

Death and Grave



In the Name of Allāh, the Merciful, the Compassionate

"And the agony of death comes with the Truth; that is what you used to flee from!" Qur'ān [(50) Qāf, 19] Death is the separation of the soul from the body, and we all know that it is inevitable. It is the event which marks our transition from this world into the Hereafter. Whenever 'Uthmān (رضي الله عنه) used to stand over a grave, he used to weep until his beard became soaked. Someone said to him, "Heaven and Hell are mentioned, and you do not weep, and [yet] the grave is mentioned, and you weep, [how is this]?" He said, "I heard the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) say : **The grave is the first stage of the Hereafter. So, if he is saved from it, that which is after it will be easier, whereas if he is not saved from it, then that which is after it will be more severe.**" [Tirmidhī]

Belief in the events following death is an integral part of the Islamic doctrine. Although the existence of the Hereafter is rationally admissible, the exact details of it can only be acquired through communication from the Creator, for these events fall in the realm of the Unseen. Thus, all one may demand as proofs in this matter are verses of the Qur'ān and authentic aḥādith. Having become convinced of the veracity of the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ), the believer has no hesitance in accepting what he has brought.

The Soul (the Rūḥ)

As we have already mentioned, death is 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 Aḥmad], and once in Madīna by the Jews [as related by Bukhārī and Muslim]. On the authority of 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه): He said : [Once,] while I was walking with the Prophet (ﷺ) in a garden, and he was leaning on a palm-branch, some Jews passed by. Some of them said, "Ask him about the soul." Others said, "Don't ask him [in case he tells you something you will dislike to hear]." But [eventually] they asked him about the soul. They said, "O Muḥammad, what is the **soul**?" He

continued leaning on the palm-branch [and did not reply immediately]. I asserted that he must be receiving inspiration [and so I stayed put]. Then, [when the inspiration had descended] he said, **"They ask you about the soul. Say : the soul is of my Lord's decree, and you have been given only a little knowledge."** Qur'ān [17:85] [Related by Aḥmad and Bukhārī]

The **human soul** differs from that of animals in that it is accountable. However, the souls of those who turn away from the truth, shun guidance and persist in satisfying their base lusts, become lower in status. They are no better than animals, and Allāh has cautioned us against such behavior : "Recite to them the account of he to whom We gave Our signs, but he extricated himself from them, and Satan caused him to follow him, so that he became one of the misguided. And, if We had willed, We would have elevated him by means of them, but he clung to the earth and followed his desires. Therefore, his likeness is the likeness of the dog; if you prompt him, he lolls out his tongue, but if you leave him, he [still] lolls out his tongue." Qur'ān [(7) Al-A'rāf, 175- 176]

Departure from this world

"Until, when death comes to one of them, he says, 'My Lord! Send me back, in order that I might work righteousness in that which I have left [behind]!' By no means! It is only a word which he says. And behind them is a barrier until the day when they will be raised up." Qur'ān [(23) Al-Mu'minūn, 99-100] This verse makes it quite clear that there is no returning to this world after death, nor is there any reprieve. "Allāh does not reprieve any soul when its [appointed] term has come." Qur'ān [(63) Al-Munāfiqūn, 11]

- Angels descend upon the **good believers** at the time of death, and give them glad tidings of Heaven. "Those who say, 'Our Lord is Allāh,' and then remain upright, angels descend upon them, [saying], 'Fear not, nor grieve, and receive glad tidings of the Garden which you had been promised. We are your friends and protectors in this world and in the Hereafter.'" Qur'ān [(41) Fussilat, 30]
- Angels also come to **the disbelievers**, but rather than comforting them, they beat them. "If only you could see when the angels receive the disbelievers, striking their faces and their backs, and [saying] : Taste the punishment of the Inferno! That is because of what your own hands prepared, and Allāh is not at all unjust to [His] servants." Qur'ān [(8) Al-Anfāl, 50]

The **extraction of the soul** occurs either gently or roughly, depending on the person's worldly conduct. Then, the soul is clothed and perfumed, either pleasantly or unpleasantly, again depending on the person's belief. The angels carry the soul upwards, towards the seventh heaven. The gates of the heavens open for believing souls, and Allāh manifests Himself to them before they are returned to their graves.

On the other hand, "Those who deny Our signs and remain arrogant before them, the gates of the sky do not open for them." Qur'ān [(7) Al-A'rāf, 40] The disbeliever's soul is therefore cast back to the earth in disgrace. "And whoever associates others with Allāh, it is as if he has fallen from the sky, and is seized by the birds, or dropped by the wind in a distant place." Qur'ān [(22) Al-Ḥajj, 31]

The Life of the Grave

After this upward excursion, the soul is returned to the body in the grave, and this marks the start of what is often called the **Life of the Grave**. The return of the soul to the body is not to the same extent as it was during the worldly life; rather, it is only to a small extent, the soul's presence being even less than that during sleep. The primary purpose of this is to allow the dead person to respond to the **Questioning of the Grave**. The Prophet (ﷺ), "When a servant is laid in his grave and his friends have turned away from him and he hears the footfalls of their sandals, two angels come to him, sit him upright, and ask him, 'What used you to say about this man Muḥammad?' The believer will answer, 'I testify that he is the slave of Allāh and His Messenger', and it will be said, 'Look at your place in Hell, Allāh has changed it for a place in Heaven', and he will behold both of them. As for the hypocrite or the disbeliever, he will [also] be asked, 'What used you to say about this man?' but he will reply, 'I do not know; I [merely] used to say what people said.' He will be told, 'You did not know, nor did you follow [one who knew], and [then] he will be struck a blow with iron hammers, whereupon he will cry out with a scream which is heard by [all] those around him, other than humans and jinn." [Related by Bukhārī.]

Other narrations add that these angels are named **Munkar** and **Nakīr**, and their appearance is very terrifying. They ask **three questions** in all, the first two being "**Who is your Lord?**" and "**What is your religion?**", and the third being about the Prophet (ﷺ), as mentioned in the narration above. "Allāh fortifies the believers with the strengthening word" Qur'ān [(14) Ibrāhīm, 27], allowing them to answer the questions correctly, and then they sleep peacefully and pleasantly until the Day of Judgement. Sinful Muslims and disbelievers, however, are liable to be punished during this time.

Grave Punishment is a reality

On the authority of 'Ā'ishah *radiallāhu 'anhā* : a Jewess entered upon her and said, "May Allāh grant you refuge from the Punishment of the Grave." So, 'Ā'ishah *radiallāhu 'anhā* asked the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) about grave-punishment, whereupon he (ﷺ) said, "Yes. Grave-punishment is a reality." 'Ā'ishah said, "I never saw the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) offer any prayer thereafter in which he did not seek refuge with Allāh from grave-punishment." [Related by Bukhārī and Muslim]

It is obligatory to believe in grave punishment

The primary Qur'anic evidence for it is in the account of Pharoah and his disbelieving kin. "The Fire; they are exposed to it by morning and afternoon. And, on the Day the Hour is established, (it will be said), 'Enter the Household of Pharoah (into) the severest punishment.'" Qur'ān [(40) Ghāfir, 46] This verse is quite explicit that the punishment they are receiving is prior to the Day of Judgement, i.e. during the life of the grave. There is also abundant evidence in the authentic aḥādīth of the Prophet (ﷺ), such as the following hadith : The Prophet (ﷺ) passed by two graves, and said about their occupants, "They are being punished for something which was not serious [according to them], but, indeed it was serious. One of them used to make **Namīmah**, that is, spread tales [in order to cause mischief and enmity between people], and the other used not to free himself from [traces of] urine." Then, he took a fresh palm-leaf stalk, split it in two halves, and implanted one in each grave. He was asked, "O Messenger of Allāh! Why have you done that?" He (ﷺ) said, "[The punishment] might be lightened for them, as long as [the two stalks] do not dry up." [Related by Bukhāri and Muslim.]

Exceptions from the Punishment

Prophets (**Ambiyā**) and martyrs (**Shuhadā'**) are exempted from grave punishment. The martyr (**Shahīd**) is also exempted from the questioning, because the clashing of swords above his head was a sufficient trial for him. However, everyone other than the prophets is liable to be subjected to a squeezing from the grave on their sides. If anyone were to have been saved from it, it would have been **Sa'd ibn Mu'adh** (رضي الله عنه). 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 grave punishment (other than the squeezing), by:

- Regular repentance; for in this way one will have few if any outstanding sins.
- Martyrdom; being killed in the battlefield while fighting in the path of Allāh.
- Dying while guarding the frontline of the Islamic land. (i.e. dying in ribāt).
- Reciting Surah 67 (Al-Mulk) every night.
- Saying **Lā ilāha illallāhul-malikul-ḥaqqul-mubīn** 100 times every day.

How can we help dead Muslims?

- By offering the funeral prayer over their bodies. This is a communal obligation, such that at least someone 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. "If a Muslim dies and forty people who do not associate anything with Allāh join the funeral prayers, Allāh accepts their intercession for him." [Related by Muslim]

- By doing good deeds which can benefit them. "When the son of Adam dies, his good deeds come to an end, except from three [things] : **1**- Perennial charity, or **2**- a pious child who prays for him, or **3**- knowledge by which people benefit after him." [Related by Muslim, Nasā'ī, Abū Dawūd and Tirmidhī.] Perennial charity is 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 mosque. Scholars are in consensus that the dead can benefit from our supplication for them, and from charity given on their behalf, as well as from Hajj and fasting performed on their behalf.

