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THE REMEMBRANCE OF

DEATH AND
THE

AFTERLIFE

by Imām Ibn Qudāmah al-Maqdīsī [d. 689H]

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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Imām Aḥmad Ibn Qudāmah al-Maqdisī [d. 689H]

The REMEMBRANCE of
DEATH and the AFTERLIFE

a translation of
'Dhikr al-Mawt wa—mā Ba'dahu'



“Say: ‘Indeed, the death from which you
flee—indeed, it will meet you’”

[QUR’ĀN (62): 8]

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Imām Aḥmad Ibn ‘Abdu’l Raḥmān Ibn Qudāmah
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On the Remembrance of Death and the Afterlife

Know that the one who is engrossed in the world (*munhamik*) and its delusion (*ghurūr*) has made his heart heedless and there is no room for it to reflect on death, thus he does not remember it. He hates to remember it and he flees from it. Then, it is important to know that man is one of the following: Man may be either engrossed in the world, a penitent beginner or a vigilant gnostic.

As for the man engrossed, then he does not remember death whatsoever and when he does it is only to lament over his world and thus he is preoccupied with dispraising death. Such a person, his remembering of death from Allāh does not increase him except in distance.

As for the repentant then he makes much remembrance of death so that fear (*khauf*) and humility (*khashiya*) will grow from his heart, this is from complete repentance (*tamām al-tawba*). He may dislike death out of fear that he be taken before he has perfected his repentance or rectified himself and his provisions for it. He will be excused for his dislike of death and this does not fall under the Prophet's (ﷺ) saying: "Whoever hates to meet Allāh then Allāh

will hate to meet him.” He only fears meeting (*liqāʾ*) Allāh based on his shortcomings. He is like one who delays meeting a beloved due to being preoccupied in preparing for his visit so as to meet him in a pleasurable manner. Thus, this is not to be included as hating to meet Allāh, and its indication is always being prepared for Him and nothing else occupies him otherwise he would be like the one engrossed in the world.

As for the vigilant gnostic, then he mentions death always as it is an appointment to meet the Beloved (*liqāʾ al-Ḥabīb*). A lover never forgets the appointment to meet the Beloved. This is the case with him generally that the arrival of death for him is slow as he loves it so as to be absolved of the abode of the sinners (*dār al-ʿāsin*) and move on to the close company of the Lord of the Worlds. As some of them have said: ‘A beloved has come at time of pain.’

Therefore, the penitent man is excused for disliking death, this one is excused for loving death and wishing for it and the loftiest of them is the one who defers his affair to Allāh. He does not choose anything for himself, neither life nor death, so long as it is more beloved to his Lord. He could go from excess love to the station (*maqām*) of submission (*taslīm*) and contentment (*riḍā*), this is the goal and utmost limit. In any case, there is a reward and merit in remembering death. For even the man engrossed in the world could benefit from it by acquiring an aversion to this world, since it can spoil his pleasures and anxieties.

Section One:

The Excellence of the Remembrance of Death

Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) narrated that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “Remember often the Destroyer of Pleasures.”¹ by which he meant death.

Anas (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) reported, “A man was once mentioned highly praised in the presence of the Prophet (ﷺ). The Prophet (ﷺ) asked them: “How is your companion’s remembrance of death?” They replied: “We never heard him mention death.” The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Then your companion is not as you suggest”²

Ibn ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) narrated, “The Prophet (ﷺ) was once asked: “Who is the most intelligent of people?” The Prophet replied (ﷺ): “Those who remember death the most are the best in their preparation for it. Such are the intelligent ones.”³

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī said: ‘Death has exposed the world’s faults, thus the one who has any inner core is not left with any joy therein. A servant does not adhere to the remembrance of death in his

¹ Nasā’ī, vol.4, p.4; Tirmidhī, #2409; Ibn Mājah, #4258; Ibn Ḥibbān, #2559; Aḥmad, #7912; Ḥākim, vol.4, p.321; al-Khaṭīb, *Tārikh Baghdād*, vol.1, p.384, vol.9, p.470; al-Qaḍā’ī, #668—the chain of transmission is ḥasan. It has also been reported from other Companions, refer to *Irwā’ ul-Ghalīl*, #682.

² Al-‘Irāqī said in *al-Mughnī*, vol.4, p.451: “It was reported by Ibn Abī al-Dunyā in his book *al-Mawt* from the ḥadīth of Anas with a weak chain of transmission. Also by Ibn ul-Mubārak in *al-Zuhd* and he said about it: ‘Mālik Ibn Mighwal reported to us’ and mentioned much addition in the report.’

I say: refer to *Sharḥ ul-Iḥyā’*, vol.10, p.229 as there is an additional verification of it therein.

³ Reported by Ibn Mājah, #4259; al-Būṣayrī said in *al-Zawā’id*: ‘Firwah Ibn Qays is majhūl, as is the one who narrated from him, the report is therefore bāṭil [null and void].’

⁴ Muslim, #2645

heart except that the world becomes trivial in his eyes and all of what is in it becomes immaterial.'

Ibn 'Umar (*radīy Allāhu 'anhumā*) when he used to remember death, he would shake like a feeble bird.

The jurists used to gather every night to remember death, the Day of Judgement, and they would cry as if they were at a funeral.

Ḥāmid al-Qayṣarī used to say: 'All of us were certain of death, yet we were not prepared for it. All of us were certain of Paradise, yet we had not performed any actions for it. All of us were certain of the Hellfire, yet we were not in fear of it. So why are you joyous? What are you waiting for? Death, it is the first visitor from Allāh which brings either good or evil. O brothers, travel to your Lord in a beautiful way.'

Shumayṭ Ibn 'Ajlān said: 'Whoever puts death before his very eyes will not be bothered with the constrictions and hardships of the worldly life.'

Know that death is tremendous and people are heedless about it due to their lack of contemplation on it, or they remember it with a heedless heart and for this reason the remembrance of death does not save it. The path to that is for the servant to open up his heart to the remembrance of death which is right before him. Like the one who wants to travel to the edge of a dangerous desert or travel by sea, he only thinks about that. It is more beneficial for him to remember his friends and relatives who have passed before him, and remember their deaths and burials.

Ibn Mas'ūd (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) said: 'The happy man is he who draws an admonition from others.'⁴

Abū'l-Dardā' (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) said: 'If you remember the dead, include yourself as being one of them.'

It is appropriate to visit cemeteries often, and when one's soul has become attached to anything from the worldly life, he reflects immediately that he will also have to leave it so as to decrease his hope [in living forever in this worldly life].

It has been reported from 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar (*radīy Allāhu 'anhumā*) that he said: Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said: "Be in the world as though you were a stranger or a wayfarer."⁵

Ibn 'Umar (*radīy Allāhu 'anhumā*) used to say: 'If you go to sleep do not wait for the morning, and if you awake do not wait for the evening. Take from your health something your infirmity, and from your life something for your death.'

In another ḥadīth: 'The thing which I fear the most for my *ummah* is: desire and lengthy hopes. As for desire then it misguides from the truth, and as for lengthy hopes then they cause forgetting the Afterlife.'⁶

⁵ Bukhārī, #6416; Ṭabarānī, *al-Kabīr*, #13470; Ibn Ḥibbān, *Rawḍat ul-'Uqalā'*, p.148; Abū Nu'aym, vol.3, p.301. Those who reported it with another additions were Aḥmad, nos.4764, 13538; Abū Nu'aym, vol.1, p.312; al-Qaḍā'ī, #644—and the isnād is ṣaḥīḥ.

It is also reported from Mu'ādh, Abū'l-Dardā' and Zayd Ibn Arqam (*radīy Allāhu 'anhum*).

⁶ Al-'Irāqī said in *al-Mughnī*, vol.4, p.453:

Reported by Ibn Abi al-Dunyā in *Kitāb Qaṣr al-Amal* [The Book of Shortening Hopes] from 'Alī, he also reported it from the ḥadīth of Jābir (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*)—both are weak.

I say: refer to *Sharḥ ul-Iḥyā'*, vol.10, p.237 as there is additional verification therein.

Al-Ḥasan said: ‘The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) once asked his Companions (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhum*): ‘‘Would all of you not love to enter Paradise?’’ And they (his Companions) said: ‘Yes indeed, O Messenger of Allāh.’ Then he (ﷺ) added: ‘‘Shorten your hopes, bring your deaths before your eyes, and be rightly ashamed before Allāh as He deserves.’’⁷

Abū Zakarīyā al-Taymī said: ‘Once when Sulaymān Ibn ‘Abdul-Malik was in the Sacred Masjid, a stone with an inscription on it was brought to him. He sought someone be found who could read it and there upon it was written: ‘O son of Adam! If you were to see the proximity of what remains of your life you would renounce your lengthy hopes and would long to increase in works, and would cut short your ambitions and your ploys. Your regret only comes when your foot slips [i.e. sin] and you are separated from your family, only then does it become clear to you that you will neither be returning to the world nor be increasing your good deeds. So act for the Day of Judgement, the day of grief and regret.’

⁷ Al-‘Irāqī said in *al-Mughnī*, vol.4, p.454:

Reported by Ibn Abī al-Dunyā in *Kitāb Qaṣr al-Amal* [The Book of Shortening Hopes] from al-ḥasan in a mursal form.

I say: a mursal ḥadīth is a type of weak ḥadīth according to the investigative scholars of ḥadīth from the people of knowledge.

Section Two:
The Cause of Lengthy Hopes

Know that lengthy hopes (*tūl al-amal*) have two causes, the first of which is love of the world (*hubb al-dunyā*), and the second of which is ignorance (*jahl*).

As for love of the world, when man becomes attached to it and its desires and pleasures, it becomes too heavy for his heart to leave, his heart stops thinking about death, which will separate him from the world. All who hate a thing deflect it away from themselves, and people are preoccupied with vain hopes. They always hope for that which will concur with his intent of remaining alive in the worldly life and what they need. They think of wealth, property, family, accommodation, friends and other means of life which he needs in the world. In this manner his heart becomes attached to this notion and cannot progress beyond it, being distracted thereby from the remembrance of death. He is unable to consider its proximity, for if he deliberates on death and the need to prepare for it he will promise himself by saying: *"The days are before you, do not repent until you get older."* Then when he gets older he says *"until you become an old man."* Then when he becomes an old man says: *"after I finish building this house"* or *"when I come back from travelling."* So he does not cease in procrastination and delay. With these stages, he delays and delays, day after day, working and focusing on something else up until death overtakes him at a time which he did not anticipate, and at this juncture his sorrow lengthens. The most frequent cry of the people of Hellfire is *'shall.'* 'O woe,' they cry, 'because of *"shall."*' The root of all these hopes is love of the world, and finding comfort with it and heedlessness to the saying of the Prophet (ﷺ): "Love whatever you want as you will soon leave it."

