

Only Allah Gives Life and Death

- Life and death are two unavoidable and fascinating topics. They have continuously mystified and puzzled people throughout the ages.
- Scholars and philosophers have tried to find answers to age-old questions like: “What is life?; “How did life come into being?; and “When did life begin? They also search for answers to questions such as “What is death?” and “ How does it occur?”
- Allah has mentioned life and death many times in the Qur’an. To believe that Allah alone is the who gives life and takes it away through death is an important element of the belief in Al-Qadar in Islam.

- The Qur'an confirms that Allah is the only who gives life and takes it away. Allah says in Surat Al-Waqi'ah:
نَحْنُ قَدَّرْنَا بَيْنَكُمُ الْمَوْتَ
- “We have decreed death among you.”
- Allah also says in Surat Ghafir,
هُوَ الَّذِي يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ ۖ فَإِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ
- “He it is Who gives life and causes death. And when He decides upon a thing He only says to it : Be! And it is.” ۞ نَا نَحْنُ نُحْيِي وَنُمِيتُ ۖ وَإِلَيْنَا الْمَصِيرُ
- “Verily We give life and cause death; and to Us is the final return.”

Lessons On Life and Death

- The Qur'an and Sunnah provide us with the following lessons about life and death:
 1. **Allah created life and death to test mankind.** He wants to prove us weather we commit good or bad deeds. Allah says in Surat Al-Mulk,
 - الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا ۗ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفُورُ
 - “He is the One Who created life and death to test which of you is best in deeds.” Life is given to man kind only for the purpose of worshipping Allah.

2. Death is a definite end to every created being; no one is immortal except Allah

- Allah says in Surat –ur-Rahman,

كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ وَيَبْقَىٰ وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ

“Whatsoever is on it(the earth)will perish. And the face of your Lord full of Majesty and Honor will abide forever.”

He also says in Surat-ul- Ankabout

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ ثُمَّ إِلَيْنَا تُرْجَعُونَ

“Every soul will taste death, and you all will return to Us.”

3. Death occurs at a specific time and a specific place.

- It does not change or happen before it due or after it is due. Allah says in Surat-ul-A'raf
- وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ أَجَلٌ ۖ فَإِذَا ۖ جَاءَ أَجْلُهُمْ لَا يَسْتَأْخِرُونَ سَاعَةً ۖ وَلَا يَسْتَقْدِمُونَ
- “When their term is reached, neither can they delay it nor can they advance it an hour(or a moment.)

How The Belief in Al-Qadar Treats Fear of Death?

- Islam treats the fear of death and teaches us to get ready for it and prepare for the Day of Judgment. Allah says in Surat Al-Imran
- “ And whoever desires a reward in this world, We shall give him of it: And whoever desires a reward in the Hereafter, We shall give him of it.”
- Whoever wants to live for this life alone, he would live as animals, and then he will die his dictated time without delay.

- And whoever longs and yearns for the Hereafter, he will live the life of a man honored by Allah, following Allah's rules. He too shall die at his dictated time.
- Allah alone gives life and He alone brings it back at a specific time. This applies to the people who are sitting at home or the people who are protecting themselves inside a castle and the people who are fighting in the battle. Death comes when it is time. Allah says in Surat-un-Nisaa: **أَيْنَمَا تَكُونُوا يُدْرِكْكُمُ الْمَوْتُ وَلَوْ كُنْتُمْ فِي بُرُوجٍ مُّشِيدَةٍ**
- Where so ever you may be, death will overtake you even if you are in fortresses built up strong and high!

- Since it is not known when death will come, the man should be conscious of Allah. Allah says in Surat Al-Imran:
- “ O you who believe, obtain taqwa of Allah as should be, and do not die except in a state of Islam”.
- The Prophet said in a Hadeeth . “Remember often the one that defeats all joys: death. Indeed whoever remembers it in time of hardship, it alleviate it; and whoever remembers it in good times, it will make them less so”.

- Allah emphasizes in the Qur'an the importance of striving to lead noble and good lives. It has also been made clear to us the rewards or punishment we expect according to the way we lead. Allah, the Merciful, has also provided us roles, responsibilities, and a way of life outlined in the Qur'an and Sunnah. If we follow Allah's guidance, He will help us live in a righteous way leading to the reward of Al-Jannah.
- Death is dictated by Allah; you cannot escape it, you cannot resist it, and you cannot keep it away from you.

The Beginning of Life-Conception

- The beginning of life is called conception. It takes place when the egg of the female is penetrated by the sperm of the male. This union between the sperm and the egg is known as fertilization. The entire process of conception in the human, as well as in other animals, is one of Nature's great wonders.