The Approach of Judgement Day

"O mankind! Indeed, Allāh's promise is true, so do not let the life of the world delude you, nor let the Deluder (Satan) delude you from Allāh." Qur'ān [(35) Fātir, 5] "And they inquire from you, 'Is it (the Day of Judgement) true?' Say, 'Yea. By my Lord! Indeed, it is true. And you shall not escape.'" Qur'ān [(10) Yūnus, 53]

The **Last Day** is so named because there is no day (of this world) after it. On that day, Allāh will cause this world to perish, and will replace it with another wherein people will be given the dues of their worldly actions. This world, with the precise and well-defined roles of its constituents, indicates the existence of a wise, knowing Creator. Yet, sometimes, we see people around us getting other than what they deserve. Very good people might suffer greatly, while evil, dishonest individuals might escape the hand of the law, and live in luxury and wealth which they have amassed by illicit and immoral means. Thus, there must be another life, in which all will receive their just reward or punishment. This place is therefore a place of toil and action. "Blessed be He in Whose Hand is sovereignty, and He has power over all things. He who created death and life, in order that He might test you, [as to] which of you is best in conduct. And He is the Mighty, the Forgiving." Qur'ān [Al-Mulk, 1-2] 'Ali (رضي الله عنه) said, "Today there is action, and no reckoning. Tomorrow, there is reckoning and no action." [Related by Bukhāri.] The intelligent individual is therefore he who reflects over the universe around him, and comes to this realization.

"Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of night and day, are signs for people of intellect. Those who remember Allāh standing, sitting and on their sides, and ponder over the creation of the heavens and the earth. [They say,] 'Our Lord! You have not created this in vain; free from all defect are You [exalted above creating without purpose], therefore preserve us from the punishment of the Fire.'" Qur'ān [(3) Āl-'Imrān, 190]

So Allāh has praised those who use their intellect, and correspondingly He has castigated those who refuse to use their minds, and who consequently deny the Hereafter. "Nay, those who believe not in the Hereafter are in punishment and far error. Have they not observed what is before them and what is behind them of the Heavens and the earth? If We willed, We could make the earth swallow them, or

cause pieces of the sky to fall on them. Indeed, therein is a sign for every penitent servant." [(34) Saba', 9] The Prophet (ﷺ) has said about Qur'ān [3:190], "Woe to him who recited it without pondering over it." [Related by Ibn Marduyah.]

Imām Ḥasan Basrī said, "An hour's contemplation is better than a night's standing in prayer."

Thus, it is imperative that we accept and believe that this world, and all it contains, has been created for a purpose. Nothing of Allāh's creation is in vain. "We have not created the Heavens and the earth and [all] that is between them in vain; that is the conjecture of those who disbelieve, so woe from the Fire to those who disbelieve! Or, shall We treat those who believe and do good deeds like those who work corruption in the land? Or, shall We treat the pious like the wicked?" Qur'ān [(38) Ṣād, 27-28]

A person who is certain of the existence of the Hereafter will reflect this belief in his life. He will feel a sense of responsibility for his beliefs, words and actions. He will strive to be sincere and truthful, to worship his Lord, and to desire good for his fellow creatures. "O you who believe! Keep your duty to Allāh, and let every soul look [to] what it has prepared for the morrow, and fear Allāh! Indeed, Allāh is well-acquainted with what you do. And be not like those who forgot Allāh, so that He caused them to forget their own selves; those are the transgressors. Not equal are the Companions of the Fire and the Companions of the Garden. The Companions of the Garden are the victorious ones." Qur'ān [(59) Al-Hashr, 18-19]

The Time of Occurrence of the Last Day

Its exact time is known only to Allāh. "They ask you about the Hour, when will its coming be? Say : its knowledge is only with my Lord. None will reveal it at its time save Him. [Its knowledge] is weighty upon the [inhabitants of the] heavens and the earth. It will not come to you except suddenly. They ask you as if you are well-informed about it. Say : Its knowledge is only with Allāh, but most of mankind do not know." Qur'ān [(7) Al-A'rāf, 187] At the end of the Jibril Ḥadīth, the angel Gabriel (عليه السلام) asked the Prophet (ﷺ), "When is the Hour?" He replied, "The questioned is not more knowledgeable about it than the questioner," and then recited a verse of the Qur'an. "Indeed, with Allāh is the knowledge of the Hour." Qur'ān [(31) Luqmān, 34]

Thus, it is totally forbidden to engage in speculation or calculation in order to try to predict the end of the world. Anyone who believes that a psychic or fortune-teller shares in Allāh's knowledge of the Hidden, has left Islām. On the authority of Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) : "Whoever came to a diviner, or a fortune-teller, and affirmed him in that which he said, has disbelieved in that which was revealed to Muḥammad (ﷺ)" [Related by Nasā'i, Abū Dawūd, Tirmidhī, Ibn Mājah and Al-Ḥākim.] Nor is it permissible to visit psychics and the like for fun, and the person who does risks

losing his prayers for forty days. "Whoever came to a fortune-teller, and asked him about something and then affirmed him, the Ṣalāt of forty days will not be accepted from him." [Related by Muslim.]

Signs before the Day of Judgement

Although the exact time of the Day of Judgement is known only to Allāh, there are certain events and signs which will occur on the earth prior to it. These signs are categorized into minor and major signs.

Minor signs

[•• For further and detailed information on the Minor signs of Day of Judgement, please refer to the appendix on page 31 at the end of this supplement. Once you've read the appendix, pls. cont. from here again. ••]

The minor signs are those which start occurring well before the Day of Judgement, and which in themselves are not strikingly extraordinary. The Prophet (ﷺ) mentioned, as reported at the end of the Gabriel Ḥadith, that among its signs are "that the slave-girl will beget her mistress, and that you will see barefoot, naked, poor shepherds [competing with one another in] building tall buildings." [Related by Muslim.]

On the authority of Anas ibn Mālik (رضي الله عنه): He said: I heard the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) say, "Indeed, among the portents of the Hour are that knowledge will decrease, ignorance will abound, adultery will become widespread, wine will be drunk, and women will abound and men will become scarce, to the extent that there will be a single provider for fifty women." [Related by Bukhārī and Muslim].

On the authority of Anas (رضي الله عنه): The Prophet (ﷺ), "Among the portents of the Hour is that people will compete with one another in [building and decorating] mosques." [Related by Nasā'ī.]

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه): While the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) was talking, a Bedouin came and asked, "When is the Hour?" [The Prophet (ﷺ)] replied, "When trust is lost then await the Hour." [The Bedouin] asked, "How will its loss occur?" He replied, "When affairs are rested with those unworthy of [handling] them, then await the Hour." [Related by Bukhārī.]

Major signs

The major signs are those which will occur closer to the Day of Judgement, and they are bizarre and remarkable. They are usually counted as the ten mentioned in the following hadith. On the authority of Hudhayfah ibn al-Asīd Ghifārī (رضي الله عنه): he said: The Prophet (ﷺ) found us while we talking about the Hour. He asked, "What are you discussing?" We said, "We are speaking of the Hour." He said, "It will not be established until you have seen before it ten signs:

1- the smoke, **2-** the Antichrist, **3-** the Beast, **4-** the Rising of the Sun from its setting place; **5-** the Descent of Jesus, Son of Mary (ﷺ); **6-** Ya'jūj and Ma'jūj; **7-** three earthquakes : an earthquake in the East, **8-** an earthquake in the West, and **9** - an earthquake in the Arabian peninsula; and **10-** the last of those is a fire which will emerge from Yemen, driving people to their gathering place." [Related by Muslim, Abū Dawūd, Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah.]

The End of this World

Eventually, "the worst people will remain [on the earth] . . . who neither recognize good nor spurn iniquity. Then, Satan will materialize before them and say, 'Will you not hearken [to me] ?' Thereupon, they will ask [him], 'What do you command us?' Then, he will command them to worship idols, and in that condition, their sustenance will be plentiful and their life good. Then, the Trumpet will be blown . . . The first to hear it will be a man who will be plastering the water-trough of his camels, and then he will swoon away, and [the remainder of] mankind will swoon away. Then, Allāh will send, or send down (the narrator is not sure) a rain like dew, or like a shadow (the narrator is unsure again), and then the bodies of mankind will grow from it. Then, [the Trumpet] will be blown a second time, and behold! They will be standing, looking." [Related by Muslim.]

The blasts on the **Trumpet** are mentioned in several places in the Qur'an, and scholars differ as to whether their total number is two or three." On the day the Trumpet shall be blown, then whoever is in the heavens and whoever is on the earth will be terrified, except those whom Allāh wills [to exempt]." Qur'ān [(27) An-Naml, 87] "And the Trumpet is blown, and then whoever is in the heavens and whoever is on the earth will swoon away, except those whom Allāh wills [to exempt]." Qur'ān [(39) Az-Zumar, 68] Some scholars are of the opinion that these are two separate blasts on the Trumpet, while others considered that they are one and the same, such that people will first be terrified, and then fall unconscious and die. Those whom Allāh will exempt are the martyrs of the battlefield, for they are living before their Lord, receiving sustenance; and some of the chief angels. After that, Allāh will command the Angel of Death to take the souls of the remainder, and finally the Angel of Death will die. Then, Allāh alone will remain, being the Last as He was the First. He will ask, three times, "To whom belongs sovereignty this day?" and then will reply Himself, "To Allāh, the One, the Overcomer."

This intermediate period will endure for forty years.

The Resurrection and Gathering



In the Name of Allāh, the Merciful, the Compassionate

“Praise be to Allāh, Who created the heavens and the earth, and made the darkness and the light. Yet, those who disbelieve hold [others] as equal to their Lord. He it is Who created you from clay, then decreed a term, and there is an appointed term with Him, and yet you doubt. And He is Allāh in the heavens and the earth. He knows that which you keep secret and that which you announce, and He knows what you earn.” Qur’ān [6 (Al-An’ām), 1-3]

The Resurrection

After the intermediate realm of forty years, Allāh will again command the angel Israfil to blow the Horn. “ . . . then [the Horn] will be blown another time, and behold! they shall be standing, looking.” [(39) Al-Zumar, 68] Allāh will cause a special rain, called “The Water of Life”, to fall, and will thereby cause the bodies to grow from ‘ajab al-dhanab (a small bone at the end of the spine), in the same way as plants grow.