As for the matter of ignorance, then this is when a man relies on his youth and distances from himself the proximity of death. This poor person does not reflect on the fact that the old men of his land only number in their tens. Death among youth is more prevalent and for every old man that dies a thousand children and young men pass away. A young man could be deceived by his good health, he does not know that death could overcome him suddenly even though he tries to distance its reality from himself. Illness comes suddenly, and if he falls seriously ill death is not too far from him. If he was to reflect and know that death does not have a specific time, summer or winter, spring or autumn, night or day. Neither is he restricted to a specific age, both young and old die.

Section Three:

People's Diverse ranks in Lengthy Hopes

People greatly fluctuate in their lengthy hopes. Some who hope to survive until old age; others have endless hopes and whilst others have deficient hopes. It was reported from Abū 'Uthmān al-Nahdī that he said: 'I reached one hundred and thirty years of age and there is nothing except that I knew within it was deficiency except for my hopes.'

It has been reported in regards to deficient hopes that the wife of Ḥabīb Abū Muḥammad⁸ said: 'Abū Muḥammad used to say to me: 'If I die today send me to so and so to wash my body and do so and so.' It was said to her: 'Have you seen a vision?' She replied: 'This is what he used to say every day.'

Ibrāhīm Ibn Sibṭ who said: Abū Zur'ah said: 'I will say to you a word which I have not said to anyone else: I have not left the *masjid* for twenty years except that my soul encouraged me to return to it.' Some of them said: 'Do you not wash your shirt?' He replied: 'The matter [death] is more urgent than that.'

Muḥammad Ibn Abī Tawba said: 'Ma'rūf got up to pray and said to me: 'Step forwards to lead.' I said: 'If I lead you in this Prayer, I will never lead you again.' Ma'rūf said: 'You tell yourself that you shall pray again! We seek refuge with Allāh from lengthy hopes, for it prevents the best of actions.'

These are the states of the ascetics (*ṣūbhād*) in regards to having short hopes, whenever hopes are shortened, actions are perfected.

⁸ See Abū Nu'aym, *Ḥilyat ul-Awliyā'*, vol.6, p.149

It is possible that one will die today, get prepared like one who is preparing to die. If you go to sleep thank Allāh for safety as Allāh is Ever-Able to cause you to die tonight, so be eager to do good actions.

The Divine Legislation relays much in exhortation of keenness to perform good actions as found in Bukhārī from Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) who said: ‘Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “Two favours which with many people lose: good health and free time.”

Also from him: ‘That Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said to a man while admonishing him: “Make use of five before five: your youth before your old age; your good health before your illness; your richness before your poverty; your free time before your preoccupation and your life before your death.”’⁹

‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhū*) said: ‘Leisureliness is good in all things, except in that related to the Afterlife.’

Al-Ḥasan used to say: ‘Amazing are a people who have been instructed to take their provisions, invited to take a journey [to the Afterlife], the first of them have already been detained, while they are sitting in jest.’

Suhaym, the client of Banu Tamīm said: ‘I sat with ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Abdullāh, when he finished his prayer he approached me and said: ‘Inform me of your need as I am eager for something.’ I said to him: ‘What are you eager for?’ He replied: ‘The angel of death.’ He used to prayer a thousand units [of prayer] per day.’

⁹ Reported by Ḥākim, vol.4, p.306; Ibn Abī al-Dunyā, *Kitāb Qaṣr al-Amal*, vol.2, p.1, no.2—with a ṣaḥīḥ isnād as our Shaykh concluded in the *takbrīj* [critical edit] of *Iqtidā’ ul-‘Ilm*, #170.

They used to be eager to do good actions to the utmost, Ibn 'Umar used to get up at night, make ablution and pray. Then he would sleep a little like a bird, then get up again, make ablution and pray. Then he would sleep a little, then get up, make ablution and pray. He would do this regularly.

'Umayr Ibn Hānī used to make one hundred thousand *tasbīhāt*.¹⁰

Abū Bakr Ibn 'Ayyāsh said: 'I have completed the Qur'ān in this corner eighteen thousand times.'

¹⁰ This immense number of *tasbīhāt* has not at all been relayed in the Sunnah, neither in the authentic Sunnah nor in the weak narrations reported in the books of the Sunnah! The best guidance is that of Muḥammad (ﷺ)!

Section Four:

Agonies of Death and the states preferable
upon its advent

Know that if man had no other distress or anguish before him except for death it would be sufficient to disturb his livelihood. Death brings anxiety to his happiness and lengthen his reflection. What is strange about man is that when he is immersed in the most delightful of things in reality he is waiting for a soldier to come and hit him five times. He is anxious about his living and his delights. Yet at the same time he is open to be set upon by the angel of death with the pangs of expunging his soul. Yet he is heedless of remembering that, this is due to ignorance (*jahl*) and delusion (*ghurur*).

Know that death is more intense than being hit with a sword. The one being hit with a sword will scream out and seek the survival of his sustenance. As for the dead person, at the time of death, his voice will be severed due to the intensity of his pain. The distress will be to the utmost level that overcome his heart and the entire body, weakening all his limbs. He thus has no power remaining. He wants to cry out and seek help, but his soul will be ripped from his body. Every limb of his body will die slowly, first his feet will become cold, then his shins, then his thighs, until it reaches the throat. When that happens he will looking at the worldly life and his family. All of it is severed and the door to *tawba* is closed. Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said: "Allāh accepts the *tawba* of the servant as long as the pangs of death have not reached him."¹¹

¹¹ Aḥmad, #6160, 6408; Ḥākim, vol.4, p.257; Abū Nu'aym, vol.5, p.19; Ibn Mājah, #4253; Ibn Ḥibbān, #2449—from Ibn 'Umar (*radīy>Allāhu 'anhumā*) with a isnād which is ḥasan.

It has also been reported that the angels entrusted with overseeing the person at the time of death that if the person was righteous they praise him and say: “May Allāh increase you in goodness!” Yet if the person was evil they say: “May Allāh not increase you in goodness.”¹²

Anas Ibn Mālik (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “Allāh, Mighty and Majestic, appoints to each of his believing servants two angels who record his actions. If he dies they say: “He has died, do you permit us to take him up to the heavens?” Allāh Will Say: “My heavens are filled with angels who glorify Me.” The angels will say: “Do you permit us to place him in the earth?” Allāh Will Say: “My earth is full with those who glorify Me.” The angels will ask: “So where shall we place him?” Allāh Will Say: “go to the grave of my servant and glorify Me, praise Me, exalt Me and record that for My servant until the Day of Judgement.”¹³

In the Two Ṣaḥīḥs from the ḥadīth of ‘Ubādah Ibn al-Ṣāmit (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) who said: Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ): “When death comes to a believer he is given glad tidings of Allāh’s Pleasure and Honour. There is nothing more beloved to him than what is in front of him. As for the person of the Hellfire, if his life is sealed with evil he is given glad tidings of it and of whatever is in such states.”

Many of the Salaf feared an evil end (*si’ al-khātima*) and we mentioned that in the ‘*Chapter of Fear*’ and it is related to this topic. We ask Allāh to have mercy with us with His Mercy Which Encompasses everything and to be Subtle with us and seal for us good, indeed He is Most Generous, Most Kind.

¹² Ibn Abī al-Dunyā from Wuhayb Ibn al-Warad—it is weak.

¹³ Ibn ‘Adiyy, *al-Kāmil*, vol.7, p.2561—in the chain of transmission is Haytham Ibn Jamāz and he is munkar ul-ḥadīth, and some deemed him as a liar.

As for the things which are recommended when death approaches is for his heart to have good opinion of Allāh, for his tongue to say the testimony (*shahāda*), be tranquil as a sign of subtlety (*luṭuf*), and it is an indication that he has seen good, and it has been reported that the soul of a believer leaves calmly.¹⁴

It is recommended to encourage the one dying to say “*lā ilaha ilā Allāh*” as has been mentioned in the ḥadīth in Muslim: “Encourage your dying to say *lā ilaha ilā Allāh*.”

The person encouraging has to be gentle, it is mentioned in another ḥadīth: “Be present with your dying, encourage them to say ‘*lā ilaha ilā Allāh*’ and give them glad tidings of the Paradise. *Shayṭān*, the enemy of Allāh, is as close as he can be to the servant at this instance.”¹⁵

In an authentic ḥadīth: “None of you should die except with good opinion of Allāh.”¹⁶

It was reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) visited a man who was dying and said to him: “How do you find yourself now?” The man said: “I hope [good from] Allāh and I fear due to my sins.” The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The two are not combined in the heart of a believer at this instance except that Allāh Gives him what he hopes for and protects him from what he fears.”¹⁷

¹⁴ Abū Nu‘aym, vol.5, p.59; Ṭabarānī, *al-Kabīr*, #10015, 10049; al-Haythamī, *al-Majma‘*, vol.2, p.326 and al-Haythamī said: “It contains al-Qāsim Ibn Muṭayyib and he is weak.”

¹⁵ Abū Nu‘aym, vol.5, p.186—from Wāthilah, the chain of transmission is weak.

¹⁶ Muslim, #2877; Abū Dāwūd, #3097; Ibn Mājah, #4167; Ibn Sa‘d, vol.2, p.255; Ibn ul-Munbārak, #1034; Aḥmad, vol.3, pp.293, 315, 325, 330, 344, 390; al-Qaḍā‘ī, #938—*from Jābir (radīy Allāhu ‘anhu)*.

Hope at death is better as fear is for actions which have passed before, at death the eye stops to reflect so has to be dealt with gently. *Shayṭān* also at that point will try to get the servant [of Allāh] to think bad of Allāh about what passed before and get him to fear, thus good thoughts of Allāh is the best weapon against the enemy.

Sulymān al-Taymī said to his son when he was on his death bed: ‘O my son, tell me about the concessions so that perhaps I will meet Allāh while having good suspicion of Him.’

¹⁷ Tirmidhī, #983; Ibn Mājah, #4261; Nasā’ī, *al-Kubrā* as relayed in *Tuhfat ul-Asraf*, vol.1, p.104—from Anas (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) and the isnād is ḥasan.

Section Five:

The Death of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ)

Know that with Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) is the best example for all circumstances, and it is well known that there is no one from among the creation who is more beloved to Allāh than him (ﷺ).