Hadeeth Shareef

- عن أبي عبد الرحمن عبدالله بن مسعود رضي الله عنه, قال: حدثنا رسول الله صلوات الله عليه وسلم وهو الصادق المصدوق قال:
- ان أحدكم يجمع خلقه في بطن أمه أربعين يوماً نطفة, ثم يكون علقة مثل ذلك, ثم يكون مضغة مثل ذلك, ثم يرسل اليه الملك فينفخ فيه الروح, و يؤمر بأربع كلمات: بكتب رزقه, وأجله, وعمله, وشقي أم سعيد. فوالله الذي لا اله غيره, ان أحدكم ليعمل بعمل أهل الجنة, حتى ما يكون بينه وبينها الا ذراع, فيسبق عليه الكتاب فيعمل بعمل أهل النار, وان أحدكم ليعمل بعمل أهل النار حتى ما يكون بينه وبينها الا ذراع, فيسبق عليه الكتاب, فيعمل بعمل أهل الجنة.

- Abu Abdal-Raman Abdullah bin Masud reported that Prophet Muhammad peace be upon said:
- Verily the creation of any one of you takes place when he is assembled in his mother's womb; for forty days he is as a drop of fluid, then it becomes a clot. Thereafter it is a lump looking like it has been chewed. Then an angel is sent to him, who breathes the soul into him. The angel is commanded to write four decrees: his provision, his life span, his deeds (based on what Allah knows the person will choose to do during his or her life, and whether he will be among the wretched or the blessed.

- I swear by Allah – there is no God but He – one of you may perform the deeds of the people of Paradise until (it appears) there is naught but an arm's length between him and it, when that which has been written will outstrip him so that he performs the deeds of the people of the Hell Fire; one of you may perform the deeds of the people the Hell Fire, until (it appears) there is naught but an arm's length between him and it, when that which has been written will overtake him so that he performs the deeds of the people of Paradise and enters therein.

When and How Does the Human Life Starts

- Based on the above Hadeeth, human life begins in the womb. Muslim scholars and scientists have two opinions on when exactly the fetus becomes human being. The first opinion is that life begins at the time of conception. The other opinion is that life does not begin until the soul is breathed into the fetus.
- Muslim scholars also have two opinions on when the soul is breathed into the fetus. Some scholar argue forty days after conceptions, while others argue 120 days after conceptions.

- Contemporary Muslim scholars support the opinion that the soul is breathed into the fetus only forty days after conception. Also scientific facts tell that in forty days the fetus become like a chewed lump of flesh as the Hadeeth describes. At that point angel breathes the soul into it.

Commentary

- At a conference in Cairo Professor Kieth Moor presented a research paper and stated: “ It has been a great pleasure for me to help clarify statements in the Qur’an about human development. It is clear to me that these statements must have come to Muhammad from God, because most of the knowledge was not discovered until many centuries later. This proves to me that Muhammad must have been a messenger of God”.

- “For the past three years, I have worked with the Embryology, committee of king AbdulAziz university in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, helping them to interpret the many statements in the Qur’an and Sunnah referring to human reproduction prenatal development. At first I was astonished by the accuracy of the Qur’an’s statements that were recorded in the 7th century AD, before the science of embryology was established.
- Professor Moor also stated that:
- “ Because the staging of the human embryos is complex, owing to the continuous process of change during development, it is proposed that a new system of classification could be developed using the term mentioned in the Qur’an and Sunnah.

- The proposed system is simple, comprehensive , and conforms with present embryological knowledge.
- “ The intensive studies of the Qur’an and Hadeeth in the last four years have revealed a system of classifying human embryos that is amazing since it is was recorded in the seventh century A.D .. The description in the cannot be based on scientific knowledge in the seventh century.

When and How Does Life Ends?

- The Qur'an and Sunnah clear that human life ends when the angel of death takes away the person's soul upon an order from Allah. The soul that was breathed into that person when or she was a fetus in the womb is now taken. And the body of that deceased person will deteriorate and later vanish in the grave.
- The soul will be spared until it is united with another new body created for that same person in the Hereafter.

- Let us learn how human life medically ends. In 1985, the Islamic organization of Medical Science organized a seminar on “Islamic Concept on Human Life, Its beginning and its end.”
- A group of major Muslim scholar and medical doctors and experts met in Kuwait and discussed matters of the beginning and end of human life according to scientific facts and Islamic Law.
- The seminar concluded that in the most cases where death occurs there is no real difficulty in recognizing it on the basis of commonly indications through medical examination, which ascertains the absence of life signs in the deceased.

- It was determined that a death case is established only if the brain stem becomes void of life signs as this part of the brain is responsible for the basic biological functions. This is what is termed “death of the brain stem.” A case can only be considered hopeless if the brain stem is established to be dead. In this case the life of the patient can be said to have ended even if movement or function remains for a while in the other organs of the body. These will definitely come to a standstill after the of the brain stem.

Study Questions

- 1. Write a one page essay on the importance of believing that only Allah controls matters of life and death.
- 2. Imagine that there is more than one god who controls life and death. How our world would look?
- 3. Suppose that someone came to you and said, “It is not only Allah who controls matters of life and death. Doctors, judges, governors and criminals can cause people to die or remain alive!” How would you respond to them?

- 4. Who has the ultimate power of controlling matters of life and death ? Support your answer with an ayah and a hadeeth.
- 5. Why did Allah create life and death? Support your answer with an ayah.
- 6. When does human start?
- 7. When does human life end?