It is essential to believe in the bodily resurrection. Just as both the body and soul participated in either obeying or disobeying Allāh in this world, so it is only fitting that they should both receive the appropriate recompense of punishment and/or reward. A bodily resurrection is not rationally inconceivable, and furthermore, the texts of the Qur’an and authentic ahādith are quite explicit in their mention of physical pleasures and punishments in the Hereafter, such that there is no room left for doubt. It was only some deviant individuals and groups, who, under the influence of the corrupt ideas of people of other religions and of the pagan philosophers, started to deny this fact, claiming that the Hereafter is purely spiritual, or that Heaven and Hell are mere states of mind which are consequential upon a person’s worldly conduct. Such beliefs display an obstinacy in accepting that which Allāh has conveyed to us, and are the fruits of baseless imaginings and Satanic whisperings which afflict those who are not content with clearly-stated, obvious truths. Imām Ghazzali pronounced a verdict of disbelief (**Kufr**) on the **philosophers** on three counts : their claim that :

- 1 the **universe is eternal**, their
- 2 **denial of the bodily resurrection**, and their
- 3 **denial that Allāh knows the minute details of things.**

The Qur'an advances logical arguments to convince those who may be skeptical about the bodily resurrection. "[Allāh] it is Who begins the creation, and then repeats it, and it is easier for Him. And His is the highest description in the heavens and the earth, and He is the Mighty, the Wise." Qur'ān [(30), al-Rūm, 27] So, Who created and then destroyed is certainly able to return that creation to existence.

Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه) said, "All is easy for Him." In another verse, we are reminded of our lowly beginnings, and that in fact that there was a time when we did not even exist. "Has man not seen that We created him from a [mere] drop, and yet, behold! he is an open adversary! He coins a similitude for Us, and forgets his creation; he says, 'Who will give live to bones when they are decomposed?' Say : He will give life to them Who initially brought them into existence, and He is knowledgeable of all kinds of creation. He Who has made for you fire from the green tree, so that you obtain kindling therefrom. Is He Who created the heavens and the earth not capable of creating their like? Indeed, and He is the Supreme Creator, the Knowing." Qur'ān [(36) Yā-Sīn, 78-81]

And, on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه): the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said : Allāh, the Exalted, says, "The Son of Adam has given lie to Me, although he may not do so, and he has vilified Me, although he may not do that. As for his giving lie to me, it is his saying, 'He will not bring me back [to life] in the manner in which He began me.' Yet, the first creation is not any easier for Me than its repeat. And, as for his vilifying Me, it is his saying, 'Allāh has taken a son,' although I am the One, the Eternally-Besought, Who neither begets nor was begotten, nor is there any like unto Him." (Narrated by Bukhāri, Aḥmad.)

The Gathering

The resurrected will be faced with an unfamiliar and terrifying scenario. "And, on the day when We shall cause the mountains to move [away], and you shall see the earth exposed, and We shall gather them, not missing any one of them." Qur'ān [(18) Al-Kahf, 47]

Imām Fakhra'd-Dīn al-Rāzi said in his exegesis (Tafsīr), putting together this and other related information from the Qur'an : "The mountains shall go through five stages on the Day of Resurrection : [first] shattering, then [they will be] like carded wool, then like scattered dust, then they will be blasted and dispersed, then they will disappear."

Isrāfil (عليه السلام) will summon the dead to their gathering, and the earth will split to let them out. "Listen, the day when the Summoner shall summon from a nearby place. The day they shall hear the Shout (i.e. the Blast on the Horn) in truth; that

will be the Day of Emergence. The day when the earth shall split [to allow them] to hurry out; that is a gathering which is easy for Us." Qur'ān [(50) Qāf, 41-44] The first over whom the earth shall split is the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ), as is narrated by Muslim. The Land of the Resurrection is called **al-Sāhirah** [See Qur'ān (79) Al-Nazi'āt, 14.], and in the following hadith, we find it described. "Mankind shall be gathered on a reddish-white land, like a clean, round, flat loaf of bread, not bearing the imprint of anyone." (Narrated by Bukhārī, Muslim.)

Creatures of the Resurrection Plain

Mankind and jinn will be gathered there in their entirety, including even the rebellious devils. "Then, by your Lord! We shall surely gather them, and the devils, and then We shall bring them around Hell on their knees." Qur'ān [(19) Maryam, 68. See also (6) Al-An'ām, 128] Also, "the days will be gathered in their forms." (Narrated by Ṭabarānī.) The earth shall be gathered there. "On that day, [the earth] shall relate its **news**, because your Lord shall have inspired it." Qur'ān [(99) Al-Zalzalah, 4- 5] On the authority of Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) : The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) recited these verses, then asked, "Do you know what its **news** is?" The Companions replied, "Allāh and His Messenger know best." He said, "Its **news** is that it testifies over every male and female concerning that which he/she did on its surface; that it says, 'He did such-and-such on such-and-such day. That is its news.'" [Related by Aḥmad, Tirmidhī, Nasā'ī.]

Animals will also be resurrected. "There is no animal upon the earth, nor any bird which flies with its two wings, except that they are nations like you. We have not neglected anything in the Record. Then, to their Lord shall they be gathered." Qur'ān [(6), Al-An'ām, 38] 'Abdur-Razzāq has reported that Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) said that Allāh will judge between the animals, and then after they have been given their justice, they will be turned to dust. At this point, the disbeliever will wish that he, too, would have been turned to dust. [See Qur'ān (78)Al-Naba', 40.]

Terrors of the Resurrection Plain

Mankind will be resurrected **barefoot**, **naked** and **uncircumcized**, but the Prophets will have clothes. The first to be clothed will be Abraham (عليه السلام). Scholars have deduced that the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) will be resurrected clothed.

There will be other terrifying and humiliating occurrences also. On the authority of Miqdād ibn 'Amr (رضي الله عنه) : he said : I heard the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) saying, "The sun will be brought down on the Day of Resurrection until it is the distance of one meel (one mile, or one inch - the narrator is unsure) from the creatures. Then, people will be in perspiration in proportion to their deeds, such that some of them will be [in perspiration] upto their ankles, some of them upto their knees, some of them upto their groins, and some will be bridled by perspiration," and

the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) pointed, with his hand, to his mouth." (Narrated by Muslim and Tirmidhī.)

Heaven and Hell will be brought near. "The day when neither wealth nor sons will avail; only he who brings Allāh a heart clean [from disbelief]. And, Heaven shall be brought near for the pious, and Hell shall be exposed for those who strayed." Qur'ān [(26) Al-Shu'arā', 88-91] Thus, the pious will rejoice in the knowledge that they shall be taken into Heaven, while the wicked will agonize in the knowledge that they are destined for Hell.

"A neck, with two seeing eyes, two hearing ears and a speaking tongue, will emerge from the Fire on the Day of Resurrection, and say, "I have been assigned to three [types of people]: every obstinate tyrant, everyone who called to another god with Allāh, and the picture-makers." (Narrated by Tirmidhī and Aḥmad.)

On that day, a man will flee from his relatives and loved ones. "On the day when a man will flee from his brother, his mother, his father, his wife and his children. Every man, on that day, shall have enough to make him heedless of others." Qur'ān [(80) 'Abasa, 34-37]

Ibn Kathīr reports in his exegeis that 'Ikrimah (رضي الله عنه) said, "A man will meet his wife and ask her, 'What kind of a husband was I to you?' She will reply, 'A good husband you were,' and she will praise him well, as far as she can. Then, he will ask her, "So, today I seek from you [the reward of] a single good deed, that you give it to me so that perhaps I may be saved from that which you see.' She will reply, 'How easy is that which you seek! Yet, I cannot bear to give you anything; I am afraid just as you are.' Then, a man will meet his son, and stick to him, saying, 'O son! What kind of father was I to you?' [His son] will praise him well. He will say, 'O son! I need an atom's weight of your good deeds, so that perhaps I might be saved from that which you see.' His son will reply, 'O father! How easy is that which you seek! But, I am afraid just as you are."

Also during this time, certain types of punishment will be inflicted on the guilty. On the authority of Abu Hurayrah radiyAllāhu 'anhu : the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, "There is not any possessor of gold or silver who does not pay their due [in zakat] except that on the Day of Resurrection the hoard shall be made into sheets which will be heated in the Fire of Hell. Then, his forehead, sides and back will be branded thereby until Allāh judges between His servants, on **a day** whose measure **is fifty thousand years** of your reckoning. Then will he see his way, either to Heaven or to Hell." (Narrated by Aḥmad, Bukhārī, Muslim.)

All of this suffering is exacerbated by the extreme length of that day. " . . . a day whose measure is fifty thousand years." Qur'ān [(70) Al-Ma'ārij, 4]

Relief for the Righteous

Yet, terrifying as these phenomena are, those who feared Allāh and were anxious

of this day in their worldly lives, will be saved from fear. In the Hadith Qudsi, Allāh, the Mighty, the Majestic, says, "By My Might! I shall not combine for My servant two fears, nor two [feelings of] safety." (Narrated by Ibn Ḥibbān.)

Seven categories of people will be in the **shade of the 'Arsh**, according to the hadith narrated by Bukhārī and Muslim; they are : **1** - a just leader, **2** - a youth who grew up in the service of Allāh, **3** - a man whose heart was attached to the mosques, **4** - two men who loved one another for the sake of Allāh, **5** - a man who was invited by a beautiful and charming woman [to commit adultery] but he refused, saying 'I fear Allāh,' **6** - a man who gave charity with his right hand such that his left hand did not know what he gave, and **7** - one who shed tears in seclusion out of fear of Allāh.

Other ahādith mention some further categories. Also, for the believers, the day will seem shorter, in proportion to their deeds. So, for some, it will seem like the duration of an obligatory prayer. (Narrated by Aḥmad.)