Yet with that, Allāh did not delay his appointed time when he fulfilled his life. The Prophet (ﷺ) met death with agony. Bukhārī reported in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*¹⁸ from the ḥadīth of 'Ā'ishah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhā*) that she said: "There was a leather or wooden container filled with water in front of Allāh's Messenger next to his bed at the time close to his death. He would dip his hand into the water and wipe his face with it saying: "*lā ilaha ilā Allāh*, indeed death has its agonies."

In *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*¹⁹ from the ḥadīth of Anas (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) that he said: "When the Prophet's (ﷺ) sickness worsened, he would fall unconscious. Fāṭimah (*radi Allāhu 'anhā*) said: 'How distressed my father is.' The Prophet (ﷺ) said to her: "There will be no distress after this day."

Ibn Mas'ūd (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) reported: 'We gathered in the house of our mother 'Ā'ishah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhā*) and Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) looked at us and we shed tears. He looked at us (ﷺ) and tears welled up in his eyes. Then he said: "Welcome to you! May Allāh greet you with peace! May Allāh preserve you! May Allāh aid you! May Allāh unite you! May Allāh support you! May Allāh grant you success! May Allāh bring benefit with you! May Allāh raise you! May Allāh keep you safe! I exhort you to have fear of Allāh,

¹⁸ Bukhārī, vol.8, p.106; Muslim, #418

¹⁹ Bukhārī, vol.8, p.113; Aḥmad, vol.3, p.197; al-Dārimī, vol.1, p.40; Ibn Mājah, #1629

I advise you by Allāh. I keep you in the trust of Allāh.” We said: “O Messenger of Allāh, when is your appointed time [death]?” He replied: “It is coming soon, for me to go to Allāh and to the *Sidrat ul-Muntabā* [Highest End of Paradise], the Eternal Garden, the *Firdaws al-A‘lā*.” We said: “O Messenger of Allāh, what shall we shroud you with?” He said: “In this thobe which I am wearing now if you want, or in a Yemeni garment, or in white.” We said: “O Messenger of Allāh, who should lead the funeral prayer?” Then we began to cry. He said: “Go easy, may Allāh have mercy on you, may Allāh increase you in goodness for your Prophet. If you have washed and shrouded me, then place me on my bed here which will be my grave. Then leave for an hour, as the first to pray over me will be my close friend and beloved, Jibrīl, then Mikā’īl, then Isrāfīl, then the angel of death, then many other angels. Then come back in groups, pray over me and convey *salāms*. Do not harm me by praising me, crying or shouting. A man from my household should pray over me first, then their women, and then you after them. Convey the salutations to whoever is absent from my companions and upon those who follow my deen up until the Last Day. For I testify to you that I have conveyed the salutations of *salām* to whoever enters into Islām.”²⁰

Jibrīl visited the Prophet (ﷺ) three days before his death and said to him: “O Muḥammad, Allāh has sent me to you to ask you about that which He is more knowledgeable than you regarding. How do you find yourself?” The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Jibrīl, I feel worried and distressed.” Then two days before his death Jibrīl visited him again and asked him the same question, the Prophet (ﷺ) replied with the same answer. Then Jibrīl visited him again a day before his death and asked him the same question, the Prophet

²⁰ Ibn Sa’d, *al-Ṭabaqāt*; Ṭabarānī, *al-Du‘ā’*; *al-Wāḥidī*, *al-Tafsīr*—the isnād is very weak, refer to *Sharḥ ul-Iḥyā’*, vol.10, p.290.

(ﷺ) replied with the same answer.

Then the angel of death sought permission [from Jibrīl to take the Prophet's soul, (ﷺ)] and Jibrīl said: "O Aḥmad, this is the angel of death asking permission to take your soul and he has not sought permission from any human before you, and will not seek permission from any human after you." The Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Grant him permission." The angel of death entered and stood in front of the Prophet (ﷺ) and said: "Allāh has sent me unto you and instructed me to obey you. So if you instruct me to take your soul I will do, and if not then I will refrain."

The Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Would you do that O angel of death?" The angel of death said: "Likewise, I have been instructed to obey you." Jibrīl said: "O Aḥmad, Allāh misses you and longs for you." Then the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Take my soul O angel of death." Jibrīl (*alayhis-salām*) said: "O Messenger of Allāh, this is my last visit to earth and you were my only need to come to the world."²¹

Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) died while leaning on 'Ā'ishah's (*radīyAllāhu 'anhā*) chest and wearing a harsh woollen garment and a thick *iḡār*. Fāṭimah (*radīyAllāhu 'anhā*): "O father, who has responded to the call of the Lord Who has invited him? O father, whose dwelling place is *al-Firdaws* [the Garden of Paradise]. O father, unto Jibrīl we convey the news [of your death] O my father. When the Prophet was buried, Fāṭimah said to Anas: "O Anas, are you content with yourself to throw dust over Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ)!"²²

²¹ Reported by Ṭabarānī, *al-Kabīr*, #2890—from al-Ḥusayn Ibn 'Alī (*radīy-Allāhu 'anhuma*); relayed by al-Haythamī in *al-Majma'*, vol.9, p.35 and he said: 'It contains 'Abdullāh Ibn Maymūn al-Qadāh and his ḥadīth are not taken [*dhābaba al-ḥadīth*].'

²² The end part of the ḥadīth from Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī mentioned prior.

Section Six:

The Death of Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq
(*radīyAllāhu ‘anhu*)

Abū'l-Maliḥ reported that Abū Bakr (*radīyAllāhu ‘anhu*) when he was on his deathbed sent for ‘Umar (*radīyAllāhu ‘anhu*) and said to him: ‘I advise you with something: Allāh has a right on you at night which He only accept at night. He has a right at night which He does not accept during the day. He does not accept a voluntary act until an obligatory act has been performed. The scales on the Day of Judgement will be weighty due to following the truth in the worldly life. It is the right of the scales in which the truth will be weighed to be weighty. The scales are only light due to following falsehood in the worldly life. It is the right of the scales in which falsehood will be weighed to be light.

Do you not see that Allāh revealed the verses of hope with those of severity, and the verses of severity with those of hope so that the servant will be both in fear and in hope, not throwing himself into destruction with his own hands? Do not anticipate anything from Allāh except the truth. If you maintain this advice from me, and let death be the most beloved thing unto you, as it is sure to happen to you. If you do not pay heed to my advice then death is not the most beloved thing unto you.

And it was said that when Abū Bakr (*radīyAllāhu ‘anhu*) was approaching death, his daughter ‘Ā’ishah (*radīyAllāhu ‘anbā*) said:

By your life, wealth will not be enough for a youth
When the pangs of death construct the chest

Abū Bakr (*radīyAllāhu ‘anhu*) said to her: “Do not say this, rather

say [what Allāh says]:

وَجَاءَتْ سَكْرَةُ الْمَوْتِ بِالْحَقِّ ذَلِكَ مَا كُنْتَ مِنْهُ تَحِيدُ ﴿١٩﴾

“And the agony of death has come in truth. This is what you used to shun!”

[*Qāf* (50): 19]

Look at my two thobes, wash them and shroud me in them, as the living are in more need of the new than the dead.’

Section Seven:
The Death of 'Umar ibn al-Khattāb
(radīyAllāhu 'anhu)

Ibn 'Umar (radīyAllāhu 'anhumā) said: "Umar was in my house after he was stabbed and he fell ill which led to his death. He said to me: 'Put my cheek on the ground.' I said: 'You should not do that.' He rested his head on my thigh and I said: 'Shall I rest you on my lap or on the ground?' I thought that it would harm him so I did not do it. He said: 'Place my cheek on the ground here. Woe to me, my mother's woe if my Lord does not have mercy on me.'

It was reported that when he was stabbed he was carried to his home and the people came to visit him and praise him. A young man came and said: 'Glad tidings O leader of the believers, you have glad tidings from Allāh. For you accompanied Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ), and you have put forth for Islām that which you know. Then you assumed authority and were just, and now you have attained martyrdom!' 'Umar (radīyAllāhu 'anhu) replied: 'I regarded that as being little, it is neither for me nor against me.' Then he said: 'O 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar, go to 'Ā'ishah (radīyAllāhu 'anhā), the mother of the believers and tell her that 'Umar conveys salāms unto you, do not say "the leader of the believers" as this day I am not unto the believers a leader. Tell her that 'Umar ibn al-Khattāb seeks your permission for him to be buried next to his companion [i.e. the Prophet (ﷺ)].' Ibn 'Umar (radīyAllāhu 'anhumā) went, conveyed the salām and sought her permission. He went to her home and found her sitting and weeping. Then Ibn 'Umar said: "Umar conveys his salām unto you and he seeks permission to be buried next to his companion." 'Ā'ishah (radīyAllāhu 'anhā) said: 'I wanted that place for myself, but this day I prefer him to have over than

my own self.’ When ibn ‘Umar returned, ‘Umar asked him: ‘What happened?’ Ibn ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said: ‘What you love O leader of the believers, she has granted permission.’ ‘Umar said: ‘All praise is due to Allāh, nothing was more beloved to me than that. When I die, carry my body [to the home of ‘Ā’ishah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhā*)], give greetings of peace and say: “Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb seeks permission”. If she grants permission for me then enter me, and if she refuses then return me to be buried in the grave yard of the Muslims.’

Muslim²³ also solely reported in the ḥadīth of al-Miswar Ibn Makhramah: ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said: ‘By Allāh, if I had the earth in gold I would spend all of it so as to saved from Allāh’s punishment before I see him.’

In another report: ‘By Allāh, if I had that over which the sun rises and sets, I would spend all out of fear of the Creator.’

²³ Rather Bukhārī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol.7, p.42. I did not see it in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim!*

Section Eight:
The Death of 'Uthmān Ibn 'Affān
(*radīyAllāhu 'anhu*)

Nā'ilah bint al-Farāfiṣah (*radīyAllāhu 'anhā*), one of the wives of 'Uthmān (*radīyAllāhu 'anhu*) that she said: "Uthmān fasted the day before he was killed. When it came time to break his fast he asked for fresh water but they did not bring it for him so he went to sleep without breaking his fast. When he awoke some servant women bought jars filled with fresh water. I asked them for some water and they gave me a cup. I then went to 'Uthmān and woke him and said: 'Here is some fresh water.' He raised his head, saw that it was *fajr* and said: 'I have awoken fasting and Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) has visited me tonight and given me fresh water saying: 'Drink 'Uthmān' and I drank until I quenched my thirst. Then he said: 'Have some more?' So I drank until I quenched my thirst. Then he said: 'Indeed, the people will rebel against you. If you fight them you will be victorious, and if you leave them then you will break your fast with us.' She said: "Then they entered his house and killed him."

