while he was leaning on a date palm leaf-stalk. He passed by a group of Jews and some of them said to the others, "Ask him (the Prophet) about the spirit (Rûh/soul)." Some others said, "Do not ask him, lest he should tell you what you dislike." But they went up to him and said, "O Abal Qasim! Inform us about the spirit." The Prophet stood up for a while, waiting. I realized that he was being Divinely Inspired, so I kept away from him till the inspiration was over. Then the Prophet recited (the verse), "... *they ask you regarding the spirit, Say: The spirit its knowledge is with my Lord (i.e. nobody has its knowledge except Allaah).*"³

The human soul differs from that of the animals in that it is held accountable. However, the souls of those who turn away from the truth, shun guidance and persist in obeying their base lusts and vain desires, become lower in status. They are no better than animals, and Allaah has cautioned us against such souls *"Relate to them the story of the man to whom We sent our signs but he passed them by: so Satan followed him up and he went astray. If it had been Our Will We should have elevated him with our signs; but he inclined to the earth and followed his own vain desires. His similitude is that of a dog: if you attack him he lolls out his tongue or if you leave him alone he (still) lolls out his tongue."* Soorah al-A'raaf (7):175-176

Departure from this World

*"Until, when death comes to one of them, he says, 'My Lord! Send me back, that I may do right in that which I have left behind!' By no means! It is but a word that he says. And behind them is a barrier until the day when they will be raised."*⁴

This verse makes it quiet clear that there is no returning to this world after death, nor is there any delay in the execution of the order. *"But Allaah does not reprieve any soul when its (appointed) term has come."*⁵

Everyone feels the agony of death. Aaisha radiyallaahu-anhaa relates that when the Prophet was on his deathbed, he was holding a pot full of

³ Soorah al-Israa (17):85. This Hadeeth has been collected in *Sahih al-Bukhari* (Eng. Trans.) [vol.9. Hadeeth no.400] This is a miracle of the Qur'aan that all the scientists up till now do not know about the spirit, i.e how life comes to a body and how it goes away at its death.

⁴ Soorah al-Mu'minun (23): 99-100

⁵ Soorah al-Mu'nafoon (63): 11

water, washing his face, saying, *"La ilaha illallaah - Truly, death has its own agony!"*⁶

Punishment in the Grave is a Reality

The Prophet's wife, Aaisha (May Allaah be pleased with her) said that a Jewess came to her and mentioned the punishment in the grave, saying to her, "May Allaah protect you from the punishment of the grave." Aaisha then asked Allaah's Messenger about the punishment of the grave. He said, *"Yes, (there is) punishment in the grave."* Aaisha added, "After that I never saw Allaah's Messenger but seeking refuge with Allaah from the punishment in the grave in every prayer he prayed."⁷

It is essential to believe in the punishment in the grave. The primary Qur'aanic evidence for it is in the account of Pharaoh and his disbelieving kin. *"The Fire; they are exposed to it morning and evening; and on the day when the Hour is established, (it will be said): Enter the household of Pharaoh into the severest punishment."* Soorah Ghafir (40): 46

This verse is quite explicit that the punishment they are receiving is prior to the Day of Judgement i.e. during the life in the grave. There is also abundant evidence in the authentic Sunnah, such as the following Hadeeth; The Prophet once passed by two graves and said, *"These two persons are being tortured not for a major sin (to avoid). One of them never saved himself from being soiled with his urine, while the other used to spread tales (to make enmity between people)."* The Prophet then took a green leaf of a date-palm tree, split it into (pieces) and fixed one on each grave. They said, "O Allah's Messenger! Why have you done so?" He replied, *"I hope that their punishment might be lessened till these (the pieces of the leaf) become dry."*⁸

Narrated by Zayd ibn Thabit ؓ. As Allah's Messenger ﷺ was going with us towards the dwellings of Banu an-Najjar. While riding his pony, it shied and he nearly fell off. He found four, five or six graves there. He said: *"Which of you knows about those lying in the graves?"* Someone said, "I do." Thereupon he (the Holy Prophet) said, *"In what state did they die?"* He said. "They died as polytheists." He said, *"These people are passing through the ordeal in the graves. If it*

⁶ Collected in *Sahih al-Bukhari*, (Eng. Trans.) vol. 5, Hadeeth no. 730

⁷ Collected in *Sahih Al-Bukhari* (Eng. Trans.) vol.2, Hadeeth no.454.

⁸ Collected in *Sahih al-Bukhari*, (Eng. Trans.) vol.1, Hadeeth no.217 & *Sahih Muslim*

were not for the fact that you would stop burying (your dead) in the graves if you heard the torment in the grave, which I hear, I should have certainly made you listen to it.” Then turning his face towards us, he said, *“Seek refuge in Allah from the torment of Hell.”* They said, “We seek refuge in Allah from the torment of Hell”. He said, *“Seek refuge in Allah from the torment of the grave.”* They said, “We seek refuge in Allah from the torment of the grave”. He said, *“Seek refuge in Allah from turmoil, its visible and invisible (aspects)”*. They said, “We seek refuge in Allah from turmoil and its visible and invisible aspects”⁹. He said, *“Seek refuge in Allah from the turmoil of the Dajjal”*. They said, “We seek refuge in Allah from turmoil of the Dajjal”¹⁰.