People will be gathered with those whom they loved. On the authority of Jabir (رضي الله عنه) : "Every soul shall be gathered according to its desires. So, whoever loved disbelief will be with the disbelievers, and his deeds will not benefit him at all." (Narrated by Ṭabarānī.) And, in the hadith narrated by Bukhārī and Muslim, a man asked the Prophet (ﷺ), "When is the Hour (of Judgement)?" The Prophet asked him, "What have you prepared for it?" He replied, "Nothing, except that I love Allāh and His messenger." The Prophet told him, "You are with those whom you love." In Bukhārī's narration, the Companions asked, "And is it the same for us?" He replied, "Yes." Anas (رضي الله عنه), the narrator of the hadith, says, "We were not pleased so much by anything as by his saying. '**You are with those whom you love.**'"

The Pool (Ḥawḍ)

Every prophet has a pool, but that of the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) is superior to the others, and is called **al-Kawthar**. It is filled from Heaven via two channels, and its water is whiter than milk and sweeter than honey. There are as many cups around it as there are stars in the sky. On the authority of Anas ibn Mālik (رضي الله عنه) : the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) was once with us in the mosque when he took a nap, and then [awoke and] raised his head, smiling. We said, "What makes you laugh, O Messenger of Allāh?" He said, "Indeed, a surah has just been revealed to me." Then, he recited Surah al-Kawthar (108). The Prophet (ﷺ) will recognize his followers by their bodily parts which will be bright from the effects of Wuḍū'. All of his followers will drink from the pool, except for apostates and innovators, as well tyrants and those who openly committed major sins.

The Questioning & Reckoning

The Great Intercession

In the confusion and terror of the resurrection plain, people will remember the prophets who were sent to them, and will wonder if those men can intercede for them before Allāh to relieve them of the horrors which are afflicting them. In the long Hadith of the Intercession, narrated by Bukhāri, Muslim and others, we are told that people will go first to Ādam (عليه السلام), the father of mankind, and will remind him of his dignified status, and ask him to intercede before Allāh. He will reply, "My Lord is angry today such as He has never been before, nor will He ever be [so angry] ever again. Indeed, He fobade me from the tree, but I disobeyed. My self! My self! My self [am I concerned for]! Go to someone else. Go to Noah (عليه السلام)." They will then go to Noah (عليه السلام), reminding him of his status as the first messenger to mankind, and put the same request before him. He will also decline, mentioning his worry over the fact that he had been given a single supplication which was guaranteed to be answered, but that he had used it against his people. He will send them to Abraham (عليه السلام), who will also decline in the same way, mentioning that he had told three lies. In the same manner, people will go to Moses (عليه السلام), who will decline due to his having killed a man in error. Jesus (عليه السلام) will also decline their request, although he will not mention any sin. It should be noted that the '**sins**' mentioned by the Prophets as the reasons why they are afraid to intercede before Allāh are sins only in relative terms; i.e. they were permissible deeds which were merely not the best choices for the circumstances in question, but due to the extreme piety of the prophets, they regard these incidents as severe. [Refer back to Lesson 12 & 13 "The Prophets and Messengers" for further discussion of this issue.]

Finally, they will come to Muḥammad (ﷺ), and will say, "O Muḥammad! You are the Messenger of Allāh, and the Last of the Prophets; Allāh forgave you your former and latter sins, so intercede for us before Allāh; do you not see what [situation] we are in? Do you not see what has come to us?" Then, the Prophet (ﷺ) will get up, go and prostrate beneath the 'Arsh, and glorify Allāh with unique praises. He will be told, "O Muḥammad! Ask, that you may be given, and intercede that your intercession may be granted!" The Prophet (ﷺ) will ask for intercession, and the first intercession he requests will be to relieve all people of the terrors of the Resurrection Plain. This is referred to as the Great Intercession,

since it encompasses all of mankind, and as we have seen, it is exclusive to the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ).

This dignified position of intercession is the Praiseworthy Station (**Maqāman Maḥmūdā**), which the Qur'ān mentions will be granted to the Prophet on that day. "Surely, your Lord will raise you up to a praiseworthy station." Qur'ān [(17) Al-Isra, 79] Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī reports in his exegesis, "That [i.e. the Praiseworthy Station] is the place that Muḥammad (ﷺ) will take on the Day of Resurrection, to intercede for people in order for their Lord to relieve them of the severe [suffering] they will be experiencing on that day."

The Exposure

Mankind will be exposed before their Lord. "And they shall be exposed before their Lord in ranks." Qur'ān [(18) Al-Kahf, 48] The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Mankind will be exposed three exposures on the Day of Resurrection. The [first] two exposures shall be disputation and excuses, but at the third [exposure], the scrolls [of deeds] will be distributed, and then some will take them in their right hands, others in their left." [Narrated by Tirmidhi] So, the first time, people will dispute with one another : the weak with the tyrants who hindered them from faith, the tyrants responding that they are, in the final analysis, not to blame, for each individual believes or disbelieves by his/her own conscious decision. The disbelievers will deny that prophets came to them. At the second exposure, people will acknowledge their wrongs, and will seek excuses. With the third exposure, the books of deeds will be distributed amongst them. Receiving the book in the right hand signifies success, while receiving it in the left hand or behind one's back signifies failure. "O mankind! You are striving in your deeds towards your Lord and [towards] meeting Him. Then, as for he who is given his book in his right hand shall be reckoned an easy reckoning, and he shall return to his family members in joy. And, as for the one who is given his book in his left hand, he shall call for destruction, and shall taste of a blazing fire." Qur'ān [(84) Al-Inshiqāq, 6-12]

The Questioning

"Then, by your Lord, We shall surely question them all, about what they used to do." Qur'ān [(15), Al-Hijr, 92-93] "Then, We shall surely question those to whom were sent (messengers), and We shall surely question the Messengers." Qur'ān [Al-A'rāf, 6] The people will be questioned about whether messengers came to them, and how they responded to them. The messengers themselves will be questioned about whether they conveyed the message.

Belief in the questioning and reckoning of the **Hereafter instils a sense of responsibility and accountability in the Muslim**. He must be constantly watching over his heart and his deeds, and must be prepared to forego those

fleeting, ephemeral pleasures of this world which are available to him in the path of sin. He must be prepared to undergo some suffering and hardship in this temporary abode, in order to avoid the inescapable consequences of evil in the Hereafter. He must fear standing before his Lord if he desires safety on that ghastly day. Allāh, the Mighty, the Majestic has said in the Hadith Qudsi, , "By My Might! I shall not combine for My servant two lives of fear, nor two lives of surety." [Narrated by Ibn Hibbān]

People will be questioned, on the Day of Judgement :

1. About **faith**. "You will be asked about "Lā ilāha illallāh" [Narrated by Tirmidhi]
2. About **Ṣalāh**. "The first thing which the servant will be questioned about on the Day of Resurrection will be his salah. If it is in order, then he shall have prospered and succeeded, while if it is impaired, then he shall have failed and be in ruined." [Narrated by Tirmidhi]
3. About **those under their care**. "O believers! Save yourselves and your families from a Fire, whose fuel is mankind and stones." Qur'ān [(66), Al-Tahrīm, 6] "Every one of you is a guardian, and every one of you will be asked about those in his care." [Narrated by Bukhāri and Muslim]
4. About the **bodily organs**. "Do not follow that which you have no knowledge of; (your) hearing, sight and heart - you will be questioned about all of them." Qur'ān [(17), Al-Isrā, 36]
5. About **delight**. "Then, you shall be questioned on that day about delight." Qur'ān [(102) Al-Takāthur, 8]
6. About **intentions**. "Whoever desires the life of the world and its adornment, We shall repay their deeds to them in it, and they will not suffer any short payment therein. They are those for whom there is nothing but the Fire in the Hereafter. In vain shall be that which they wrought therein, and null shall be that which they used to do." Qur'ān [(11) Hūd, 15]

In a long hadith narrated by Muslim, we are told that the men whose cases shall be judged first on the Day of Resurrection shall be a man who was **martyred**, a man who **acquired knowledge** and taught it and who recited the Qur'an and a man to whom Allāh had been generous and given many varieties of **wealth**. These men will acknowledge Allāh's favors upon them, and will claim that they did these deeds for His sake. They will be exposed as **liars**, for they did not do these deeds for the sake of Allāh. The man who was martyred had been fighting in order to be called brave, the scholar or reciter of the Qur'an had acted thus in order to gain a reputation as such, and the philanthropist had sought recognition as a generous person. Since deeds are according to their intentions, these people received what

they had sought through these deeds, and they will not receive reward for them. Hence, they will be dragged into Hell.

7. There are **four questions** which everyone must face: "The feet of a servant will not move on the Day of Resurrection until he has been questioned about [four things:] **his life** - how he spent it, **his knowledge** - how he acted upon it, **his wealth** - where he earned it and how he spent it, and **his body** - how he used it." [Narrated by Tirmidhī]

The Reckoning

"To Us shall be their coming, then with Us shall be their reckoning." Qur'ān [(88) Al-Takwīr, 25-26] People will be brought to account for their deeds, as well as for their resolved intentions. "When two Muslims encounter one another with their swords, the murderer and the murdered shall be in the Fire." [Narrated by Bukhārī and Muslim] The murdered individual is also in the Fire because he was intent on killing his companion. However, out of Allāh's grace, we are excused for fleeting thoughts which we do not consciously entertain or sustain, nor verbalize. "Allāh does not task a soul beyond its scope." Qur'ān [(2) Al-Baqarah, 286] The Prophet (ﷺ) has said, "Allāh has forgiven my ummah for those things which their hearts whisper to them." [Narrated by Bukhārī and Muslim]

There will be some who will **enter heaven without reckoning**. In the hadith narrated by Muslim, the Prophet (ﷺ) says that the nations of all the prophets were exposed to him. He saw some prophets with only one or two people, or their family members with them (i.e. no-one else had believed in them). Then, he saw a huge crowd, and thought that was his ummah. Gabriel 'alayhis-salām told him that it was actually the ummah of Moses 'alayhis-salām, but he indicated to him a larger crowd which stretched from one horizon to the next, and told him that this was his ummah. He said, "and with them are **70,000** who shall enter heaven without reckoning or punishment." They are those who do not use charms, nor seek them from others, nor draw omens, but rely upon their Lord."