Al-'Alā' Ibn al-Fuḍayl from his father who said: "When 'Uthmān Ibn 'Affān (*radīyAllāhu 'anhu*) was killed they searched his shelves and found a locked chest. They opened it and found a small vessel in it with a piece of paper inside it with something written on it. It said: "This is 'Uthmān's Bequest: In the Name of Allāh, the Most Beneficent, Most Merciful. Indeed the Paradise is truth, the Hellfire is truth. Allāh will resurrect those in the graves on the day about which there is no doubt. Allāh does not break His Promise. On it we live, die and will be resurrected *insha'Allāh*."

Section Nine:

The Death of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib

(radīy Allāhu 'anhu)

Al-Sha'bī said: 'When 'Alī (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) was struck with that blow he said: 'What was done with the one who hit me?' They said: 'We got him.' 'Alī said: 'feed him from my food, give him my water to drink. If I live I will look at his affair, and if I die then strike him with one strike and no more.' Then 'Alī asked al-Ḥasan to wash him and said: 'Do not go to excess in the shroud, for I heard Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) say: "Do not go to excess in the shrouding as they wear out quickly."²⁴

Walk with me [in the funeral procession] and do not walk either speedily or slowly. If it is good you will hasten it for me, and if it is bad then you will be relieved from me.'

It is reported that on the night in which 'Alī (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) died, Ibn ul-Tayyāḥ came to him at *fajr* and called the *adhān* for *ṣalāh* while 'Alī was lying on the bed. He told him that *fajr* had commenced, but he remained lying down. Then he told him a third time, then he got up, walked and said:

Make your chest firm for death.
As death is going to meet you.²⁵
Do not be scared of death
When it comes to your valley.

²⁴ Abū Dāwūd, #3154 and in the chain is Abū Mālik al-Janbī and he is weak in ḥadīth.

²⁵ This couplet is al-Hazaj-Makhzūm as testified to by the experts in prosody, refer to Ibn ul-Mabrad, *al-Kāmil*, #923 and *Lisān ul-'Arab al-Muḥīṭ*, vol.1, p.1285, #105. Ibn Manzūr stated: "These words are a *kināyah* [ambiguous implication] for getting prepared for something."

I say: refer to *Asās ul-Balāgha*, p.125 and *Ṭabaqāt Ibn Sa'd*, vol.3, p.32

Section Ten:

On Sayings of those Near Death among the
Companions

When death approached al-Ḥasan Ibn 'Alī (*radīyAllāhu 'anhumā*) he said: 'Take my bed out of the house and then leave.' Then he said: 'O Allāh I trust myself with You.'

We mentioned prior the words of the Rightly Guided Caliphs (*radīyAllāhu 'anhum*).

It was reported that Mu'ādh Ibn Jabal (*radīyAllāhu 'anhu*) said when death approached him: 'Look if morning has come upon us yet.' He came and it was said to him that morning had not yet broken. Later he was told when morning had broken and he said: 'I seek refuge in Allāh from a night whose morning leads to the Hellfire.' Then he said: 'Welcome to death! The absent visitor, the beloved who has arrived. O Allāh if I feared You then today I hope in You. O Allāh You Know that I did not love the world or to remain in it for long. I used to fast on the very hot days, pray on winter nights and gather with scholars in the circles of remembrance.'

Abū Muslim said: 'I went to see Abū'l-Dardā' (*radīyAllāhu 'anhu*) while he was admonishing himself saying: 'What would a man do on this hour? What would he do on such a day?' Then he died, may Allāh have mercy on him.'

Salmān al-Fārisī (*radīyAllāhu 'anhu*) drew near to his death he wept he was asked: 'What has made you weep?' He replied: 'Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) instructed us to prepare with the provisions of a

traveller,²⁶ yet with me are these provisions.’ It was said: all that he had around him value amounted to little more than ten dirhams.

Al-Muzanī reported that:²⁷ ‘I went to see Muḥammad Ibn Idrīs al-Shāfi‘ī at the time of his death²⁸ and I said to him: ‘How are you O Abū ‘Abdullāh?’ He replied: ‘I have become one who is departing from this world, leaving my brothers, seeking Allāh, meeting with by bad actions, so I do not know whether my soul is going to Paradise or to the Fire.’” Then al-Shāfi‘ī recited some poetry,

When my heart became hard and my thoughts constricted,
I had hope in Your Pardon as a form of safety.
My sins are enormous,
yet when I compared it to Your Pardon,
Your Pardon was Greater.
You never cease to be a Possessor of Pardon,
and You still show good and pardon which is a favour and a honour²⁹

²⁶ Aḥmad, vol.5, p.438; Ibn Mājah, #4104; Ṭabarānī, *al-Kabir*, #6160, 6069, 9182; Hākim, vol.4, p.317; ‘Abdu’l-Razzāq, #20632; Abū Nu‘aym, vol.1, pp.195, 196, 197, vol.2, p.237; Aḥmad, *al-Zuhd*, p.28; al-Qaḍā‘ī, #728—it is ṣaḥīḥ.

²⁷ [TN]: Al-Bayhaqī, *Manāqib ul-Shāfi‘ī*, vol.2, pp.294-95 via Abū ‘Abdullāh Ibn Shākir from al-Muzanī.

²⁸ [TN]: Al-Shāfi‘ī died in 204 AH and al-Muzanī was twenty-nine years old at that time.

²⁹ Refer to *Diwān al-Shāfi‘ī*, pp.120, 121; al-Bayhaqī, *Manāqib ul-Shāfi‘ī*, vol.2, p.111.

Section Eleven:
Visiting the Graveyard

It was said that: Abū'l-Dardā' (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) used to sit at the graves and he was asked as to why he did that. He replied: 'I sit with a people who remind me of my true abode, and if I am absent they will not backbite me.'

Maymūn Ibn Mihrān said: 'I went out with 'Umar ibn 'Abdul-'Azīz to the cemetery and when he looked at the graves he would cry. Then he approached me and said: 'O Maymūn, these are the graves of my forefathers from Banu Umayyah, yet it is as if they were never even a part of the world sharing in their delights and pleasures. Do you not see how they fell prey to calamity and punishment? And how they were afflicted? Their bodies have now decayed.' Then he cried and said: 'By Allāh I do not know of anyone who have received more favour than those who went on to the graves and was assured from Allāh's punishment.'

It is recommended to visit the graves (*ziyārat al-qubūr*), for the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Visit the graves as they will remind you of the Afterlife."³⁰

Whoever visits the graves will meet the face of the dead, recite something from the Qur'ān as a gift for him³¹ and the visit should

³⁰ Muslim, #1977; Abū Dāwūd, vol.2, p.72; al-Bayhaqī, vol.4, p.77; Nasā'ī, vol.1, p.285; Aḥmad, vol.5, pp.350, 355, 361—from Buraydah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*).

³¹ There is difference of opinion among the people of knowledge on this issue, refer to Shaykh 'Abdu'l-Salām al-Shuqayrī, *Ḥukm ul-Qirā'āt li'l-Amwāt*. Also refer to al-Shawkānī, *Nayl ul-Awṣār*, vol.4, p.79—as for reciting the Qur'ān at a grave then Abū Dāwūd stated in his *Masā'il*, p.158: 'I heard Aḥmad (*rahimabullāh*) being asked about reciting the Qur'ān at graves and he said: "no."'

be on Friday.³²

It was reported that when 'Āsim al-Jahḍarī died, a man from his people saw him in a dream two years after he died and he said to him: 'Did you not die?' 'Āsim replied: 'Yes of course.' The man said: 'Where are you then?' 'Āsim replied: 'By Allāh, I am in a Rawd from the gardens of Paradise, along with some people from my companions. We meet every night of *jumu'ab* in the company of Abū Bakr Ibn 'Abdullāh al-Muzanī and we get your news.' The man said: 'I said to him: 'By your bodies or your souls?' 'Āsim said: 'How far [is that from being the case]! For our bodies have rotted away, our souls meet.' The man said: 'do you know when we will visit you?' 'Āsim said: 'We only come know this every Friday evening up until dawn on Saturday.' The man said: 'Why on these days?' 'Āsim said: 'Due to the nobility and magnitude of the day of *jumu'ab*.'³³

'Uthmān Ibn Sawād al-Ṭufāwī relayed, and his mother was of the pious worshipping women named Rāhibah. He said: 'When my mother was on her deathbed she looked up to the heavens and said: 'O my support, upon whom will I depend in life after my death, do not disgrace me at death or worry me in the grave.' He said: 'Then she died. I used to visit her grave every *jumu'ab* and make *du'ā'* for her, asking Allāh to forgive her and the rest of the people in the graves. One night I saw her in a dream and I said to her: 'O my mother, how are you?' She said: 'O my son, death is a severe torment. All praise is due to Allāh, I am in the praiseworthy *barzakh*, awaiting *al-rayḥān* and *al-sundus*, until the Day of Gathering.'

³² There are some reports which have been relayed regarding the virtue of this, as found in Ibn ul-Qayyim, *al-Rūb*, with the edit of the brother, Shaykh 'Abdu'l-Fattāh 'Umar—yet they are weak and uncorroborated. Refer to Ibn ul-Hāj al-Mālikī, *al-Madkhal*, vol.3, p.277

³³ Refer to one of my previous comments [on the likes of such reports]!!

I said: 'Do you have any needs?' She said: 'Yes, do not give up visiting us as I am happy with your arrival on *jumu'ah*, and when you arrive it is said to me: 'Rāhibah, here is your son from before', so I am so happy with that as are the people around me who are dead in their graves.'

Anas Ibn Manṣūr said: 'A man was late for a *janāzah* but was able to catch the prayer. At night, he stood at the gate of the cemetery and said: 'May Allāh sooth your loneliness, show mercy to you, overlook your sins, accept your good deeds.' He never said any more than these words. He said: 'I got up one night, but I did not go to the cemetery, I supplicated as I did usually and then I fell sleep and I was with many people who had come to me. I said: 'who are you and what do you want?' They said: 'we are the people of the graves and you used to give us gifts.' I said: 'What gifts?' They said: 'the supplications you used to make.' Then I did not give up from making supplication at that cemetery ever again.

Bashhār Ibn Ghālib said: 'I saw Rābi'ah in a dream and I used to make a lot of supplication for her. She said to me: 'O Bashhār! Your gifts reached me on plates of light covered with silk cloths.' I said: 'How is that?' She replied: 'This is how the *du'ā*' of the living is for the dead. They are brought to the receivers on plates of light covered with silk cloths and it is said: this is a gift for you.'