Exemptions from the Punishment in the Grave

The Prophets are exempted from the punishment in the grave. The martyr is also exempted from the questioning, because the clashing of the sword above his head was a sufficient trial for him. However, anyone other than a Prophet is liable to be subjected to a squeezing from the grave on his or her sides. If anyone were to have been saved from it, it would have been Sa'd ibn Mu'adh ؓ according to a Hadeeth of the Prophet ﷺ. This squeezing is gentle for a good believer, and thereafter the grave expands and becomes spacious, but it is so severe for the disbeliever that his ribs interlock.

One can protect oneself from the punishment in the grave (other than the squeezing), by:

- ① Regular repentance; for in this way one will have few if any outstanding sins.
- ② Martyrdom: being killed in the battlefield while fighting the cause of Allaah.
- ③ Dying while guarding the frontline of the Islaamic land.
- ④ Reciting Surah 67 [AL-Mulk] every night.
- ⑤ Saying laa ilaaha illallaahul-malikul-haqqu-l-mubeen 100 times every day.

⁹ This includes all calamities faced by Muslims.

¹⁰ *Sahih Muslim* (Eng. Trans.) Hadeeth no.6859.

How can we help the deceased?

① **By offering the funeral prayers over their bodies:** This is a communal obligation, such that at least some in the community must perform the prayer over a Muslim who dies, otherwise everyone who was capable of having prayed over him, but did not do so, is sinful.

② **By doing good deeds which can benefit them:** The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said, *"When a man dies, his good deeds come to an end, except for three (things): ① Perennial charity ② a pious child who prays for him (for the deceased) or ③ knowledge (by which people) benefit after him."*¹¹

Perennial charity, is the charity that the person gave (before his death) for some good cause from which people continue to benefit on an ongoing basis, such as money given towards a masjid. Scholars are in consensus that the deed can benefit from our supplication for them, and from charity given on their behalf, as well as from Hajj and fasting. Truly, the moment of death is one of the most important moments of one's life. The Shaitan is ever present at that time to tempt one away from believing in Allaah. Hence, it is important for us to remain steadfast in our commitment to the Deen, right up to the moment we die.

*"Our Lord! Let not our hearts deviate from the truth after you have guided us, grants us mercy from you. Truly, you are the Grantor."*¹²

Difference between the Death of a Believer and a Disbeliever.

There is an enormous difference in the experiences after death faced by a Believer and those of a disbeliever. It was reported that al-Bara' ibn Azib said, "We went out with the Prophet ﷺ in order to partake in the funeral rites of one of the Ansar. We arrived at the grave, but the inner chamber had not been prepared yet, so Allaah's Messenger ﷺ sat down facing the Qiblah, and we sat around him attentively. He had a stick in his hand with which he sketched on the ground. Then he began looking alternately to the heaven and to earth, raising his gaze and lowering it. Finally, he said two or three times, *'Seek refuge in Allaah from the torment of the grave.'* Then he said, *"O Allaah, verily I seek refuge in You from the torment of the grave."* He repeated it three times, then he elaborated, *"Verily when the believing servant is leaving this world and entering the next, angels from the heavens descend to him - their faces white*

¹¹ Collected in Saheeh Muslim (Eng. Trans.) Hadeeth no. 4005

¹² Soorah al-Imran (3): 8

with brightness like the sun and carrying with them burial sheets and scents from Paradise. They sit before him at a distance as far as the eyes can see. Then the Angel of Death comes to the person, sits at his head and says, "O good soul, come out to your Lords forgiveness and pleasure." Thereupon the soul flows out of the body like the water flowing out of the waterskin and all of the angels between the heaven and the earth supplicate for Allaah's blessing upon him. The Angel of Death barely receives the soul in his hand, whereupon the other angels take it from him and wrap it with fragrant sheets. There exudes from the soul a scent like the most beautiful fragrance of musk that one could find on the face of the earth. The angels ascend with the soul, never passing a host of angels without hearing them ask, "Who is this wonderful soul?" They reply, "So and so, the son of and so." Addressing him with the best names he was known by in his earthly life. Upon reaching the first heaven, the angels' request that it be open for the soul - which is granted. Angels of each heaven then accompany the soul until it reaches the one above it and finally arrives at the seventh heaven.

Then Allaah the Mighty and Majestic, says, (to the angels) "Place the record of My servant in 'illiyun." The persons record is then placed in 'illiyun, whereupon a command is heard: "return him to the earth, for verily I have promised mankind that having created them from earth, I will return them to it, yet another time." Then the soul is returned to earth, back to its body. Verily, the deceased hears the shuffling feet of his companions who attended his burial as they turn away and leave his grave. Thereupon two angels, severe in interrogation, come to him, and sitting him up, they begin to ask him questions.