Martyrs of the battlefield will also be exempted from the reckoning. "When the servants are standing at the place of reckoning, a [group of] people will come with their swords on their backs dripping blood, and they will assemble at the gate of Heaven. It will be asked, 'Who are these?' whereupon it will be said, "They are the martyrs; they were alive, receiving sustenance.'" [Narrated by Tabarani]

The Balance, the Path, Intercession, Heaven and Hell

The Balance (al-Mizān)

As we have already come to know, the World Hereafter is one foreign and unfamiliar to our worldly experience. In it, truth shall prevail and every individual will face what s/he sent forward. Many things which were previously intangible or abstract will become manifested as real, observable entities.

People's very appearances on that day will betray them. "On the day when [some] faces will become white [with radiance], and [other] faces will become black. As for those whose faces will be blackened [it will be said], 'Did you disbelieve after your faith?! So, taste the punishment for having disbelieved!' And, as for those whose faces shall be made white [with radiance], [they shall be] in the mercy of Allāh; they shall abide therein." Qur'ān [(3) Āli- 'Imrān, 106-107] "The guilty ones shall be recognized by their marks, so that they shall be seized by [their] forelocks and feet." Qur'ān [(55), Al-Rahman 41]

Also among the things which will materialize are deeds : both good and bad: "On the day when every soul shall be confronted with whatever good it has done. And, [as for] whatever it bad it has done, it will wish that there were a great distance between it and [its evil]." Qur'ān [(3), Āli- 'Imrān, 30] "And they will find what they did placed before them." Qur'ān [(18) Al-Kahf, 49] "Let not those who are miserly with that which Allāh has given them of His bounty think that it is good for them. Nay, it is bad for them. That which they covetously withheld will be clasped around their necks on the Day of Resurrection. And to Allāh belongs the heritage of the Heavens and the Earth. And Allāh is well-acquainted with what you do." Qur'ān [(3) Āli- 'Imrān, 180] On the authority of Abu Umāmah : he said : I heard the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) saying, "Recite the **Qur'ān**, for it **is an intercessor** for its people on the Day of Resurrection, and recite the Two Radiant Ones (al-Baqarah and Āli-'Imrān), for the two of them shall come on the Day of Resurrection as if they are two clouds or two canopies . . . arguing for their people [i.e. those who recited them] on the Day of Resurrection." [Narrated by Aḥmad and Muslim]

The deeds (and/or the books of deeds) will be weighed, and this task is accomplished by the Balance. "And We shall lay down the equitable balances for the Day of Resurrection, so that no soul shall be wronged in the least. And, even if it be the weight of a mustard-seed, We shall produce it, and We suffice to take account." Qur'ān [(21) Al-Anbiyā', 47] "Then, whoever's scales are heavy, they are the successful ones. And whoever's scales are light, they are the ones who have lost themselves by denying Our signs." Qur'ān [(7) Al-A'rāf, 9]

The **scales of the disbelievers will be light**, for their good deeds shall be rendered null and worthless. "Say : Shall we inform you of those who are the worst losers with regard to their deeds; those whose efforts are wasted in this world, while they think that they are doing good? They are those who disbelieved in the signs of their Lord and the meeting with Him, so their deeds are void, and We do not give them any weight on the Day of Resurrection." Qur'ān [(18) Al-Kahf, 103-105]

The Prophet (ﷺ) has advised us on how to fill our scales to make them heavy with good deeds. He said, "There are two statements which are light on the tongue, beloved to [Allāh] The Most Gracious and heavy on the Balance : "**Subhānallāhi Wa bi ḥamdihi Subhānallāhil 'aẓīm**" (Free from all imperfection is Allāh, and praise to Him. Free from all imperfection is Allāh, the Mighty.)" [Narrated by Bukhārī, Muslim, Tirmidhī, Ibn Mājah and Aḥmad] "There is nothing which weighs more heavily in the Balance on the Day of Resurrection than good character." [Narrated by Abū Dāwūd, and Tirmidhī who judged it authentic.]

The Path (al-Ṣirāṭ)

The Ṣirāṭ is a bridge like a sword-edge, and it spans over the Hell. It is referred to in the Qur'an : "And there is not any of you except that he must appear before it (Hell). It is an unavoidable decree with your Lord. Then, We shall save those who were pious, and We shall leave the guilty ones therein (humbled) on their knees." Qur'ān [(19) Maryam, 71-72] Everyone will receive light in proportion to their deeds, and will then be left to cross the Ṣirāṭ. Some will traverse it, and their speeds will vary depending on the light they have. Others will fail to cross, and will fall into Hell.

Intercession (al-Shafā'ah)

Intercession is for a created being to request Allāh to forgive another created being. It is a manifestation of Allāh's generosity, for He may forgive any sin other than **kufr** or **shirk**. Allāh is not compelled to accede to requests for intercession. "On that day, no intercession will be of avail, except from those whom Allāh permits [to intercede], and whose word is acceptable to Him." Qur'ān [(20) Ṭā-Hā, 109] He will not accept intercession for those who died as disbelievers. "Then, the

intercession of the intercessors will not benefit them." Qur'ān [(74) Al-Muddath-thir, 48]

Who will intercede?

1. Prophets will be permitted to intercede for their followers.
2. Angels will intercede. "How many angels are there in the heavens and the earth, whose intercession is of no avail at all, except after Allāh permits whom He wills and approves." Qur'ān [(53) Al- Najm, 26]
3. The **martyr** will be permitted to intercede for seventy people of his household. [Narrated by Aḥmad and Tirmidhi]
4. The pious Muslim may be allowed to intercede. The Prophet (ﷺ) has said, "Whoever reads the Qur'ān and implements it, such that he regarded its lawful as lawful and its prohibited as prohibited, Allāh will enter him into Heaven, and grant him intercession for ten members of his household, all of whom are deserving of the Fire." [Narrated by Tirmidhi and Ibn Mājah]

After all the intercessions, some more sinful Muslims will be emancipated from the Fire by the sheer mercy of Allāh. Allāh will say, "The angels have interceded, the prophets have interceded and the believers have interceded. None remains but the Most Merciful of the merciful ones." [Narrated by Bukhārī and Muslim]

Specific Intercessions

1. Intercession will be granted to the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) for some of his Ummah to enter Heaven without any reckoning. Bukhārī's narration of the Hadith of the Intercession mentions, near the end, that the Prophet (ﷺ), when given permission to intercede, will say, three times, "O my Lord! My ummah!" whereupon Allāh will grant him this intercession.
2. Intercession will be granted for some sinful Muslims who are deserving of Hell, such that they are saved from that punishment.
3. Intercession will be granted for sinful Muslims who entered Hell to come out of it. the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Every prophet has a supplication which is [guaranteed to be] answered; every [other] prophet hastened his supplication, but I have concealed my supplication for intercession for my ummah on the Day of Resurrection, and so it shall reach, Allāh willing, everyone who died not associating anything with Allāh." [Narrated by Muslim] He will supplicate, "O Lord! Grant me permission [for the deliverance of] those who said 'Lā ilāha illallāh'." Then, Allāh will say, "By My might and My majesty! By My grandeur and My greatness! I shall surely bring forth from [the Fire] whoever said 'Lā ilāha illallāh'." [Narrated by Muslim] Bukhārī narrates that "people will come out of the Fire by the

intercession of Muḥammad (ﷺ), and will enter Heaven; they will be called the "**Jahannamiyyūn**".

4. Intercession for raising of ranks within Heaven.

Fate of the disbelievers

- They will ask to be returned to the world for another chance. (See Qur'ān [(32) Al-Sajdah, 12])
- They will express wish to return when they see Hell, but they will be lying. (See Qur'ān [(6) Al-An'ām, 27-31]).
- They will look for intercessors (See [(7) Al-A'raf, 53]) but intercession will not benefit them (See Qur'ān [(74) Al-Muddath-thir, 48]).
- They will falsely swear by Allāh that they were not polytheists. (See Qur'ān [(6) Al-An'ām, 23])
- They will cry out in vain to be brought out of Hell. (See Qur'ān [(23) Al-Mu'minūn, 106-108])
- They will ask the angels to ask Allāh for lightening of the punishment for one day, but will be refused. (See Qur'ān [(40) al-Ghafir, 47-50])
- They will ask Malik to ask Allāh to annihilate them, but they will be refused. (See Qur'ān [(43) Al- Zukhruf, 77])

Fate of the believers

Those whose good outweighs their evil will enter Heaven. Those whose evil and good are equal in weight will also enter Heaven, but they will have to wait for some time, during which they will see some people going to Heaven and others to Hell. According to a number of the Salaf, these people are the People of A'rāf. (See Qur'ān [(7) Al-A'rāf, 46- 49]) Those whose evil outweighs their good are deserving of Hell. They may be punished in Hell and then taken out (through intercession or merely by Allāh's mercy) and then go to Heaven, or they may be saved from Hell altogether (either by intercession, or by Allāh forgiving them.)