Section Twelve:

The True the Nature of Death

The verses and reports indicate that the reality of death, the soul leaving the body while the soul remains, either punished or favoured. The soul could be pained by itself due to grief (*huzn*) or worry (*ghamm*), or it could favoured with types of joy (*farh*) and happiness (*surūr*) without the bodily organs having any connection to this.³⁴

Whatever is a description of the soul (*rūb*) itself remains with it after the body has been separated from it, and all which it has via the bodily organs becomes void when the body dies until the soul returns to the body. It is neither far off to accept that the soul returns to its body while in the grave, nor is it to accept that the soul is delayed from returning to its body on the Day of Resurrection.³⁵ Allāh, Glory unto Him, has more knowledge as to what happens to His servants.

The meaning of death is: the severance of the spirit's behaviour from the body. Removal of the body from its working function. A person losing their wealth, property and family due to being taken to another world which is unlike this one. If there is anything in the world which pleased and comforted him, his anguish will be greater after death. Yet if nothing pleased him except for the remembrance of Allāh (*dhikr*) and relationship (*uns*). Then his favours will be great, his happiness will be perfected when he is removed from his beloved things. The burdens and preoccupations are severed, all of which preoccupied him from remembering Allāh.

³⁴ According to the *Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ*, the punishment of the grave, and its blessings, happen on both the body and soul together. For a discussion on this in detail refer to *Sharḥ ul-'Aqīdah al-Taḥawīyyah*, p.447.

³⁵ See al-Safārīnī, *Lawāmi' ul-Anwār al-Babīyyah*, vol.2, pp.26-28

Death uncovers to the dead that which was not exposed to him while he was alive. As things become exposed to a person while awake that which were not exposed to him while he was asleep. People are asleep and when they die they are attentive.³⁶

The first that will be uncovered to him is what harmed him and what benefitted him of good deeds and bad. This was recorded in the secrets of his heart yet he was preoccupied from inspecting it due to his preoccupation in the world. So when this is severed, all of his actions become exposed, he does not look at a bad deed except that he regrets and anguishes so much so that he will want to enter hell so as to be free of the anguish. All of this will be uncovered at death. These pains are experienced by the disobedient when they are buried, we ask Allāh for salvation.

What indicates that the soul does not cease after death is when Allāh says,

وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ
قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا بَلْ أَحْيَاءُ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ ﴿١٦٥﴾

“And consider not those that were slain in the way of Allāh to be dead. Rather they are alive, nourished in the presence of their Lord, all rejoicing”

[*Āl-‘Imrān* (3): 165]

Maṣrūq said: ‘We asked ‘Abdullāh Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) about this verse and he said: ‘Their souls will be in the souls of green birds in chandeliers hanging from the throne of Allāh. They enjoy as they wish and then go back to their chandeliers.’ He also said,

³⁶ This expression is ascribed to the Prophet (ﷺ) by some, like the author of *al-Ibyā’*, yet it has no basis whatsoever as al-‘Irāqī said in *al-Mughnī*, as did al-Subkī in *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi‘īyyah*, vol.4, p.170; al-‘Ajlūnī, *Kashf al-Khifā’*, vol.2, p.312.

النَّارُ يُعْرَضُونَ عَلَيْهَا غُدُوًّا وَعَشِيًّا وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ
أَدْخِلُوا آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ أَشَدَّ الْعَذَابِ ﴿٤٦﴾

“The Fire, they are exposed to it morning and evening. And the Day the Hour appears [it will be said], ‘Make the people of Pharaoh enter the severest punishment.’”

[*Ghāfir* (40): 46]

Allāh informed that they will be punished after death.

In the Two *Ṣaḥīḥs*³⁷ from Ibn ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) that he said: ‘Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “When one of you dies, he is shown his seat in the morning and evening. If he is from the people of Paradise, he is shown a seat from the people of Paradise; and if he is from the people of the Hellfire, he is shown one of their seats. It will be said to him: ‘This is your seat until Allāh resurrects you on the Day of Judgement.’”

It was mentioned prior that when a person’s evil deeds are uncovered he will be in anguish and great pain. As for the believer, then ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said: ‘When the soul leaves a believer he is like a man who was imprisoned and then freed. He then embarks throughout the earth safe and sound. After death the believer uncovers Allāh’s virtue and honour to which the worldly life is but a prison. He is like one who is imprisoned in a dark room and then a vast garden is opened up to him, full of trees and he does not like to return to the worldly life much like how he does not like to return to his mother’s womb.’

Mujāhid said: ‘The believer is given glad tidings of his son’s righteousness later so as to cool his eyes.’

³⁷ Bukhārī, vol.3, p.193; Muslim, #2866; Mālik, vol.1, p.239; Tirmidhī, #1072; and Nasā’ī, vol.4, p.107.

Section Thirteen:
The Grave

It has been reported from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said: “The grave is a garden from the gardens of Paradise, or a pit from the pits of Hell.”³⁸

It has also been reported from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said: “The grave says to the dead when he is placed therein: ‘Woe to you O son of Adam! What has deluded you so? Did you not know that I am an abode of darkness, an abode of solitude, an abode of worms?’”³⁹

Tirmidhī reported from Abū Sa‘īd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) who said: ‘Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) entered his *musalla* and saw the people gathering as if they were many. He said (ﷺ): “If you were gathered like this so as to remember the destroyer of delights you would be too busy from what I see from you now. Make plentiful your remembrance of the destroyer of delights (death). For there is no day except the grave speaks and says: ‘I am the abode of strangeness, I am the abode of solitude, I am the abode of dust, I am the abode of worms.’ When the believing servant [of Allāh] is buried the grave will say to him: ‘welcome to you, with pleasure’. As you were of the most beloved to traverse on my back today you have become unto me. You will see what I have for you, and it will become extended as far as his eye can see and a door to Paradise

³⁸ Tirmidhī, #2462—from Abū Sa‘īd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) and also relayed by al-Sakhāwī in *al-Maqāsid*, #758 who further ascribed it to Ṭabarānī who relayed it—from Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) and then said: “the chain is weak.”

³⁹ Al-‘Irāqī said in *al-Mughnī* vol.4, p.498:

Reported by Ibn Abī al-Dunyā in *Kitāb ul-Qubūr* [The Book of Graves]; Ṭabarānī in *Musnad al-Shāmiyīn* and Abū Aḥmad Ḥākim in *al-Kunā* from the ḥadīth of Abū’l-Ḥajjāj al-Thimālī with a weak chain.

will be opened. If a sinner or disbeliever is buried the grave will say to him: 'No welcome and no greetings. As you were of the most detested to traverse on my back today you have become unto me. You will see what I have prepared for you.' Then it will constrict him to the extent that his ribs break."

Ka'b said: 'When a righteous man is placed into his grave, his righteous actions gather around him: the prayer, fasting, *hajj*, striving in way of Allāh and charity. The angels of torment reach for his legs and his prayer will say: 'Leave him, you have no way to him. For he stood with me for long periods standing for Allāh.' Then the angels of torment will reach for his body, his *hajj* and striving in way of Allāh will say: 'leave him, for he strived with himself and tired his body. He made pilgrimage and strived for Allāh. You have no way to him.' Then they will go for his hands and his charity will speak saying: 'How much charity left these two [hands], until he placed them into Allāh's Hand seeking Allāh's Face. You have no way to him.' Then it will be said to the man: 'Are you content with life and death?' Then the angels of mercy will go to him and lay down a bed with covers from Paradise. His grave will become as vast as he can see, illuminated by a candle from Paradise from his light up until Allāh Resurrects him from the grave.'

Anas Ibn Mālik (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "When a servant [of Allāh] is placed into his grave, his companions turn away from him and he hears their footsteps. Then two angels will go to him and sit him up, then they will say to him: 'What did you used to say about this man Muḥammad (ﷺ)?' As for the believer he will say "I testify that he is the servant and messenger of Allāh." The angels will say: 'Look at your place in the Hellfire! Allāh has given you a place in Paradise instead of it.'" The Prophet (ﷺ) then said: "He will see both places. As for

the sinful or the hypocrite when it is said to him: 'What did you used to say about this man?' They will reply: 'I did not comprehend what I was saying, I just used to say what the people said.' The angels will say to him: 'Neither did you comprehend nor did you recite [the Qur'ān].' Then he will be beaten with an iron hammer between his ears and he will cry out so loudly that he will be heard whatever is near him except human and Jinn." Reported in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs.⁴⁰

Also within the Two Ṣaḥīḥs is the ḥadīth of Asmā' bint Abī Bakr (*radīy Allāhu 'anhā*) from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said: "It has been revealed to me that you will be tested in your graves similar to, or like, the test of the Dajjāl. It will be said therein: 'What do you know of this man [i.e. Muḥammad (ﷺ)]?' As for the believer then he will say: 'I testify that he is the servant and messenger of Allāh.'" .

Ibn 'Abbās (*radīy Allāhu 'anhumā*) said: When the *janāza* procession of Sa'd Ibn Mu'ādh (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) came out we followed it. Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) turned to us and said: "There is no person except that he will have constriction in the grave, and if anyone would be absolved of this it would be Sa'd Ibn Mu'ādh."

'Abdullāh al-Ṣin'ānī said: 'I saw Yazīd Ibn Hārūn in a dream four nights after he died. I said to him: 'What did Allāh do with you?' He replied: 'He accepted my good actions and overlooked me for my bad actions.' I said: 'What happened after that?' He replied: 'Is there anything but kindness from He Who is the Most-Kind? He forgave my sins and granted me entry into Paradise.' I said: 'What did you do in order to achieve that?' He replied: 'By attending the gatherings of remembrance, my speaking the truth, my truthful-

⁴⁰ Bukhārī, vol.3, p.188; Muslim, #287; and Nasā'ī, vol.4, pp.97, 98

ness in speech, my long standing in prayer and my patience with poverty.' I said: 'Munkar and Nakir, they are true?' He replied: 'By Allāh, there is no god except He, they sat me up and asked me: 'Who is your Lord? What is your deen? Who is your prophet?' I removed some dust from my grey beard and I said: 'Are the likes of me to be asked?! I am Yazīd Ibn Hārūn al-Wāsiṭī. I lived in the world for sixty years as the most knowledgeable of people.' Then one of the angels said: 'He has spoken the truth.' He is indeed Yazīd Ibn Hārūn. Sleep as a bride would, for there will be no terror for you after today."

