

## Class 2

## ‘Death &amp; Journey of the Soul’

## كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ

Life slips away second by second. Are you aware that every day brings you closer to death or that death is as close to you as it is to other people? As we are told in the verses

- *“Whatsoever is on it (the earth) will perish. And the Face of your Lord full of Majesty and Honour will remain forever”* [al-Rahmaan 55:26-27]
- *“Every soul shall taste death in the end; to Us shall you be brought back.”* (Surat al-‘Ankabut: 57)

All praise is due to Allah, who reminds his slaves that their lives have an appointed time and that the successful ones are those who are saved from the fire and are entered into paradise, when He says:

*“Everyone shall taste a. And only on the Day of Resurrection shall you be paid your wages in full. And whoever is removed away from the Fire and admitted to Paradise, he indeed is successful. The life of this world is only the enjoyment of deception.”* (3:185)

Brothers and sisters (may Allaah preserve us upon the Sunnah and grant us a good end...Aameen). Indeed death is a reality faced by everyone who lives. No one has the power to avoid it, nor does anyone around the dying person have the ability to prevent it. It is something which happens every moment and is encountered by the old and the young, the rich and the poor, the strong and the weak. They are all the same in that they have no plan or means of escaping it, no power, no means of intercession, no way to prevent it, nor to delay it, which shows that indeed it comes from One having tremendous power-so that the human is helpless in this regard and can only submit to it. He S.W.T. reminds us that death will reach us no matter where we are when He says: *“Wheresoever you may be, death will overtake you even if you are in fortresses built up strong and high!”* (4:78)

People die every day, but when someone close to us dies the shortness of this worldly life becomes a more manifest reality and less attention is given to the worldly aspirations. This is the way it should be whether someone close dies or not, in order that we may make more effort in preparing for the meeting with our Lord. Let our gatherings be that of remembrance of Allaah and the aakhirah, ilm and advice towards that which increases the slaves in taqwah. The Messenger ﷺ said: *“Make much remembrance of the destroyer of pleasures, it is death.”* And let us not be deceived by this worldly life and its glitter.

Brothers and sisters! There is no cure for death. A cure for cancer exists, a cure for AIDS exists and a cure for every other disease exists, except death. The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said: *‘Allaah has not created a disease except that He has created a cure for it, except for a single disease... old age’*

Narrated by Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) saying that the Prophet ﷺ said: "*The life span of my followers are between sixty and seventy. Very few of them do exceeds this age.*" Reported by: Tirmidhi

While you are reading this in the different places of the world, with different reasons many people have died. If you ask their relatives, most probably they did not know that they will die. Whereas you who's reading this or me who's writing this, maybe we won't live to see tomorrow. Maybe these are our last minutes on the earth to repent and to be closer to Allah.

If not today, one day we will all certainly die at some point. We, people we know and people we love will die also. After 100 years from now no one we know today might be on earth.

This reality must be established firmly in one's heart, the reality that life in this world is limited and has an appointed end - and this end will definitely come...

- The righteous will die and the wicked will die...
- The warriors who fight will die and those who sit at home will die...
- Those who busy themselves with correct belief will die and those who treat the people as their slaves will die...
- The brave who reject injustice will die, and the cowards who seek to cling on to this life at any price will die...
- The people of great concern and lofty goals will die, and the wretched people who live only for cheap enjoyment will die...

-----ALL WILL DIE!!!-----

## Having Good thoughts about Allah before Death

Jābir (رضي الله عنه) said: Three days before he died, I heard the prophet ﷺ say *None of you should die except while he is having good thoughts about Allah*" (Muslim). Also In a Hadith Qudsi it is recorded that Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) said "*I am as my servant thinks of Me.*"

Some scholars have also said that during times of well being and health, an individual should have both hope and fear in Allah and these two feelings should be equally balanced. Others say that one's fear should be more, but when the signs of death approach, a person's hope in Allah's mercy should become stronger. This is because the very purpose of having fear of Allah is to prevent oneself from committing sins and ugly deeds and to increase in obedience and good deeds. And those things are most often not possible during that situation (i.e., during the last moments of one's death).

Instead, in that situation, assuming good thoughts about Allah is preferable which would cause one to have feelings of destitution and submission and to feel oneself in total need of Allah (تعالى).

May Allah make us amongst those who has good thoughts about Allah, who are between Hope and Fear.

### Are we prepared?

People wake up every morning making short term or long term plans for their lives. But death is not included in these plans. Whereas most of these plans might not occur, death will certainly occur.

Allah has informed us in the Qur'an that He has created us with the purpose of worshipping Him alone and that He made this life a test to see who will fulfil that purpose. *"And I did not create the Jinn and mankind except to worship Me."* (Qur'an 51:56)

Al-Hasan Al-Baṣrī – Allāh have mercy on him – said: *How strange it is that a people whose departure (from this world to the next) has been announced, and whose predecessors have already departed, still play around!*

One does not prepare for death by pre-paying funeral services or selecting a graveyard in advance. It is about fulfilling one's purpose in life – to worship Allah alone, to live according to His commandments, and perform good deeds. The concept of worship in Islam is all encompassing and is not merely restricted to praying. In fact, any action that is pleasing to Allah is considered an act of worship, and a person will be rewarded for it.