Heaven (Jannah) and Hell (Jahannam)

Heaven and Hell have both been created and are currently in existence, as evidenced by verses of the Qur'ān. "It (Heaven) has been prepared for the pious." Qur'ān [(3) Āli-'Imrān, 133] "Guard yourselves against the fire which has been prepared for the disbelievers." Qur'ān [(3) Āli-'Imrān, 131]

There are **different levels** in both Heaven and Hell. "And for each, there are ranks based on what they did." Qur'ān [(6), Al-An'ām, 132] "Those who believe, and whose offspring follow them in faith, We shall unite their offspring with them,

and We shall not cause decrease the reward of their deeds at all.” Qur’ān [(52) Al-Tūr, 21] Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) said, “Allāh will elevate the offspring of the believer, even if they were beneath him in deeds, in order that his eye might delight in them.” [Narrated by Tabāri and Bazzār] “Indeed, the **hypocrites** shall be in the lowest depths of the Fire, and you will never find for them any helper.” Qur’ān [(4), Al-Nisa, 145] “The lightest of the People of the Fire in punishment on the Day of Resurrection will be a man in the hollows under whose feet shall be placed two coals on account of which his brain will boil. He does not consider that anyone has a more severe punishment than himself, although he is the lightest of them in punishment.” [Narrated by Bukhārī and Muslim]

The Qur’an states clearly that neither Heaven nor Hell shall ever perish or pass away. The believers will continue to have bliss and enjoyment in Heaven, and the disbelievers will continue to be punished in Hell, without end. “Those who believe and do good deeds, We shall enter them into gardens beneath which flow rivers, in which they shall abide forever.” Qur’ān [(4) Al-Nisā’, 57] “Allāh has cursed the disbelievers and has prepared for them a blazing fire, wherein they shall abide forever.” Qur’ān [(33) Al-Ahzāb, 64-65] And, in the authentic hadith, the Prophet (ﷺ) tells us, “Death will be brought [in the form of] a black-marked white ram and made to stand between the Garden (of Heaven) and the Fire (of Hell) . . . and then it will be slaughtered, and it will be said, ‘Immortality, and no death [anymore]!’” [Narrated by Bukhārī, Muslim, Aḥmad, Nasā’i and Dārimi]

“O Allāh! We ask You for Your Pleasure and Heaven, and We seek refuge with You from Your wrath and the Fire.” ●●●

Appendix

The Signs of the Hour

THE SIGNS OF JUDGEMENT DAY — THE MINOR SIGNS

Prelude

As Muslims, we know that this world, created by Allāh, will also be brought to an end by Him, and that it will be followed by a new world in which all people will be resurrected and brought to account for their beliefs, words and deeds. The precise timing of the end of the world is known only to Allāh; not even any of the prophets sent by Allāh, nor any of the angels closest to Him, know when it is to occur.

“They ask you about the Hour, when will its coming be? Say : its knowledge is only with my Lord. None will reveal it at its time save Him. [Its knowledge] is weighty upon the [inhabitants of the] heavens and the earth. It will not come to you except suddenly. They ask you as if you are well-informed about it. Say : Its knowledge is only with Allāh, but most of mankind do not know.” Qur’an [7:187]

Although we do not know when exactly the world is going to end, Allāh and the Prophet (ﷺ) have told us of some of the signs which indicate that the Hour is approaching, drawing nearer. In the Gabriel Hadith, wherein the angel Gabriel (ﷺ) took on the form of a man with extremely dark hair and extremely white clothing, and then came and asked the Prophet (ﷺ) about the levels of the religion (Islām, Imān and Iḥsan), he asked after that, “Tell me about the Hour.” The Prophet (ﷺ) replied, “The questioned one is not more knowledgeable about it than the questioner,” whereupon Gabriel (ﷺ) said, “Then tell me about its signs.” He replied, “That the slave girl shall give birth to her mistress, and that you see barefoot, naked, poor shepherds building tall buildings.” [Muslim]

So, there are certain events and signs which will occur on the earth prior to it. These signs are categorized into minor and major signs. The minor signs are those

which start occurring well before the Day of Judgement, and which in themselves are not strikingly extraordinary. The major signs are those which will occur closer to the Day of Judgement, and they are bizarre and remarkable.

It is important for us to **acquaint ourselves with these signs**, so that:

- 1) We can strengthen our conviction of the Truth of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) by seeing his prophecies fulfilled.

"[Allāh is] the Knower of the Unseen, such that He does not acquaint anyone with His Unseen. Except he of whom He approves of messengers . . . that one may know that [the Messengers of Allāh] have conveyed the message of their Lord, and He encompasses that which is with them, and has enumerated all things." Qur'ān [72:27-28]. See in particular Mujāhid's interpretation : *Mukhtaṣar Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*, (3/561).]

- 2) We can be aware of the details of these matters, especially the trials and tribulations amongst them, so that we are better equipped to deal with them if they occur during our lifetimes. "Fore-warned is fore-armed."

"And the True Promise draws near, whereupon the eyes of the unbelievers will be fixed [and they will say], 'Alas for us! We were heedless of this! Nay, we were wrongdoers!'" Qur'ān [21:97]

- 3) We can heighten our realization of the approach of the Hereafter, and thereby apply ourselves, with increased vigor, to prepare for it. for once the major signs have started to occur, one may fail to do good deeds, or even lose the opportunity to believe and repent if one had not done that by then

"Do they then await only the Hour, that it come to them suddenly? For indeed, it signs have [already started to] come! Then, how can they have their reminder when [the Hour] comes to them?! " Qur'an [47:18]

"On the day that some of the signs of your Lord will come (to pass), faith will not benefit a soul which had not believed before or earned good in its faith." Qur'an [6:158]

"Hasten to do [good] deeds before tribulations like pieces of the darkened night, wherein a man will awaken a believer but be an unbeliever by night, or will be a believer by night and awaken an unbeliever, [and in which] people will sell their religion for some (paltry) worldly provisions." [Various narrations to this meaning are recorded by : Tirmidhi (gharib), Muslim, Aḥmad]

"A time will come upon people wherein the one steadfast to his religion will be like one holding a burning coal." [Tirmidhi (gharib)]

It is certainly not intended, nor desired, to become complacent with and fatalistic regarding with these tribulations and signs, claiming that one

cannot turn back destiny, and that one should therefore sit back, complacently, not attempting to combat the predicted spread of evil and merely awaiting Imam Mahdi or Prophet Jesus (peace be upon them) to bring victory to the truth! By no means! We have been ordered to take certain precautions, and to adopt certain means, to uphold the truth and to combat evil, and even if we fail in the course of that in spite of our utmost effort, we would still have discharged our obligation. On the other hand, if we sit back complacently, then we are accountable for our inaction, and we cannot blame the consequences on destiny. So, we must counter adverse destiny with favorable destiny, and flee from one destiny to another. Shaykh 'Abdul-Qādir al-Jīlānī said, "I counter the destinies of truth with truth, for [the sake of] truth. The [true] man is he who combats [adverse] destiny, not he who is abandons himself with destiny."

Some Minor Signs

The minor signs are scattered through the hadith literature, and depending on the method of counting and other criteria, they can number from **fifty** [see page 31] to **over hundred**. A couple are mentioned in the Gabriel Hadith. Let us proceed now to mention some more of them.

Hadith 1: On the authority of Anas (رضي الله عنه): the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Among the portents of the Hour is that people will compete with one another in [building and decorating] mosques." [Nasā'i]

Hadith 2 : On the authority of Anas ibn Malik (رضي الله عنه) : He said : I heard the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) say, "Indeed, among the portents of the Hour are that knowledge will decrease, ignorance will abound, adultery will become widespread, wine will be drunk, and men will be few and women will be many, to the extent that there will be a single provider for fifty women." [Bukhārī and Muslim] Those fifty women need not necessarily all be his wives (which is not allowed in Islām, of course). Although some people may come to falsely legitimize it (as was done by a ruler during the time of al-Qurtubī), it seems probable that among the fifty will be not only wives, but also mother, daughters, sisters, aunts, and the like.

Hadith 3 : "Time will contract (i.e. it will appear to be shorter, and its blessings will vanish, such that people will accomplish less in more time), knowledge will be lifted up, stinginess will be cast [into people's hearts], tribulations will appear, and killing will be much." [Aḥmad, Bukhārī, Muslim, Abū Dāwūd]

Hadith 4 : "Make haste to do [good] deeds before six [things] : **[1]** the leadership of fools, **[2]** the proliferation of police / government agents, **[3]** the selling of judgement, **[4]** blood being taken lightly, **[5]** severance of [ties of] kinship,

[6] people who will take the Qur'an as music, sending ahead one of them to sing for them, even though he may be least of them in knowledge/ understanding [of the religion]." [Aḥmad, Tabarānī]

We can extract from this hadith several general phenomena, each of which we discuss at greater length :

• Decline in Religious Knowledge and Practice

We have seen this indicated in several of the ahadith above, or perhaps in all of them at, least indirectly. The knowledge which has been prophesied to decrease is of knowledge about Islam. Secular knowledge, however, need not necessarily decrease; to the contrary it may increase. One hadith mentions that publications will increase. Another narration might be taken as predicting the appearance of cars.

• Disappearance of Knowledge

Knowledge of Islam disappears with the death of the Islamic scholars ('ulamā'). "Allāh will not retract this knowledge by a withdrawal, [suddenly] withdrawing it from people's hearts, but He will retract knowledge by retracting the scholars, until, when He has left no scholar, people will take ignorant leaders, who will be asked, and will pronounce verdicts without knowledge, thus going astray and leading others astray." [Bukhārī, Muslim] And, when both scholars and knowledge have become scarce amongst people, such that they can either • not find qualified scholars, • or are unaware even of the qualifications to look for in people whom one consults on religious matter, then it is quite understandable that they should start to regard as religious authorities such people as are unqualified to be such. "Indeed, among the signs of the Hour are that knowledge be sought with the petty ones." [Ṭabarānī] This, along with the disappearance of the scholars of higher caliber, is something we have already started witnessing.

• Insincere Pursuit of Knowledge

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه) said, "What will be your situation when tribulation envelops you, in which a youngster will grow and the older one will become aged, and [the tribulation] will be taken as sunnah, such that if it is changed one day, it will be said, 'This is wrong!'" Someone asked, "When is that?" He said, "When your trustworthy ones are few, and your leaders are many; when your jurists are few and your reciters are many, and knowledge is acquired for other than [the sake of] religion, and the world is sought through the deeds of the Hereafter." [Dārimi, al-Hākim]

Non-implementation of Knowledge On the authority of Abū al-Dardā' (رضي الله عنه) : We were with the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), and he raised his eyes to the sky, and then

said, "This is [almost] the time when knowledge will be snatched from people, such that they will not be capable of [practising] any of it." [Tirmidhi (ḥasan gharīb), al-Ḥākim, Dārimī]

• The adornment of mosques

(Already mentioned earlier) may also be a symptom of the decline in religious practice and knowledge, for it is disliked to decorate the inside of a mosque since it would distract the attention of worshippers. Further, it appears that the outward embellishment of mosques is accompanied by a decline in the internal spirituality - which in fact seems to be a general trend characterized by reduction of religion to little less than outward observances. One narrator of the above hadith from Abu'd-Dardā' (رضي الله عنه) asked 'Ubādah ibn al-Samit (رضي الله عنه) about it, and the latter replied, "Abu'd-Dardā' spoke the truth. If you wish, I will relate to you the first [type of] knowledge which will be lifted from people : [it is] **humility** [in prayer]. The time is near when you will enter the community mosque, but you will not see a single man therein humble [in his prayer]."