Al-Marwazī said: 'I saw Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal in a dream, he was in a garden wearing two green robes and a crown made from gold. He was walking in a way which I never knew him to walk. I said: 'O Aḥmad! What's all this? You are walking in a way which I know is not your habit of walking?!' He replied: 'This is the walk of the servants in the abode of peace (*dār al-salām*).' I said: 'What is the crown on your head?' He said: 'My Lord, Mighty and Majestic, stopped me and took me to account easily. He clothed me, gifted me, brought me near and I look at Him. He gave me this crown saying: 'O Aḥmad, this is a crown of respect given to you as you said that My Words are Uncreated.'

Section Fourteen:

Concerning the Circumstances of the Deceased
from the time when the Horn is Blown to his Final
Residence in Paradise or Hell

We have indicated the circumstances of the grave (*aḥwāl al-qabr*), yet more severe than that is the blowing of the horn (*nafakh al-ṣūr*), the resurrection (*ba'th*), the accounting (*ḥisāb*), the weighing of the scales (*naṣb al-mīzān*) and the bridge (*ṣirāṭ*). There has to be faith in these states and long contemplation (*taṭwīl al-fīkr*) over them. Most people do not establish their hearts with *īmān* in the Afterlife, and if a person was not to view the birth of animals and it was said to him: “the one who created these animal likewise created humans from a despised fluid and then he has been fashioned, is intelligent and speaks”, his nature would intensely reject that. The wondrous way in which man has been created far exceeds his resurrection and return. So how can Allāh’s Ability and Wisdom be rejected? If your *īmān* is weak, strengthen it by reflecting on the first creation, for the second is the same and easier [for Allāh]. If you were to strengthen your *īmān* with that you will feel the fear and danger in your heart. So reflect and contemplate much on it as it will exhort you to be serious. The first sound to be heard by the dead will be when Isrāfil blows the horn. Imagine yourself being resurrected and bedazzled due to the sound, Allāh said:

وَيُفْخِخُ فِي الصُّورِ فَإِذَا هُمْ مِنَ الْأَجْدَاثِ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَنْسِلُونَ

“And the Horn will be blown; and at once from the graves
to their Lord they will hasten.”

[*Yāsīn* (36): 51]

Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) who said: ‘Allāh’s Mes-

senger (ﷺ) said: “How can I be content when the angel entrusted to blow the horn has prepared himself, bending his forehead and listening with his ears, waiting for the instruction [from Allāh].” The Muslims asked: “What should we say O Messenger of Allāh?” He (ﷺ) said: “Say:

« حَسْبُنَا اللهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ ، وَتَوَكَّلْنَا عَلَى اللهِ »

ḥasbunullāh wa ni‘ma al-wakīl, wa tawakkalnā ‘alā Allāh

Allāh is sufficient for us and the best of those on whom to depend, and upon Allāh we rely.”⁴¹

Then look at how people will be gathered on the Day of Judgement and standing naked, on a plain land with nowhere for people to hide.

In the Two Ṣaḥīḥs⁴² the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The people will be gathered on the Day of Judgement on reddish-white land like a pure loaf of bread (made from pure flour).”

Then reflect on the commotion and congestion of people, with the sun near to their heads, the intense sweating and the worry in the hearts.

In the ḥadīth it is mentioned that the sweat will pour out according to their actions.⁴³

⁴¹ Tirmidhī, vol.1, p.70; Ibn Mājah, #4273; Aḥmad, vol.3, pp.7, 73; Abū Nu‘aym, vol.5, p.105, vol.7, p.130, 312; Ibn ul-Mubārak, p.1597—there is weakness in this narration. However, it has also been narrated from Ibn ‘Abbās, Zayd Ibn Arqam, Anas and Jābir (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhum*)—and these make it ḥasan. Our Shaykh, al-Albānī, verified it in *Silsilah Aḥādīth al-Ṣaḥīḥah*, #1079, also refer to *Fath ul-Bārī*, vol.11, p.317.

⁴² Bukhārī, vol.11, p.323; Muslim, #2790

⁴³ Muslim, #2864; Tirmidhī, #2423 from Miqdād Ibn al-Aswad (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*).

Reflect O poor one on the question your Lord will Ask you about your actions, without any intermediary. For it has been reported from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said: “Three things will be presented to the people on the Day of Judgement: as for two of them then they will be discussed and excused, as for the third then the records will fly up and he will try to grab it with his left and with his right.”⁴⁴

Abū Barzah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) who said that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “The feet of the servant will not move until he is asked about: His life and how he spent it. The actions which he did. About his wealth, how he earned it and what he spent it on; and his body and how he used it.”⁴⁵

Şafwān Ibn Muḥriz said: ‘I took the hand of Ibn ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) and we walked, when a young man approaches us and said: ‘What did you hear Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) say about salvation on the Day of Judgement?’ Ibn ‘Umar said: ‘I heard Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) say: “Allāh, Mighty and Majestic, will bring the believer near to Him and shelter him. Allāh will say to him: did you commit such and such sins? The man will say that he did and Allāh will keep asking to the extent that the man will think that he is ruined. Allāh will say: ‘I covered you in the worldly life, and I will forgive you today.’ Then he will be given his book of good actions. As for the disbelievers and hypocrites, the witnesses will say:

⁴⁴ Tirmidhī, #2427 from Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*)—the chain is weak. He also reported it from Abū Mūsā (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) with another weak chain.

⁴⁵ Tirmidhī, #2416; *al-Khaṭīb*, vol.12, p.440—from Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) and it contains weakness, however it has other supporting narrations from Abū Hurayrah in *al-Dārimī*, vol.1, p.131; Abū Nu‘aym, *al-Hiyab*, vol.10, p.232; Ibn al-Dabīthī, *Ḍhayl Tarīkh Baghdād*, vol.2, p.163, and from Mu‘ādh in *al-Khaṭīb*, vol.11, p.331—the ḥadīth is ḥasan.

هَؤُلَاءِ الَّذِينَ

كَذَبُوا عَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ ۚ أَلَا لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَى الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٨﴾

“These are the ones who lied against their Lord. Unquestionably, the curse of Allāh is upon the wrongdoers.”

[*Hūd* (11): 18]”

Reported in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs.⁴⁶

In the Two Ṣaḥīḥs⁴⁷ from the ḥadīth of Abū Sa‘īd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “There will be a bridge over Hellfire, and I will be the first to cross it.”

Also in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “A bridge will be placed over the Hellfire.” They said: “O Messenger of Allāh, what sort of bridge?” He said: “One which is liable to slip, it has hooks and spikes which prick like a thorn. The believers will cross over it, some as fast as lightning strikes, others with the speed of wind and some like the finest of race horses and riding beasts. Some will be cross safely while other will be injured on the way until the last of them will be released.”

⁴⁶ Bukhārī, vol.5, p.70; and Muslim, #2768

⁴⁷ Bukhārī, vol.13, p.358; and Muslim, #183

Section Fifteen:
Hellfire and from it Allāh's Refuge is Sought

Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) who said: 'We were with the Prophet (ﷺ) one day and we heard some commotion. Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said: "Do you know what that is?" We said: "Allāh and His Messenger know better." He said: "That is a stone which was thrown into Hell seventy years ago and now it has finally reached the bottom." Reported by Muslim.⁴⁸

In the Two Ṣaḥīḥs⁴⁹ from Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) who said: Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said: "The fire which you light in this world O son of Adam is a seventieth of the Fire of Hellfire." They [the Companions] said: "By Allāh, this fire would be sufficient O Messenger of Allāh!" He said: "Hellfire has sixty-nine parts more than the fire of this world, and each part is as hot as this."

Muslim⁵⁰ solely reported the ḥadīth of Ibn Mas'ūd (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said: "Hellfire will be brought having seventy thousand reins, each rein held by seventy thousand angels."

Abū'l-Dardā' (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) said:⁵¹ "The people of Hellfire will starve equal to their punishment. They call out seeking succour with food and they will be given *ḍarī'* [a bitter thorny tree]⁵² which neither nourishes nor satisfies hunger. They will cry out again, and

⁴⁸ Muslim #2844

⁴⁹ Bukhārī, vol.6, p.238; Muslim, #2843; Mālik, vol.2, o.994; and Tirmidhī, #2592

⁵⁰ Muslim #2842; and Tirmidhī, #2576

⁵¹ Relayed in marfū' form and with a weak chain, al-'Irāqī transmitted it in *al-Mughnī*, vol.4, p.532—from al-Dārimī and it is mawqūf up to Abū'l-Dardā' (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*).

⁵² 'Ḍarī'' is a vile blend, the *tafāsīr* differ as to what it is. See al-Rāghib, *al-Mufradāt*, p.295

then they will be given food which burns their throats. They will then remember that they used to vanquish this by drinking, so they will cry out for drink. They will be given *hamim* [boiling water hung from hot metal] to drink and when they approach it the faces are burnt. Then they will say to the keepers of the Hellfire:

أَدْعُوا رَبَّكُمْ يُخَفِّفْ عَنَّا يَوْمًا مِّنَ الْعَذَابِ ﴿٤٩﴾

“Supplicate your Lord to lighten for us a day from the punishment.”

[*Ghāfir* (40): 49]

Then they will say: “Ask an angel.” They will then say:

يَعْمَلُكَ لِيَقْضِ عَلَيْنَا رَبُّكَ قَالَ إِنَّكُمْ مَّنِكُتُونَ ﴿٧٧﴾

“O Mālik, let your Lord put an end to us!” He will say, ‘Indeed, you will remain.’”

[*al-Zukhruf* (43): 77]

Then they will say:

رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْهَا فَإِن عُدْنَا فَإِنَّا ظَالِمُونَ ﴿١٠٧﴾

“Our Lord, remove us from it, and if we were to return [to evil], we would indeed be wrongdoers.’

He will say,

قَالَ اخْسَرُوا فِيهَا وَلَا تَكَلِّمُونِ ﴿١٠٨﴾

‘Remain despised therein and do not speak to Me.’”

[*al-Mu'minūn* (23): 107-108]

Then they will despair of any good and will begin to scream, wail and suffer.

Reflect on the snakes of Hell, for in the ḥadīth it is mentioned: “Indeed snakes of Hell are as long as the necks of camels and the scorpions of Hell are like mules.”⁵³

Al-Ḥasan said: ‘Hellfire consumes them seventy thousand times per day and then their bodies are reformed to taste the punishment over and over.’

Know that the description of Hellfire is lengthy and mention of the slightest of it is enough to instil fear. So if you are a believer in this pay close attention and fear what is in front of you. Allāh does not combine in a servant two fears and we do not mean the fear like when women cry for an hour, then gives up doing good actions. Rather what we intend is the fear which prevents disobedience and exhorts to obedience. As for the fear of the fools who merely suffice with listening to these states and then say, “*we ask Allāh for help, we seek refuge in Allāh*” yet with this they persist in sin, and *Shayṭān* has tricked him as a lion tricks its prey.