‘Uthmān b. ‘Affān – Allāh be pleased with him – said in a sermon:

*Son of Adam! Know that the angel of death who has been assigned to you has not ceased to pass you and move on to others, ever since you have been in this world. But it is as if he is about to pass someone else and move on to target you, so be careful and prepare for him (by correcting your deeds). And do not forget him, for he does not forget you. And know o son of Adam, if you are heedless about yourself and do not prepare, no one else will prepare for you. You must meet Allah the Mighty and Majestic, so take for yourself and do not leave it to someone else. Peace be on you.*

Death is not a disaster, but a passing from this world onto the next. It should make us reflect and ponder about the purpose of life, and what will become of us after death.

‘Abdullāh b. Mas‘ūd – Allāh be pleased with him – said: *There is no comfort or rest for the believer until he meets Allāh.*

Masrūq – Allāh have mercy him – said: *There is no house better for the believer than the niche of his grave, for then he will rest from the worries of this world, and be secured from the punishment of Allāh.*

This is applicable to those who has prepared for it, those who has been playing and continue to play around then this stage is the start of the horrors. *May Allah save us from it and make us amongst those who take heed of the seriousness of death.*

A man once asked Ka'b, "Which illness cannot be treated?" "Death", he replied. And said: My father said, "There is one treatment for death: gaining the pleasure of Allah 'azza wa jall."

*Death is not the end, it is the beginning of the Eternal Life - PREPARE FOR IT!*

### **The Journey of the Soul** (from the *Kitabar-Ruh* by Ibn Al Qayyim)

'When the believer is about to depart from this world and go forward into the Next World, angels with faces as bright as the sun descend from the heavens and sit around him in throngs stretching as far as the eye can see. Then the Angel of Death comes and sits at his head and says, "Good soul, come out to forgiveness and pleasure from Allah!" Then his soul emerges like a drop of water flows from a water-skin and the angel takes hold of it. When he has grasped it, the other angels do not leave it in his hand even for the twinkling of an eye. They take it and place it in a perfumed shroud and a fragrance issues from it like the sweetest scent of musk found on the face on the earth.

'Then they bear it upwards and whenever they take it past a company of angels, they ask, "Who is this good soul?" and the angels with the soul reply, "So-and-so the son of so-and-so," using the best names by which people used to call him in this world. They bring him to the lowest heaven and ask for the gate to be opened for him. It is opened for him and angels who are near Allah from each of the heavens accompany him to the subsequent heaven until he reaches to the heaven where Allah the Great is. Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, says, 'Register the book of My slave in 'Illiyun and take him back to earth. I created them from it and I return them to it and I will bring them forth from it again.'

'His soul is then returned to his body and two angels come to him. They make him sit up and say to him,

- "Who is your Lord?" He replies, "My Lord is Allah."
- They ask him, "What is your religion?" He replies, "My religion is Islam."
- They ask him, "Who is this man who was sent among you?" He replies, "The Messenger of Allah."
- They ask him, "How did you come to know these things?" He replies, "I read the Book of Allah, believed it and declared it to be true."

"Then a Voice from on high declares, "My slave has spoken the truth, so spread out carpets from the Garden for him and open a gate of the Garden for him!" Then some of its fragrance and perfume comes to him, his grave is expanded for him as far as the eye can see, and a man with beautiful garments and a fragrant scent comes to him and says, "Rejoice in what delights you for this is the day which you were promised." He asks, "Who are you? Yours is a face which presages good." He replies, "I am your good actions." Then he says, "O Lord, let the Last Hour come soon so that I may rejoin my family and my property! "

'When an unbeliever is about to depart from this world and go forward into the Next World, angels with black faces descend from the heavens carrying rough hair- cloth and sit around him in throngs stretching as far as the eye can see. Then the Angel of Death comes and sits at his head and says,

"Foul soul, come out to the wrath and anger of Allah! "Then his soul divides up in his body and it is dragged out like a skewer is pulled out of wet wool. Then the angel takes hold of it. When he has grasped it, the other angels do not leave it in his hand even for the twinkling of an eye. They take it and wrap it in the rough hair-cloth and a stench comes out of it like the worst stench of a corpse on the face of the earth.

'Then they take it up and whenever they take it past a company of angels, they ask, "Who is this foul soul?" and the angels with the soul reply, "So-and-so the son of so-and-so," using the worst names by which people used to call him in this world. They bring him to the lowest heaven and ask for the gate to be opened for him. It does not get opened.'

The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, then recited, "*The gates of heaven will not be opened to them nor will they enter the Garden until the camel passes through the eye of the needle.*" (Al Araf(7):40)

'Then Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, will say, "Register his book in Sijjin in the lowest earth." Then his soul is flung down.'

The Prophet then recited, 'Whoever associates anything with Allah, it is as though he has fallen from heaven and the birds snatch him away or the wind sweeps him headlong into a place far away.

'Then his soul is returned to his body and two angels come and say to him, "Who is your Lord?" He replies, "Alas, alas, I do not know!" Then a voice calls from on high, "My slave has lied, so spread out carpets from the Fire for him and open a gate of the Fire for him! "Then a hot blast from it comes to him, his grave is made so narrow for him that his ribs are pressed together, and a man with a hideous face and clothing and a foul odour comes to him and says, "Grieve on account of what has brought you disgrace for this is the day which you were promised." He asks, "Who are you? Yours is a face which presages evil." He replies, "I am your bad actions." Then he says, "O Lord, do not let the Last Hour come! "

To conclude, we quote the hadeeth of the Prophet ﷺ where he said: "*The grave is either a garden from the Gardens of Paradise, or a pit from the pits of Hell.*" [At-Tirmithi]

*May Allah make us amongst those who are considered as the Good Soul, who are able to answer the questions in the Grave and are saved from its trials.*