Discarding of the Regulations of Divine Law Matters eventually reach the stage where people, either through ignorance or in escapist pursuit of their lusts and whims, distort the Shari'ah to legitimize the unlawful (Ḥarām) and to prohibit the wholesome (Ḥalāl). "Verily, there will surely be among my nation people who will legitimize illicit sexual intercourse (Zinā), the [wearing of] silk [for men], [the drinking of] wine, and musical instruments. And some people shall surely alight by a mountain . . . and then Allāh will destroy them by night, and cause the mountain to topple onto them, and others will be transmuted into apes and swine until the Day of Resurrection." [Bukhāri, Abū Dāwūd]

Such happenings have actually been indirectly alluded to in the Qur'ān itself. "They took their rabbis/priests and monks, as lords besides Allāh." Qur'an [9:31] 'Adiyy ibn Hatim, a Christian who then accepted Islam, heard this verse being recited, and remonstrated, 'They did not worship them!' The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) replied, 'Indeed. Surely, they (i.e. the religious leaders) prohibited the permissible for them (i.e. the people), and legitimized the prohibited for them, and [the people] followed them, and so that was their worship of them.' [Aḥmad, Tirmidhī. After this the Prophet (ﷺ) invited 'Adiyy to embrace Islam, and he accepted.] And the Prophet (ﷺ) foretold, "Verily, you shall surely follow the pattern of those who were before you [i.e. Naṣarā and Yahūd], span by span and cubit by cubit, to the extent that if they entered a lizard's hole, you would follow them." [Bukhāri, Muslim, Aḥmad]

"Verily, a portion of my nation shall surely **legitimize alcohol**, by [using for it] a name which they will call it [instead]." [Aḥmad, Ibn Mājah, al-Mukhtarāh] These again, are signs we have already started to witness. We see, for example, efforts to legitimize ribā (interest/usury) by giving it a different name. Allāh's help is to be entreated.

• Apostasy

Decline in knowledge provides fertile grounds for depraved persons to spread apostasy among the ignorant. "The Hour will not be established before some tribes of my nation join the pagans, nor before idols will be worshipped. And, indeed there shall be in my nation **thirty liars**, each of them claiming that he is a prophet, but I am the last of the prophets; there is no prophet after me." [Tirmidhī, al-Hākim] How many such charlatans have we seen already! Starting with Musaylimah, through to Mirza Ghulām Aḥmad of Qadiyān and Rashād Khalīfah!

• Corruption of Authority

We have already discussed how the decline in religious knowledge may lead to unfit people taking positions of religious authority. However, it is also among the Signs of the Hour that the holders of public office will become corrupt.

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) : While the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) was talking, a Bedouin came and asked, "When is the Hour?" [The Prophet (ﷺ)] replied, "**When trust is lost** then await the Hour." [The Bedouin] asked, "How will its loss occur?" He (ﷺ) replied, "When affairs are rested with those unworthy of [handling] them, then await the Hour." [Bukhārī]

"There shall come upon people deceptive years, in which the liar will be regarded as truthful, the truthful one will be regarded as a liar, the treacherous one will be trusted, the trustworthy one will be mistrusted, and in which **al-Ruwaybidah** will speak." Someone asked, "**What is al-Ruwaybidah?**" He said, "A paltry/petty/contemptible man speaking about the affair/business of the general public." [Aḥmad, Ibn Mājah, al-Ḥākim]

The corrupt leaders are also expected to have numerous policemen and agents who assist them in their tyranny and oppression (as indicated in **hadith 4**, already mentioned above).

The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) has said, "There are two categories of the People of the Fire [of Hell] whom I have not [yet] seen : [1] People with whips like cows' tails, with which they shall beat people, and [2] Women who are clothed yet naked" [Muslim]

Such evil authorities, standing in the way of people doing good, have been seen in our times. Shaykh 'Abdullāh 'Azzām says, describing such conditions which exist in some Muslim countries,

"What then do you think about the millions of Muslims who are being humiliated with dreadful persecution, and are living the lives of cattle? They cannot repel attacks on their honor, lives and properties. Nay, such a man cannot even have his own way in growing his beard because it is an obvious sign of Islam. Nor, in fact, is he free to have his wife wear the long garments required by Islam because it is a crime for which he may be seized anywhere and at any time. Nor can he teach

the Qur'an to three Muslim youths in the mosque because it is an illegal gathering according to the law of the ignorant. Nay, in some of the countries which are called Islamic, he cannot even have his wife cover her hair, nor can he prevent the intelligence officers from taking his daughter by the hand in the deep of night, under the cover of pitch-darkness, to wherever they wish. Can he refuse a command issued by the evil authorities, or will he comply and thereby provide a cheap sacrifice on the altar of the whims of this tyrant?

Are these millions not living lives of despicable subjugation, and do the angels not take their souls while they are wronging themselves? What then will be their reply when the angels ask them, "What was the matter with you?"? Will they not say, "We were weak and oppressed in the land"?

Weakness is not an excuse before the Lord of the Worlds. In fact, it is a crime making the offender deserving of Hell. However, Allāh has excused those of advanced years; the small children; and the women who neither find any scheme for liberation, nor know the path to the Land of Honor, nor are able to emigrate to the land of Islam or to arrive at the base for jihad." [ʿAbdullah ʿAzzam, "Join the Caravan"]

• Killing

Hadith 4 has predicted that human blood will come to be taken lightly. This is in keeping with an increase in killing (which is indicated in other ahadith), for it is conceivable that under such circumstances, there will be little punitive action against the murderers. "By He in Whose hand is my soul! The world shall not pass [away] before there comes upon people a day in which the murderer will not know why he has murdered, nor will the murdered one know why he has been killed." [Muslim] Another narration by Aḥmad clarifies that this killing is amongst the Muslims, and that it will be on account of the people's minds at that time being absent.

• Decline in Ethics and Morals

Hadith 4 mentions the cutting of ties of kinship. The Gabriel Ḥadīth mentions that the slave-girl will give birth to her mistress, and one interpretation of this is that the child will behave as a mistress/master to its parents.

Other aḥādīth (some of which we have mentioned) tell of: - people giving up their religion for petty worldly provisions - trust being lifted up, such that reliable people cannot be found - adultery and wine - consumption becoming more common and/or open - appearance of obscenity and **foul language** - greeting with salām becoming exclusive to those whom one recognizes - giving of false testimony, and concealment of true testimony - appearance of increased **stinginess** - unscrupulousness in monetary matters, such that a person will not care whether he is taking his money from a legitimate source or not. [Bukhārī] Another narration mentions **interest** (ribā) becoming widespread, such that no-one will be totally free of its influence. [Aḥmad, Bukhārī]

• The Approach of the Major Signs

We can consider that the minor signs lead up to the major signs, which in turn lead up to the end of this world. In the following hadith, the Prophet (ﷺ) gives us some idea of the succession of these events:

“Count **six** before the Hour : [1] my death, [2] then the conquest of Jerusalem, [3] then a [wholesale] death which will take from you like **qu’as al-ghanam** [a disease which afflicts sheep, leaving them dead], [4] then the abundance of wealth to the extent that a man will be given 100 dinar but remain unhappy [i.e. inflation], [5] then a tribulation [which is such that] no house of the Arabs will remain without it entering, [6] then a truce which will occur between you and the Romans, and then they will prove treacherous, such that they will come to you beneath 80 banners, under each banner 12,000 [men].” [Bukhārī]

Whether or not we witness all of these signs, we should realize that once we die - and the time of death is uncertain - the Hour has effectively come for us. Hence, we should make haste to correct our beliefs, repent from our sins, increase our knowledge of Islam, and strive to do more good deeds so as to strengthen our iman and draw nearer to Allāh. May Allāh save us from the worst of the trials and tribulations.

“Whoever fears sets out on his journey by night, and whoever travels by night reaches his destination. Indeed, the merchandise of Allāh is expensive! Indeed, the merchandise of Allāh is Heaven!” [Tirmidhi (ḥasan gharib)]

●●● go back to page 8 to continue with the signs of the Hour.

●● [Main references :]

1- *Fa qad jā’a ash-rātuhā*, by Maḥmūd ‘Atiyyah Muḥammad ‘Alī

2- *‘Umr Ummat al-Islām*, by Amīn Muḥammad Jamāl al-Dīn

3- Preface to al-Kashmiri’s *al-Tasrīḥ bi-mā Tawātara fī Nuzūl al-Masīh*, by ‘Abdul-Fattah Abū Ghuddah]

Minor & Major signs of the Last Hour

— from [‘ishrāt us-Sā’ah, by: Yūsuf ibn Abdullāh ibn Yūsuf al-Wābil]

The Minor Signs

1. The Prophethood of Muḥammad (ﷺ)
2. The death of the Prophet (ﷺ)
3. The conquering of Bait ul-Maqdis
4. The Plague of Amwās (in Palestine)
5. The increase in wealth so that Ṣadaqah is not needed
6. Trials and civil strife: (i) The appearance of troubles in the east (ii) The killing of Uthmān (رضي الله عنه) (iii) The Battle of al-Jamal (iv) The battle of Ṣiffin (v) The appearance of the Khawārij (vi) The happening of al-Ḥarrah (vii) The appearance of the saying that the Qur’ān is created (viii) The following of the ways of the previous nations
7. The appearance of claimants to Prophethood
8. Widespread safety
9. The appearance of fire in the Hijāz
10. Fighting the Turks
11. Fighting the non-Arabs
12. Disappearance of trustworthiness
13. Disappearance of knowledge and appearance of ignorance
14. Increase in the number of police and helpers of the oppressors
15. Spread of fornication
16. Spread of usury
17. Spread of musical instruments and their being thought to be allowed
18. Drinking of intoxicants and its being allowed
19. Adorning the mosques and rivalling therein