They say, "Who is your Lord?" He replies, "Allaah is my Lord."

They continue, "What is your religion?" He answers, "Islam is my religion." They proceed with the questioning, saying, "Who is this man that has been sent to you?"

He responds, "He is the Messenger of Allaah."

Finally, they ask him about his deeds, to which he replies, "I read Allaah's books and believed in it."

Upon the believers answering these questions, a voice is heard in the heaven, saying, "My servant has told the truth, so clothe him in the clothing of Paradise, spread for him the furnishings of paradise, and open for him a window with a view of Paradise."

Thereupon a breeze of fresh air engulfs him and fragrance, while the expanse of his grave is expanded before him as far as the eye can

see. There appears before him a man with a wonderful face and dressed in beautiful clothes, emitting a splendid fragrance. He says to the soul, "Rejoice at the news which will gladden you! Rejoice at Allaah's pleasure and Paradise, whose joys and delights never end. This is the day you were promised."

The deceased says to him, "And who are you?, for your face bears glad tidings!" The person answers, "I represent your deeds: by Allaah, I've always known you to be quick in obedience to Allaah and slow to His disobedience. May Allaah award you with good."

Then a door to Paradise is opened, and a door to fire is opened, whereupon, it is said to him (regarding the Hellfire), "This would have been your final abode had you disobeyed Allaah, however it has been exchanged for this other abode (i.e. Paradise)." When the soul sees what is in the Paradise, he exclaims, "My Lord, hasten the arrival of that Hour so that I may be joined with my family and my wealth." There upon it is said to him, "Rest in tranquillity."

Allaah's Messenger ﷺ continued, "When the disbeliever servant is about to leave this world and enter the next, angels, powerful and severe, descend to him from the Heaven - their faces black and carrying with them coarse cloth from Hell. They sit before him at a distance as an eye can see. Then the Angel of Death arrives, and sitting at the head of the disbeliever and says, "O you foul soul. Come out to the anger and wrath of your Lord." The soul inside the disbelievers body is overcome by terrible fear (and does not want to deliver itself up), whereupon the Angel of Death violently pulls it out like multi-pronged skewers being yanked out of the wool- tearing with them the arteries and nerves. Upon this, the soul is cursed by every angel between the heaven and the earth and by those inside the heaven. Then the doors of the heaven are closed to him, and every single guard at these doors beg Allaah that this soul not be carried up in front of him and wrap it with coarse cloth. There emits from it the foulest odor that could be found on the face of the earth. They ascend with it, never passing a host of angels without being asked, "Who is this ugly soul?" They reply, "So and so, the son of so and so." Using the worst name he was known in this world. When they arrive at the lowest heaven, they request that it be open for this soul, but the request is denied.

At this time Allaah's Messenger ﷺ recited the following verse: "And whoever ascribes partners with Allaah, it is as though as he has fallen from the sky, such that birds snatch him up or the winds throw him to a remote place."

[Surah Hajj (22): 31]

Then he commented, *"Verily (when the soul is returned to its body), the deceased hears the sound of his companions footsteps as they turn away from his grave.*

Then two angels, severe in interrogation, come to him, and sitting him up, they begin to question him, "Who is your Lord?" He replies, "Oh! Oh! I don't know."

They continue by asking him, "What is your religion?"

He answers, "Oh! Oh! I don't know?"

So they ask, "Then what do you say about this man who was sent to you, Muhammed?"

Again he says "Oh! Oh! I don't know I only heard people talking about him."

Then it is said, "You did not know and you did not read!" Thereupon a voice from the heaven is heard, "He has lied! So spread out for him a place from the fire and open for him the window to the fire."

The fearing hot winds of Hell engulf him while his grave closes in upon him, crushing him until his ribcage is broken by force - causing the rib of one side to intertwine with the ribs of the other. Then there appears to him a man with an ugly face and ugly clothing and exuding a foul odor, who says, "Tidings of evil for you, for this is the day for which you were promised!" The deceased says to him, 'And you, too; for your is a face that pretends evil."

The person rejoins, "I represent your wicked deeds. By Allaah I have always known you to be slow in obedience of Allaah and quick in disobedience to Him. May Allaah reward you with evil!" Then one who is deaf, dumb and blind and is carrying an iron rod is sent to the deceased. If he were to strike a mountain with it, the mountain would disintegrate into rubble. He strikes the deceased with a blow, which turns him into dust. Allaah returns the deceased to his original form, whereupon he is struck a second time. This causes him to shriek with such violence that it is heard by all the creation except from mankind and Jinn. Then a door to the fire is opened, and beddings of fire are spread out for him, whereupon he cries, "Lord do not establish the Hour."⁴³

May Allaah give us Death whilst in the state of Islaam

¹³ Related by Sahih al-Bukhari.

علامات الساعة وماذا بعد الموت

مكتب جاليات القصيم



المكتب التعاوني للدعوة والإرشاد وتوعية الجاليات بالسييم

الرياض - هي المثار - مقابل العيادات الخارجية مستشفى البعثة

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