⁵³ *Aḥmad*, vol.4, p.191—from ‘Abdullāh Ibn al-Ḥārith and within the chain is weakness.

Section Sixteen:

Loving Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ)

Be in this world as a lover of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) and be serious in esteeming his Sunnah. Perhaps he may intercede for you, as he has an intercession which has precedence over all of the other prophets. For he will ask Allāh about the people from his *ummah* who committed major sins and he will save them. Have many righteous brothers as each believer has an intercession. Do not be deluded and rely on hopes. Whoever hopes for something seeks it out and protects himself from acts of oppression. Whoever dies on this before rectifying these oppressions then his fire will surround him on the day of judgement. This one will say "*he oppressed me*", this one will say "*he mocked me*", this one will say "*he was a bad neighbour*", this one will say "*he deceived me*"—you will not be free from their hands, once you have settled this it will be said "*there is no transgression today.*"

Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) said: 'Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said: "The believers will be safe from the Hellfire on the Day of Judgement and they will be stopped at a bridge between Hell and Paradise where they will discuss with each other about injustices among them in the worldly life. When they are purified they will be admitted into Paradise."⁵⁴

Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Do you know who the bankrupt one (*muflis*) is?" The companions said: "According to us, the bankrupt one is the one who has no *dīnār* and no provisions." The Prophet (ﷺ): "The bankrupt one from my *ummah* is the one who comes on the Day

⁵⁴ Bukhārī, vol.5, p.70

of Judgement with prayer, fasting and *zakāt*. Yet he had abused this one, slandered this one, unjustly consumed the wealth of this one, shed the blood of this one and hit this one. So whomever was on the receiving end will take form his good actions and if his good actions dissipate his sins will be placed into his record and he will be thrown into the Hellfire.”⁵⁵

Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “People will get their due rights on the Day of Judgement, even a sheep who lost its horn to a horned sheep [in a fight].”⁵⁶

All of these *ahādīth* are in the Ṣaḥīḥ collections so you should look, may Allāh grant you success, to the longevity of the safety of your good actions so as to enter that which invalidates *riyā’* and *ghibab*, we ask Allāh for safety and success.

⁵⁵ Muslim, #2581; and Tirmidhī, #2420

⁵⁶ Muslim, #2582; and Tirmidhī, #2322

Section Seventeen:

Description of Paradise, we ask Allāh from His
Virtue to Grant us Entry Therein

Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘We said: ‘O Messenger of Allāh, narrate to us about Paradise and its structure.’ He said (ﷺ): “It is made from gold and silver. Its scent is that of musk, its gravel is pearl and corundum, its earth is Saffron. Whoever enters it will be granted favour and will not despair, he will abide therein eternally and not die. His clothes will not wear out nor will he grow old.”⁵⁷

Usāmah Ibn Zayd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) narrated from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said once when mentioning Paradise: “Who is preparing for it? By the Lord of the Ka‘bah, it is like a sweet smelling flower in the wind, is it like sparkling light, it is like a flowing river, it is like a wife who does not die, in happiness, ease and luxury, in an eternal abode.” They said: “We are preparing for it O Messenger of Allāh!” He said: “Say: *insha’ Allāh*.”⁵⁸

In the Two Ṣaḥīḥs⁵⁹ from the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) who said: “Allāh, Mighty and Majestic, says: ‘I have prepared for My righteous servants that which no eye has seen, no ear has heard and no human heart has conceptualised.’”

In the Two Ṣaḥīḥs⁶⁰ also from Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) from the Prophet (ﷺ): “The first group to enter Paradise will

⁵⁷ Tirmidhī, #2528; Aḥmad, vol.2, p.305 and within the chain is weakness however it is strengthened by other routes and supporting narrations.

⁵⁸ Ibn Mājah, #4332; Ibn Ḥibbān, #2640—the chain is weak.

⁵⁹ Bukhārī, vol.6, p.230; Muslim, #2834; Aḥmad, vol.2, p.316; Tirmidhī, #2540; al-Baghawī, #4370—from Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*).

⁶⁰ Part of the above mentioned ḥadīth.

have a face gleaming like the moon on a moonlit night. Then the group after them will have faces as bright as the stars, they will neither urinate nor defecate. They will neither spit nor blow their noses. Their utensils will be of gold, and their combs will be of gold and silver. They will have the scent of musk and their centres will be made from Aloe's wood. They will be married to the *ḥūr ul-'ayn*. They will resemble their father Adam in height, that of sixty cubits tall."

In another narration: "Each of the men will have two wives, and the marrow of the bones their legs will be seen through the flesh out of beauty. The people of Paradise will have no differing or hatred among themselves, they will be like one heart glorifying their Lord day and night."

Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) said: 'Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said: "There will be two gardens in Paradise, the vessels and utensils each of which are silver and gold. The only thing between the people and looking at their Lord will be the mantle of grandeur on His Face in the Eternal Paradise." Reported in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs.⁶¹

Also in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs⁶² from Abū Mūsā (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) again also from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said: "In Paradise will be a tent made from a hollow pearl, the width of which will be sixty miles long from all sides therein will be their wives unable to see each other, and the believer will go around inside it."

Know that Allāh has mentioned the pleasure of Paradise in the Qur'an, He says:

⁶¹ Bukhārī, vol.8, p.479; and Muslim, #180

⁶² Bukhārī, vol.6, p.229; Muslim, #2838; and Tirmidhī, #2530.

وَفِيهَا مَا نَشْتَهِيهِ الْأَنْفُسُ وَتَلَذُّ الْأَعْيُنُ

“And therein is whatever the souls desire and [what] delights the eyes.”

[*al-Zukhruf* (43): 71]

And He says:

لَا يَبْغُونَ عَنْهَا حِوَلًا

“They will not desire from it any transfer.”

[*al-Kahf* (18): 108]

And Allāh further said:

فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّا أُخْفِيَ لَهُمْ مِنْ قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ

“And no soul knows what has been hidden for them of comfort for eyes as reward.”

[*al-Sajdah* (32): 17]

The descriptions of Paradise are plentiful I have summarised what I was able to here.

The most virtuous reward to be attained in Paradise is to see Allāh, in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs from the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that it was said: ‘O Messenger of Allāh, will we see our Lord?’ He replied (ﷺ): “Do you have any difficulty in seeing the moon on a moonlit night?” They said: “No.” He said: “Thus, you will see Him on the Day of Judgement.”

Section Eighteen:
The Wide Scope of Allāh's Mercy

We conclude the book by mentioning the wide scope of Allāh's Mercy, hoping for His Grace by this as we have no actions by which to seek His Pardon. However, we hope for that from His Mercy and Kindness, Allāh said:

قُلْ يَاعِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِن
رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا

“Say, ‘O My servants who have transgressed against themselves [by sinning], do not despair of the mercy of Allāh. Indeed, Allāh forgives all sins. Indeed, it is He who is the Forgiving, the Merciful.’”

[*al-Zumar* (39): 53]

Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “When Allāh completed creation, He Wrote in a Book which is with Him above the Throne: ‘Indeed My Mercy overcomes My Anger.’” Reported in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs.⁶³

Also Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) narrated from the Prophet (ﷺ) who said: “Indeed, Allāh, Mighty and Majestic, has one hundred mercies. He Sent a mercy to humans, jinn, insects and animals—due to this they are affectionate with each other and have mercy with one another. Even the animals are affectionate with their offspring: The other ninety-nine parts of His Mercy are what He will treat His servants with on the Day of Judgement.”⁶⁴

Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said: ‘Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ)

⁶³ Bukhārī, vol.13, p.325; and Muslim, #2751

⁶⁴ Bukhārī, vol.10, p.362; and Muslim, #2752

said: “Indeed your Lord, Blessed and Exalted, is Most Merciful. Whoever intended a good action but did not get to actually do it will have a good action recorded. If he actually did it Allāh will write from ten to seven hundred good actions. Whoever intended an evil action but did not do it will have a good action recorded. If he actually does it he will have an evil action written or Allāh will erase it.”⁶⁵

Abū Dharr (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “Allāh says: “Whoever does a good action will have ten the like thereof and more. Whoever does an evil action then his reward will be the like thereof or I will forgive. Whoever comes close to Me by a hand span I will draw close to him by an arm’s length. Whoever comes close to Me by an arms length I will draw close to him by a fathoms length. Whoever comes to Me walking, I will go to him running.””⁶⁶

Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) narrated from the Prophet (ﷺ) that a man commits a sin and says: “O my Lord! I committed such and such sin, please forgive me.” Allāh, the Blessed and Exalted, will say: “My servant knows that he has a Lord Who will forgive his sin and takes the sinful to account. I have forgiven My servant.” He will remain for a while as Allāh Wills and then sin again and say: “O my Lord, I have sinned, please forgive me.” Allāh, Mighty and Majestic, will say: “My servant knows that he has a Lord Who will forgive his sin and takes the sinful to account. I have forgiven My servant.” He will remain for a while as Allāh Wills and then sin again and say: “O my Lord, I have sinned, please forgive me.” Allāh, Mighty and Majestic, will say: “My servant knows that he has a Lord Who will forgive his sin. I bear witness that I have

⁶⁵ Bukhārī, vol.11, p.277; and Muslim, #130, 131.

⁶⁶ Muslim, #2687.

forgiven My servant, let him do as he wills.”⁶⁷ All of these traditions are authentic.

In the Two Ṣaḥīḥs⁶⁸ from the ḥadīth of ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that he said: “Some prisoners of war were brought in front of Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) and among them was a woman who breastfed all of the babies among them, she had lost her own baby and then found it. She picked the baby up and held it to her chest and breastfed it. Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “Do you see this woman with her son?” We said: “Yes.” He said: “Allāh is More Merciful with His servants than this woman is with her child.”

In the Two Ṣaḥīḥs⁶⁹ from the ḥadīth of Abū Dharr (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said: “There is no servant [of Allāh] who says ‘*Lā ilaha ilā Allāh*’ and dies upon that except that he will enter Paradise.” I said: “Even if he commits illegal sexual intercourse and theft?” He said: “Even if he commits illegal sexual intercourse and theft, Even if he commits illegal sexual intercourse and theft, Even if he commits illegal sexual intercourse and theft, Even if he commits illegal sexual intercourse and steals.” Then he said after the fourth time: “Despite the nose of Abū Dharr [i.e. regardless of what Abū Dharr may think].”

Also in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs⁷⁰ from the ḥadīth of ‘Itbān Ibn Mālik (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said: “Allāh has prohibited the Hellfire from the one who says ‘*lā ilaha ilā Allāh*’ seeking by that Allāh’s Face.”