20. Building tall buildings
21. The slave girls giving birth to her mistress
22. Increase in killing
23. Time passing quickly
24. Coming together of markets
25. Appearance of Shirk in this Ummah
26. Appearance of wickedness, cutting off of relations and ill treatment of neighbours
27. Dying of grey hairs with black dye
28. Increase of extreme miserliness
29. Increase in trade
30. Many earthquakes
31. Appearance of sinking into the earth, transformation into animals and false-accusations
32. The passing away of the pious
33. The raising of the despicable people to positions of importance
34. That greeting is given only to those the person knows
35. That knowledge is sought from other than the scholars in truth
36. Appearance of women in clothes which do not cover them
37. The truthfulness of the dreams of the Believers
38. Spread and increase in writing
39. Laxity with regard to the Sunnah
40. Increase in size of the new moons
41. Increase in falsehood and having no concern to check reports
42. Increase in false testimony and withholding true witness
43. Large number of women and small number of men
44. Sudden death being common
45. Hatred amongst peoples hearts
46. The return of the land of the Arabs to being pastures and rivers
47. Increase in rain but decrease in produce
48. The revealing of a mountain of gold by the Euphrates river
49. The talking of wild animals and inanimate objects to people
50. Wishing for death because of the severity of trials
51. Increase in the number of 'Romans' and their fighting the muslims

- 52. Victory over Constantinople
- 53. The appearance of al-Qahtānī
- 54. Fighting the Jews
- 55. The expelling by al-Madīnah of its wicked people, then its desolation at the end of time
- 56. The sending of a pleasant wind to take away the souls of the Believers
- 57. The attacking of the Sacred House and dismantling of the Ka'bah

The Major Signs

- 1. The Mahdī (ﷺ)
- 2. The Anti-Christ [Masīḥ ud-Dajjāl]
- 3. The descent of Īsā (ﷺ) d. Yajūj and Ma'jūj
- 4. The three great sinkings of the earth
- 5. The appearance of smoke in the sky
- 6. The rising of the sun in the west
- 7. The beast of the earth [Dābbat ul-Arḍ]
- 8. The fire which brings the people together

The Meaning of Nafs

By: Muḥammad Afifi al-Akiti.



In the Name of Allāh, the Merciful, the Compassionate

Praise be Allāh, Who has adorned the aspect of man by granting him good stature and proportion, Safeguarding him from increase and decline in his aspect and measurements, We ask for His forgiveness and guidance, We seek refuge from the evils, which are in ourselves and the wicked in our actions, And may the blessings and salutations be invoked upon Muḥammad, His Prophet.

To proceed.

“As for whoever exceeded the limits and preferred the life of this world, surely his abode will be the Fire; and as for whoever feared to stand before his Lord and restrained the desires of his self, surely his abode will be the Garden.” Qur’ān [79:39-40]

Ibn Kathīr says:

“The Mu’min are a people who have been prevented through the Qur’ān from indulging in the pleasures of this world; it comes between them and what might destroy them. The Mu’min is like a prisoner in this world, who tries to free himself from its shackles and chains, placing his trust in nothing in it, until the day he meets his Creator. He knows full well that he is accountable for everything that he hears, sees and says, and for everything that he does with his body.” [Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah, vol. 9 pg. 276, Cairo 1352]

There are 2 kinds of people, one are those whose **Nafs** have overcome them and led them to ruin because they yielded to them and obeyed their impulses. The other kinds are those who have overcome their Nafs and made them obey their commands.

Nafs (pl. Anfus or Nufūs) lexically means soul, the **psyche**, the **ego**, **self**, **life**, **person**, **heart** or **mind**. (Mu'jam, Kassis)

Although some scholars have classified the Nafs up to **7** stages, there is agreement among Ulamā' that in the Qur'ān, Allāh (ﷻ) has described at least 3 main types of the Nafs. And these are in rank from the worse to better:

- 1) Nafs **al-Ammāra Bissū'** (the Nafs that urges evil),
- 2) Nafs **al-Lawwāma** (the Nafs that Blames) and
- 3) Nafs **al-Muṭma'innah** (the Nafs at Peace).

(Chapter 12 v. 53 in the Tafsir of al-Ṭabarī: *Jāmi' al-Bayān fi Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, 30 vols., Bulaq 1323 & also in Imām Baghawī's Tafsīr: *Lubab al-Ta'wīl fī Ma'alam at-Tanzīl*, 8 vols. Cairo, 1308)

A **summary** of these states of the Nafs are given by Imām Ṭabarī in his Tafsir of Sūrah Yūsuf verse 53:

1. Nafs al-Ammāra Bissū' (The Soul which Commands):

This is the **Nafs** that brings punishment itself. By its very nature it directs its owner towards every wrong action. No one can get rid of its evil without the help from Allāh. As Allāh refers to this Nafs in the story of the wife of al-Azīz (Zulaikha) and Prophet Yusuf (ﷺ):

"The (human) soul is certainly prone to evil" Qur'ān [12:53].

Allāh also says:

"And had it not been for the grace of Allāh and His Mercy on you, not one of you would ever have been pure; but Allāh purifies whomever He wishes, and Allāh is Hearing, Knowing." Qur'ān [24:21]

This Nafs resides in the world of the senses and is dominated by earthly desires (**Shahawāt**) and passions....

Evil lies hidden in the Nafs and it is this that leads it on to do wrong. If Allāh were to leave the servant alone with his self, the servant would be destroyed between its evil and the evil that it craves; but if Allāh grants him success and help, then he will survive. We seek refuge in Allāh the Almighty, both from the evil in ourselves and from the evil of our actions.

2. Nafs al-Lawwamah (the Soul that Blames):

Allāh refers to this Nafs,

"And I do call to witness the Nafs that blames" Qur'ān [75:2].

This Nafs is conscious of its own imperfections.

Imām Ḥasan al-Baṣrī said, "You always see the believer blaming himself and saying things like 'Did I want this? Why did I do that? Was this better than that?'

3. **Nafs al-Muṭma'innah** (the Soul at Peace):

Allāh refers to this Nafs,

“O Self, in complete rest and satisfaction!” Qur’ān (89:27).

This Nafs is tranquil as it rests on the certitude of Allāh.

Ibn Abbās (رضي الله عنه) said, “It is the tranquil and believing soul”.

Al-Qatadah (رضي الله عنه) said, “It is the soul of the believer, made calm by what Allāh has promised. Its owner is at rest and content with his knowledge of Allāh’s Names and Attributes, and with what He has said about Himself and His Messenger (ﷺ), and with what He has said about what awaits the soul after death: about the departure of the soul, the life in the Barzakh, and the events of the Day of Qiyāmah which will follow. So much so that a believer such as this can almost see them with his own eyes. So he submits to the will of Allāh and surrenders to Him contentedly, never dissatisfied or complaining, and with his faith never wavering. He does not rejoice at his gains, nor do his afflictions make him despair - for he knows that they were decreed long before they happened to him, even before he was created....”

(Al-Ṭabarī: *Jamī’ al-Bayān fi Tafsīr al-Qur’ān*, vol. 13, Bulaq 1323)

Imām Baghawī says,

“The Nafs al-Muṭma’innah has an angel to help it, who assists and guides it. The angel casts good into the Nafs so that it desires what is good and is aware of the excellence of good actions. The angel also keeps the self away from wrong action and shows it the ugliness of bad deeds. All in all, whatever is for Allāh and by him, always comes from the Soul which is at Peace.

The **Nafs al-Ammārah Bissū’** has Shaytan (Devil) as its ally. He promises it great rewards and gains, but casts falsehood into it. He invites it and entices the soul to do evil. He leads it on with hope after hope and presents falsehood to the soul in a form that it will accept and admire.”

Ibn al-Qayyim also mentioned the states of Nafs:

“The Nafs is a single entity, although its state may change: from the Nafs al-Ammarah, to the Nafs al-Lawwāmah, to the Nafs al-Muṭma’innah, which is the final aim of perfection....

It has been said that the Nafs al-Lawwāmah is the one, which cannot rest in any one state. It often changes, remembers and forgets, submits and evades, loves and hates, rejoices and become sad, accepts and rejects, obeys and rebels.

Nafs al-Lawwāmah is also the Nafs of the believer....It has also been mentioned that the Nafs blames itself on the Day of Qiyāmah - for every one blames himself for his actions, either his bad deeds, if he was one who had many wrong actions,

or for his shortcomings, if he was one who did good deeds. All of this is accurate. (*Madārij as-Sālikīn fī Manāzili lyyāka Na'budu wa lyyaka Nasta'in*, vol. 1 pg. 308)

Prof. **Sa'id Hawwa** says regarding these Nafs:

"Depending upon its condition, the Nafs exist in multidimensional. When the Nafs is tranquil because of obeying Allāh, and the soul opposes its desires, this soul is known as Nafs al-Muṭma'innah. Regarding this, Allāh has spoken about it in the Qur'an (89:27-28). But if the soul does not attain peace with itself, rather being exposed to desires, then such soul is known as the **Nafs al-Lawwāmah** because this soul reproaches its owner due to the owner's carelessness in fulfilling out Allāh's wishes - Qur'an [75:2]. More so, if the soul submits to lusts and allows itself to be seduced by Shayṭān, such a soul is known as Nafs al-Muṭma'innah. Allāh tells the story about the wife of al-Azīz (Zulaykhā) in Qur'an [12:53]. (*Tarbiyatun nar Rūhiyyah*, pg. 32, Cairo: Dar al- Salam, 1408)

There is a famous Arabic saying:

"O soul..Watch out! Help me with your striving,
in the darkness of the nights;
so that on the Day of Qiyāmah,
you will win a good life on those heights."

May this be of benefit.

And the last of our prayers,

"Glory to your Lord, the Lord of Honour & Power! He is better from what they ascribe to Him! Peace be upon the Messengers! Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of the worlds." Qur'an [37:180-182] ●●●