

Understanding Life after Death in Holy Qur'an

Introduction:

This discussion article on “Understanding Life after Death” resumes where the previous discussion article on “Death as Stipulated in the Holy Qur'an” left off. As already reiterated, death of the material human body causes separation of the soul from the material body and at the same time, opens the door into the timeless transit stop in Barzak¹, in interim readiness before the processing of life after death. Barzak is a timeless barrier, before commencement of the judgement process. The ultimate transition is to the Great² Day of Judgement and the final outcome of Judgement: as either reward or reprimand in the main.

Discussions on Life after Death of Humans:

- 1) Life after death is the promised penultimate destination for mankind, after living through the physical life, whilst they were materially on Earth. Their life on earth is actually a period of performance compliance test. This penultimate stage is a deemed event and stated in the Holy Qur'an, in so many places, as repetitive reminders. For every accountable moment of life, Almighty God records all peoples' thoughts and actions. This is the build-up of evidences. The Holy Qur'an clarifies with utmost simplicity that for every person is a book³, which shall be wide open on the Great Day of Judgement, recording their affairs on earth; with no shortage of angels as witnesses. Almighty God alone shall be in full control of all affairs on the Great Day of Judgement, as He has always been in control. Life after death commences after Barzak stage, with a replay of the entire history of all peoples' compliances in physical life, as they were whilst materially performing on Earth. The replay from the book shall become: (a) undisputed evidence favouring each person's deeds and (b) undisputed evidence against each person's misdeeds and sins.
- 2) Consequently to the replay of each person's performance in compliance, Judgement delivered on the Great Day of Judgement shall be swift, just and final. This expected outcome should become a point of fundamental consciousness in all peoples' minds, regardless of gender or ethnicity in their everyday affairs. A most explicit warning is given in the Holy Qur'an at **HQ17:13-14** as *“And We have made every human being's actions to cling to*

¹ The timeless transit stop at Barzak is given at HQ23:99-100 as “Until when death catches up with one of them, he says: My Lord, send me back, that I may do good in that which I have left. By no means! It is only a word that he speaks. And before them is a barrier, until the day they are raised.”

² Called the Great Day of Judgement, because that is where all persons aspire their souls to be rewarded an everlasting place in Heaven.

³ The term “book” has been used as universal reference to record keeping of all types of events in all cultures.

his neck, and We shall bring forth to him on the day of Resurrection a book which he will find wide open. Read your book. Your own soul is sufficient as a reckoner against you this day."

- 3) After thousands of years of inexorable deaths of all human beings, and after passage through Barzak and before commencement of the trial and judgement, every soul shall be answering for oneself independently. In Barzak, each soul waits timelessly⁴ and will not be able to know how long it waited until it is summonsed by a very loud trumpet throughout the universe for the Final Judgement. Barzak remains their journey's end until the Great Day of Judgement, when all souls will be judged and paid their just rewards or reprimands accordingly. The Holy Qur'an explains this in definite terms.
- 4) Relationships of whatsoever description, whether family, friends, employment or otherwise, shall be all severed. There is no escape or biased favouritism. This aspect is stratified in the Holy Qur'an at **HQ23:101-103** as *"So when the trumpet is blown, there will be no ties of relationship among them that day, nor will they ask of one another. Then those whose good deeds are heavy, those are the successful. And those whose good deeds are light, those are they who have lost their souls, abiding in hell."*
- 5) Islam also teaches with warning about late regrets; that no soul can return to the material body on Earth after death, even when the soul wishes to return to make atonements for the past misdeeds and sins done. That becomes too late. Whereas sincere and intense forgiveness should have been pleaded directly with Almighty God, before death of the person's material body on Earth, notwithstanding that no person knows the exact moment of death. The Holy Qur'an states most succinctly at **HQ23:99-100** as *"Until when death catches up with one of them, he says: My Lord, send me back, that I may do good in that which I have left. By no means! It is only a word that he speaks. And before them is a barrier, until the day they are raised."*
- 6) The Holy Qur'an is also composed of principles of balances, by giving humanity a slight glimpses of what will happen in hell and Heaven. This is stated in the Holy Qur'an at **HQ66:6-7** (for hell), as *"O you who believe, save yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is people and stones; over it are angels, stern and strong. They do not disobey Allah in what He commands them, but do as they are commanded. O you who disbelieve, make no excuses this day. You are rewarded only as you did."*
- 7) The Holy Qur'an also makes exemplary quotations, giving assurances that some will definitely qualify to enter and reside in the bliss of Heaven. This quotation is given at **HQ89:27-30** (for Heaven), *"O souls that are at rest,*

⁴ Souls are not material and do not age. Only material ages over time. There are countless billions of souls in Barzak all awaiting an awakening, when the trumpet will be sounded to indicate the resurrection stage.

return to your Lord, well-pleased (with Him), well-pleasing (Him). So enter among My servants, and enter My Garden!” Another quotation is at **HQ45:30** *“Then as to those who believed and did good, their Lord will admit them to His mercy. That is the manifest achievement.”*

- 8)** Should mankind be given provisions to seek forgiveness in life before death? Yes by all means: The Holy Qur’an gives humanity options to plead for forgiveness at **HQ66:6-7** as *“O you who believe, turn to Allah with sincere repentance. It may be your Lord will remove from you your evil and make you enter Gardens in which rivers flow, on the day on which Allah will not disgrace the Prophet and those who believe with him. Their light will gleam before them and on their right hands — they will say: Our Lord, make perfect for us our light, and grant us protection; surely You are Powerful over all things.”*
- 9)** Mankind has been continuously warned of doing the right things and not doing the wrong things through many past Prophets⁵; and their scriptures were delivered to mankind.
- 10)** Reprimand in Hell is not forever and after swift and just judgement for the period sentenced to reprimand (as final), the soul shall be transferred to Heaven according to the stage⁶ qualified.
- 11)** Life afterwards, in Heaven, shall be one of bliss and everlasting. The Holy Qur'an gives this assurance at **HQ64:9** as *“The day when He will gather you for the day of Gathering, that is the day of the Manifestation of losses. And whoever believes in Allah and does good, He will remove from him his evil and cause him to enter Gardens wherein rivers flow, to abide therein forever. That is the great achievement.”*

Conclusions on Life after Death:

- a) Forgiveness should be sought before death of persons and not afterwards.
- b) The Holy Qur’an stipulates that Barzak is a barrier, which cannot be breached until the Day of Judgement. There is no coming back.
- c) No soul can enter Heaven or Hell until the Day of Resurrection, and after the Great Day of Judgment.

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⁵ A total of 124,000 Prophets were ordained by Divine revelations, but directly delivered to them by Archangel Gabriel. All of these 124,000 prophets were regular human beings (and not gods), who must eat food, drink water, breath air and need atmospheric pressure to stay alive. The figure of 124,000 prophets is quoted in Hadith No 21257 of *Musnad ibn Hanbal*. Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*) was the Last and Final Prophet and after his death in 632AD, that sealed off all prophets of any description whatsoever being ordained by Divine revelations, to serve humanity on earth. This is stated in the Holy Qur’an at **HQ33:40** *“Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the prophets. And Allah is ever Knower of all things.”*

⁶ Both Heaven and hell have seven different stages each, according to perfection of compliance or sinfulness.