⁶⁷ Bukhārī, #7505; and Aḥmad, vol.2, pp.296, 403, 492.

⁶⁸ Bukhārī, vol.10, p.360; and Muslim, #2754.

⁶⁹ Bukhārī, vol.3, p.88; and Muslim, #94.

⁷⁰ Bukhārī, vol.2, p.132; and Muslim, #33.

In the Two Ṣaḥīḥs from the ḥadīth of Anas Ibn Mālik (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhū*) from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said: “The one who says *lā ilaha ilā Allāh*’ will come out of the Hellfire, those who had in their heart good the weight of a barley grain. Then those who said *‘lā ilaha ilā Allāh*’ will come out of the Fire, those who had in their heart good the weight of a mustard seed. Then out of the Fire will come who said *‘lā ilaha ilā Allāh*’ and had in their heart good the weight of atom.”

Abū Mūsā (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhū*) said: ‘Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “On the Day of Judgement there will not remain any believer except that a Jew or Christian will be brought before him and it will be said [by Allāh]: “This is your ransom for the Hellfire.””⁷¹

‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Amr Ibn al-‘Āṣ (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said: ‘Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “Allāh, Mighty and Majestic, on the Day of Judgement will bring a man from my *ummah* at the head of creation and spread for him ninety-nine books, each book stretches as far as the eye can see. Then He will ask him: ‘Do you deny any of this? Have my Recording Angels who write the actions oppressed you at all?’ The man will reply: ‘No, my Lord.’ Then He will ask him: “Do you have any excuse or good actions?” The man will be perplexed and reply: ‘No, my Lord.’ Then He will say: “On the contrary, you do indeed have one good action according to us, there is no transgression on you today.” Then a card will be brought out upon which is written, *‘lā ilaha ilā Allāh wa anna Muḥammadan ‘abdūhu wa rasūlahū.*’ Then the man will be brought and he will say “What [use] is this card compared to these books.” It will be said to him: “You will not be oppressed.” Then his books will be placed on one scale, and the card in the other. The scale with the books will raise up [due to being light] and the scale with card [with *‘lā*

⁷¹ Muslim, #2767; Aḥmad, vol.4, p.402; Ibn Mājah, #4992; and al-Baghawī, #4234

ilaha ilā Allāb' on it] will be weighty. For there is nothing which can outweigh Allāh's Name."⁷²

Al-Fuḍayl Ibn 'Ayād looked at the tasbeehāt of the people on the Day of 'Arafah and their crying, he said: 'Do you think that if these people asked a man for a sixth of a *dirham*, he would reject them?' It was said: 'No.' Then he said: 'By Allāh, the forgiveness with Allāh, Mighty and Majestic, is easier to dispense than that man giving to them trivial money.'

Ibrāhīm Ibn Adham said: 'One very dark and rainy night I was making *tawāf*, and I was still making *tawāf* up until before dawn. I raised my hands to the heavens and said: O Allāh, I ask You to Protect me from all that You Hate. Then a voice said: 'You ask for protection, all of My creation as or protection. If I protect you, over whom will I have preference?''

These *ahādīth*, along with what we have mentioned in the chapter of hope, give us glad tidings of Allāh's Kindness. His Vast Mercy and Generosity. We hope from Allāh, Glory unto Him that He does not deal with us as we deserve but to give precedence to us as given to those who are its people. We seek Allāh's forgiveness for our statements which are contrary to our actions, for all things adorned for the sake of people, to forgive us for all aspects of knowledge and action which we intended for Him but then became mixed with that which made it impure [and thus not solely done for Allāh]. By His Kindness we seek intercession to His Kindness and Generosity. We ask Allah for His Generosity, Indeed He is Ever-Near, Ever-Responsive.⁷³

⁷² Aḥmad, vol.2, pp.213, 221; Tirmidhī, #2639; Ibn Mājah, #4300; Ibn Hibbān, #2524; Ḥākim, vol.1, pp.6, 529; al-Baghawī, *Sharḥ al-Sunnab*, vol.10, p.133 with a ṣaḥīḥ isnād.

⁷³ *Āmin, Alḥamdulillāh Rabbil-'Ālamīn*. All praise is due to Allāh for granting success in completing this annotated commentary to this blessed book.

All praise is due to Allāh, Lord of the World. Much good and blessed praise as our Lord Loves and is Pleased with, as appropriate for His Kind Face, the Mighty and Majestic.

And may peace and blessing be upon our Master
Muḥammad, his Family and Companions

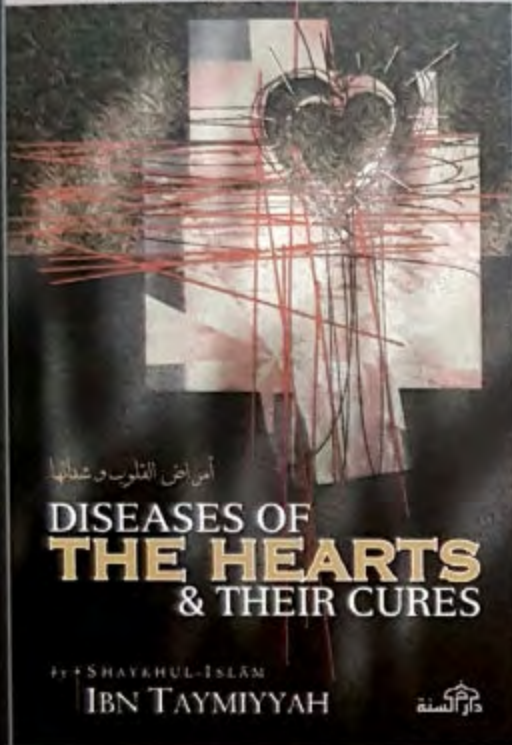
Index of Arabic Terms

- Āyah*: pl. *āyāt*. Sign, miracle, example, lesson, verse.
- Aḥbān*: *fiqh*: the call to prayer.
- Da'if*: weak. A *ḥadīth* that has failed to meet the criteria of authenticity.
- Dīn*: religion, way of life.
- Dhikr*: remembrance, *fiqh*: making mention of Allāh.
- Du'ā*: supplication, invocation.
- Fiqh*: understanding and comprehension. *fiqh*: of the rulings and legislation of Islām.
- Ḥadīth*: pl. *aḥādīth*, speech, report, account. *fiqh*: a narration describing the sayings, actions, character, physical description and tacit approval of the Prophet (ﷺ).
- Ḥajj*: *fiqh*: pilgrimage, one of the pillars of Islām.
- Īmān*: faith that also comprises a meaning of submission. Its place is the heart, the tongue and the limbs and it increases with obedience and decreases with disobedience.
- Jihād*: striving in the Way of Allāh to make His Word supreme.
- Qadā*: see *qadar*.
- Qadar*: Allāh's decree of all matters in accordance with His prior knowledge and as dictated by His wisdom.
- Radīy Allāhu 'anhu/ 'anhā/ 'anhum/ 'anhumā*: may Allāh be pleased with him/her/them/both of them.

- Ṣaḥīḥ*: healthy, sound, authentic, correct. A *ḥadīth* that has met the criteria of authenticity and can be used as a legal proof.
- Ṣalāb*: *fiqh*: the second pillar of Islām, the prayer.
- Ṣawm*: *fiqh*: fasting, one of the pillars of Islām.
- Shahādah*: testification, witness. The declaration that none has the right to be worshipped save Allāh and that Muḥammad (ﷺ) is the Messenger of Allāh.
- Shirk*: polytheism, associating partners with Allāh in matters that are exclusive to Allāh.
- Sunan*: a compilation of *aḥādīth*.
- Sunnah*: habit, customary practice, norm and usage as sanctioned by tradition. *fiqh*: the sayings, commands, prohibitions, actions, and tacit approvals of the Prophet (ﷺ).
- Sūrah*: chapter of the Qur'ān.
- Tafsīr*: elucidation, clarification, explanation. *fiqh*: of the Qur'ān.
- Taqwā*: fearful awareness of Allāh, pious dedication, being careful not to transgress the bounds set by Allāh.
- Tawḥīd*: the foundation stone of Islām, the absolute belief in the Oneness of Allāh—His being the sole Creator and Sustainer, His being the only One deserving worship and His being unique with respect to His Names and Attributes.
- Ummah*: nation, the Muslim nation.
- Wudū'*: *fiqh*: ritual ablution.
- Zakāb*: *fiqh*: one of the pillars of Islām, an obligatory tax levied on a Muslim wealth subject to certain criteria.

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DEATH AND THE AFTERLIFE

by Imām Ibn Qudāmah al-Maqdīsī [d. 689H]

If a person had no other distress or anguish before them except death, this would be sufficient to disturb their livelihood. Death is the reality of every soul and it is the destroyer of all pleasures. How strange is it indeed that a human is so immersed in worldly life; its delights, glitter, glamour, fame and power that they are heedless of a truth which is about to strike at any time, with no return.

Death is a tremendous reality however, in today's modern era, there is lack of contemplation on it, or it is remembered with a heedless heart. It is for this reason the remembrance of death is important and preparing for it is our utmost need. Like the one who wants to travel to the edge of a dangerous desert or travels by sea or air, only thinking about the journey and how to reach with safety and security.

Hāmid al-Qaysarī used to say: "All of us were certain of death, yet we were not prepared for it. All of us were certain of Paradise, yet we had not performed any actions for it. All of us were certain of the Hellfire, yet we were not in fear of it. So why are you joyous? What are you waiting for? Death! It is the first visitor from Allāh which brings either good or evil. O believers, travel to your Lord in a beautiful way."

This work will awaken every soul, shaking off the slumber of idleness, firing the spirit up to prepare for the inevitable journey which needs striving and good works in order to reach salvation. This text covers many issues related to the Hereafter, taking the reader on a journey starting from remembering death, having lengthy hopes in the worldly life and learning from the deaths of the Prophet (ﷺ) and his Companions. The text explores the true nature of death, Hellfire, the description of Paradise, virtues of loving the Messenger and ending with never losing hope in the mercy of Allāh. It is a small but powerful text which gives a comprehensive overview of the Afterlife; sure to stimulate a positive change in the reader.

Imām Ibn Qudāmah al-Maqdīsī [d. 689AH] was a leading scholar and an ascetic known for his piety and vast knowledge. Born in Palestine, near Jerusalem, he travelled to Baghdād, Damascus and Makkah in search of sacred knowledge. He authored many beneficial works. He was the Imām of the Muslim Community, unparalleled in Islāmic Jurisprudence.

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