

DEATH

بَعْضُ الْكَلِمَاتِ

SOME TERMS

The following is an outline of our trip towards **الْآخِرَةُ** (Al-Aakhirah), 'The Hereafter', a journey which each one of us is taking:

▪ **الْقِيَامَةُ الصُّغْرَى** (AL-QIYAAMATU-S-SUGHRA), 'THE MINOR RESURRECTION'

Which includes:

1. **الْمَوْتُ** (Al-Mawt) / **الْوَفَاةُ** (Al-Wafaat), 'Death';
2. **الْقَبْرُ** (Al-Qabar), 'The Grave';
3. **الرُّوْحُ** (Ar-Ruwh), 'The Soul' and
4. **الْبَرْزَخُ** (Al-Barzakh), 'The Interval';
5. **أَشْرَاطُ السَّاعَةِ** (Ashraatu-s-Saa'ati), 'Signs of the Hour': This section includes both the Major and Minor Signs.



▪ **الْقِيَامَةُ الْكُبْرَى (AL-QIYAAMATU-L-KUBRAA), 'THE MAJOR RESURRECTION'**

Which includes:

1. **الْبَعْثُ وَالنُّشُورُ (Al-Ba'thu wan-Nashuwr), 'The coming out, the Resurrection';**
2. **أَهْوَالُ الْقِيَامَةِ (Ahwaalu-l-Qiyaamah), 'The Horrors of the Day of Judgment';**
3. **الْحِسَابُ وَالْجَزَاءُ (Al-Hisaabu wa-l-Jazaa'), 'Accountability and Recompensing';**
4. **النَّارُ وَالْجَنَّةُ (An-Naaru-wa-l-Jannah), 'Hellfire or Paradise': -Which is the final Destination.**



الموت في اللغة والاصطلاح (AL-MAWT), 'DEATH' FROM THE SEMANTIC POINT OF VIEW

Life and death are opposites, as are light and darkness, cold and heat. Hence, the Arabic language dictionaries define each of them in terms of opposites.

The definition of al-Hayaat (life) is:

" الحياة نقيض الموت ، "

"Al-Hayaat (life) is the opposite of Al-Mawt (death);

والحيّ من كلّ شيء : نقيض الميّت ،

Hayy (alive) is opposite to Mayyit (dead);

" والجمع أحياء "

And the plural (of Hayy) is Ahyaa' . "

[Lisaan al- 'Arab by Ibn Mandhoor, 1/774.]

The definition of death is:

" الموت والموتان ضد الحياة "

"Al-Mawt (death) is the opposite of Al-Hayaat (life)."

[Lisaan al- 'Arab by Ibn Mandhoor, 3/547.]

The root meaning of Mawt in Arabic is stillness (السكون); everything that has come to a standstill is dead (وكل ما سكن فقد مات). [Lisaan al- 'Arab by Ibn Mandhoor,.]



So you may hear them say,

"ماتت النار موتاً:"

"Maatat an-naar mawtan (the fire has died)"

إذا برد رمادها،

when its ashes turn cold

فلم يبق من الجمر شيء،

and there are no embers left.



ومات الحر والبرد إذا باخ،

And they say "Maat al-harr wal-bard (the heat and cold have died) when they ease off,

وماتت الريح: ركدت وسكنت،

and "Maatat ar-reeh (the wind has died)" when it stops blowing,



وماتت الخمر : سكن غليانها،

and "Maatat al-khamr (the wine has died)" when it goes flat.



والموت ما لا روح فيه "

Al-Mawt (death) is that in which there is no soul."

[Lisaan al- 'Arab, 3/547.]



THE ROOT MEANING OF 'DEATH' AND 'LIFE' IN THE ARABIC LANGUAGE

The root meaning of الحياة (Al-Haayaat), 'life' in the Arabic language is: Movement (الحركة).

In Lisaan al-'Arab it says:

"الحي كل متكلم ناطق ،

"Al-Hayy (living, alive) is everything that speaks and utters.

والحي من النبات ما كان طرياً

With reference to plants, Al-Hayy is everything that is fresh

"يهتز

and growing."

[Lisaan al-'Arab, 1/773.]

Human life comes about when the soul is breathed into الجنين (Al-Janeeyn), 'the foetus' in the mother's womb.



As for the root meaning of المَوْتُ (Al-Mawt), 'death' in the Arabic language, it is: Stillness (السكون);

"انقطاع تعلق الروح بالبدن،

"...is the severing of the bond between the body and the soul,

ومفارقتة وحيلولة بينهما، وتبدل حال،

the change of situation whereby the soul is separated from the body

وانتقال من دار إلى دار."

and moves from one realm to another."

[Tadhkirat al-Qurtubi, 4.]



GREATER DEATH (الوفاة الكبرى) AND LESSER DEATH (الوفاة الصغرى)

الوفاة الصغرى (Al-Wafaat As-Sughraa), 'The Lesser Death'

Sleep is akin to death, hence our scholars called it 'The Lesser Death', الوفاة الصغرى (Al-Wafaat As-Sughraa).

So:

- Sleep is a kind of death (فالنوم وفاة);
- Waking up from sleep (والقيام من النوم) is a resurrection (بعث ونشور).

وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَتَوَفَّاكُم بِاللَّيْلِ

{It is He, Who takes your souls by night [when you are asleep],

وَيَعْلَمُ مَا جَرَحْتُم بِالنَّهَارِ

and has knowledge of all that you have done by day,

ثُمَّ يَبْعَثُكُمْ فِيهِ

then He raises [wakes] you up again ...}

(Al-An'aam, [006]: 060)

During sleep, people's souls are taken, then if Allaah wishes to keep a person's soul whilst he is asleep, He does so, and if He wills that a person should remain alive, He returns his soul until the appointed time which He has decreed.



Allaah (az) says:

اللَّهُ يَتَوَفَّى الْأَنْفُسَ حِينَ مَوْتِهَا

{It is Allaah Who takes away the souls at the time of their death,

وَالَّتِي لَمْ تَمُتْ فِي مَنَامِهَا

and those that die not during their sleep:

فَيُمْسِكُ الَّتِي قَضَىٰ عَلَيْهَا الْمَوْتَ

He keeps those [souls] for which He has ordained death,

وَيُرْسِلُ الْأُخْرَىٰ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى

and sends the rest for a term appointed... }

(Az-Zumar, 039: 042)

Here Allaah [s] tells us that both souls (النفسين):

1. The one which He keeps (الممسكة), i.e. the ones sleeping temporarily;
2. The one which He sends back (المرسلة), i.e. those who then wake up.

As for those who die in reality while sleeping (i.e., their life in this world comes to an end), form a third group:

3. Those who die in their sleep.

This group is referred to at the beginning of the *Aayah*:

اللَّهُ يَتَوَفَّى الْأَنْفُسَ حِينَ مَوْتِهَا

{It is Allaah Who takes away the souls at the time of their death ... }

(Az-Zumar, [039]: 042)



- It includes both those who die whilst awake (اليقظة) and those who die in their sleep. When He mentions the two souls who die, He says that He takes the one and sends back the other..." [Majmoo' Fataawa Shaykh al-Islam, 5/452.]

Both Bukhaaree and Muslim narrated that 'Aa'ishah (r) said:

كَانَ رِجَالٌ مِنَ الْأَعْرَابِ جُفَاءً يَأْتُونَ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

"Bedouin men used to come to the Prophet (p)

فَيَسْأَلُونَهُ مَتَى السَّاعَةُ،

and ask him about **the Hour**,

فَكَانَ يَنْظُرُ إِلَى أَصْغَرِهِمْ فَيَقُولُ:

and he would look at the youngest of them and say;

" إِنْ يَعْشُ هَذَا لَا يُدْرِكُهُ الْهَرَمُ "

'If this man lives, he will not reach old age

حَتَّى تَقُومَ عَلَيْكُمْ سَاعَتُكُمْ ."

until your hour comes. "

[Mishkaat al-Masaabeeh, 3/48.]



Imaam Ibn Katheer [r] said:

" والمراد انخرام قرنهم،

"It meant the end of their generation

ودخولهم في عالم الآخرة،

and their entrance into the Hereafter.

فإن من مات فقد دخل في حكم الآخرة ،

For everyone who dies is considered to have passed into the Hereafter.

وبعض الناس يقول : من مات فقد قامت قيامته ،

Some people say that the one who dies has embarked upon his resurrection.

" وهذا الكلام بهذا المعنى صحيح "

In this sense these words are correct."

[An-Nihaayah by Ibn Katheer, 1/24.]



SOME MORE TERMS FOR الوفاة الصغرى (AL-WAFAAT AS-SUGHRAA), 'THE LESSER DEATH'

- الْقِيَامَةُ الصُّغْرَى (AL-QIYAAMATU-S-SUGHRA), 'THE MINOR RESURRECTION';
- المعاد الأول (AL-MA 'AADU-L-AWWAL), 'THE FIRST APPOINTED TIME';

Imaam Ibn al-Qayyim [r] said:

"الموت بعث ومعاد أول."

"Death is a resurrection and a first appointed time."

Allaah has made two appointed times (معادين) and two resurrections (بعثين) for the son of Adam, in which those who did evil will be requited for what they did, and those who did good will be rewarded with good. The first resurrection is when the soul leaves the body, and travels to the realm of the first requital (reward or punishment)." [Ar-Rooh by Ibn al-Qayyim, p. 103.]



البرزخ (AL-BARZAKH), 'INTERVAL'.

In Arabic, *Barzakh* means 'a barrier' between two things (الحاجز بين الشيئين).

Allaah (s) says:

جَعَلَ بَيْنَهُمَا بَرْزَخًا

{... And He has set a barrier [*barzakh*] between them ...}

(Qur'aan, [025]: 053)

In Shari' ah, Barzakh refers to the period from death until the Resurrection (الدار التي تعقب الموت (إلى البعث).

Allaah (az) says:

وَمِنْ وَرَائِهِمْ بَرْزَخٌ إِلَى يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ

{... And behind them is Barzakh [a barrier] until the Day when they will be resurrected.}

(Al-Mu'minoon, [023]: 100)

Mujaahid [r] said:

هو ما بين الموت والبعث

“This is what is between death and the resurrection. “



Ash-Shaa'bi [r] was told that,

مات فلان ،

“So and so has died.”

ليس هو في دار الدنيا ،

He said, “He is not in this world,

ولا في الآخرة

nor in the Hereafter”.

[Tadhkirat al-Qurtubi, 177.]

