

The Hereafter Series

Introduction

We, the human race living on this earth, are under the perception that we belong here and that this is our residence. We don't want to know the fact that we are on a train. And the train is going through stations to another final destination. And that this world is only one of these stops on one of these stations. But we do not belong here.

We have a ticket that has three slips: we live in the womb for nine months and then when we're born a slip is torn off. And then we live in dunya for awhile and when we die, the second slip from the ticket is torn out. Then we have one slip left. And that will be torn off in either hell or heaven. And that is the final destination.

We don't belong here. We are travelling. That is why the Prophet Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said "Be in this world as if you are a traveller." And he said that the example or the analogy of me in this dunya is as if somebody is travelling in the desert and he saw a tree and he took some shade under this tree and then took some rest. And then he continued travelling. That is dunya: we spend a few moments under this tree, and then we keep on travelling.

Can you stop time? The movement of time is an erosion of our existence in this dunya. It is taking part of us with every second passing. We need to believe in the fact that we don't belong here. We need to prepare for death. And that is what this series is about: The Journey towards the Hereafter.

Objectives

Why do we talk about al-Aakhirah? We have to have an objective for everything that we do.

1. It is a pillar of faith. It is part of Imaan.
2. Why do we have all of these problems around us? Why do we have a Muslim who drinks or deals with riba or lies or commits zina? What are we missing? 'Aa'isha radiyallahu 'anha gives us a program in one short sentence for individual and social change: "If the first thing revealed in Qur'an was 'do not drink', the people would have said 'we are never going to stop drinking.' And if the first thing that was revealed in the Qur'an was telling the people to not commit fornication and adultery the people would have said 'we're never going to stop committing fornication and adultery!' The first things that were revealed in the Qur'an were the Surah Al-Mufassal that talked about and mentioned hell fire and paradise. Until the hearts were attached to Allah (swt), THEN the orders for halaal and haraam came down."

During the time in Makkah, there wasn't much law given. Most of the laws were revealed in Madinah. In Makkah, it was a preparation to receive the law and to fill the tank with imaan. That is why mentioning the Unseen and Jannah and Akhirah attaches the heart and lifts the veils of darkness. We're not suffering from ignorance only (although that is a problem). Everyone knows

khamr is haraam. Why do some people drink? Everyone knows riba is haraam. People know salah is fardh, but why do some people don't fulfil it? A major problem is: insufficient imaan. The heart is rough, like a rock. The hearts are not soft – what will soften these harsh hearts? Talking about akhirah and the unseen.

The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam says: "If you know what I know, you would cry a lot and laugh a little."

'Ali ibn Abi Talib said, "It wouldn't make a difference if I see jannah, I wouldn't love it more. And even if I see naar, I wouldn't fear it more." He is saying that he has absorbed the meaning of jannah and naar so much that it wouldn't make a difference if he actually saw them. He is living as if he is seeing jannah and naar in front of them.

In 1930, the US decided that they should ban alcohol. SubhanAllah, it is in the fitra to know alcohol is bad for you. They passed the law and they tried to enforce it. During the process, about half a million people were thrown in jail. Millions and millions of dollars were spent to enforce the law; thousands of people were killed. The consumption of alcohol didn't change – bootlegging was going on in people's own houses. The process of making it is so unhygienic and dirty. Diseases were spreading. After four years, the ban was lifted. This is the mighty US. They couldn't enforce a law banning alcohol. Look at 1400 years earlier:

Jibra'eel came to Muhammad saws saying that khamr (and other things) is forbidden and they are acts of shaytaan. fajtaniboo [jazakAllah khayr Nadia!] - STAY AWAY FROM IT. The ayah came down banning alcohol. The prophet saws conveyed the ayah to the sahabah with him. The sahabah went out carrying this news, saying that khamr is now illegal. Anas ibn Maalik said that he was serving alcohol. They heard the announcement in the street and Anas threw the jug from his hand. Some of the sahabah had cups in their hands, they threw it. Some had it in their mouths, they spat it out. Some went as far as vomiting what was in their stomach. It was described as the streets of madinah having it flowing. There was IMMEDIATE obedience. There was no enforcement by throwing people in jail. How did it work in Madinah and not in US? The difference of waraa`. The sahabah were prepared for it.

Muslim (23/4889) Anas b. Malik reported: I was serving drink to Abu 'Ubaida b. jarrah, Abu Talha and Ubayy b. Ka'b prepared from unripe dates and fresh dates when a visitor came and he said: Verily liquor has been prohibited. Thereupon, Abu Talha said: Anas, stand up and break this pitcher. I stood up and (took hold) of a pointed stone and struck the pitcher with its lower part until it broke into pieces.

We need to prepare ourselves by talking about al-akhirah.

Outline

The Outline of what the series will be talking about:

1. Al-Qiyaamah as sughrah: the minor day of judgement, which includes:
 - i. Death
 - ii. Al-Qabr (The grave)
 - iii. Ar-Ruh
 - iv. Ash-sharaat us Sa'aa : signs of the day of Judgement (major and minor)

2. Al-Qiyaamah al-Qubra (day of judgement):
 - i. Al-Ba'ath wa al-Nushoo` : Resurrection
 - ii. Ah-waa al-Qiyamah: Horrors of the day of judgement
 - iii. Al-Hisaabuh wa Al-Jazaa` : Accountability and recompensing
 - iv. Final destination: Jannah and naar

All of us are going in this direction. And we start by seeking assistance from Allah swt.

What is the minor day of judgement? It starts with al-mowt – death.

Al-Mowt

Every soul shall taste death

AlBukhari narrates that some Bedouins came and asking the Prophet saws about the Hour. RasulAllah would point at the youngest amongst them and say, “By the time he reaches his old age, your day of judgement will already have started.” When a person is dead, that’s it. He is counted on the other side.

Anas b. Malik reported that a person asked Allah’s Apostle (may peace be upon him): When would the Last Hour come? Thereupon Allah’s Messenger (may peace be upon him) kept quiet for a while. then looked at a young boy in his presence belonging to the tribe of Azd Shanilwa and he said: If this boy lives he would not grow very old till the Last Hour would come to you. Anas said that this young boy was of our age daring those days. (Muslim 41/7052)

There is no way around death. Everyone will die. Allah subhaana wa ta’aala says: “Everything will perish save His Face. His is the decision and to Him you shall be returned.”

“Everyone on it will die and only the Face of Allah will remain.”

“Every soul shall taste death.” If anyone would be spared his life, then that would be Rasul Allah, but Allah says: “You shall die and they will die.” Everyone will die. The term is fixed for death. It is an appointed time. It cannot change. It cannot be later than the appointed time.

Allah says: “And no person can ever die, except by Allah’s leave and at an appointed term.”

And

“And every nation has an appointed term. When their term comes, neither can they delay it, nor can they advance it.” Allah is telling us not to try to run away from death.

Allah says: “Where so ever you may be, death will overtake you, even if you are in fortresses built up strong and high.”

Allah tells us a story of some people who tried to run away from death: “Did you not think of those who went forth from their homes in thousands, fearing death?” Allah is talking about a group from Bani Israel – an army was attacking them, so they wanted to save themselves. They ran from their town in thousands. Allah told them “die.” He raised them up again to show them His miracle on them. “Truly Allah is full of bounty to mankind, but most men thank not.”

Umm Habibah (the wife of RasulAllah) made a du’aa`. She said, “O Allah, give me pleasure by giving a long life to my husband RasulAllah and to my father Abu Sufyan and my brother Mu’awiyah.” RasulAllah said to her: “You are supplicating towards Allah in regards to fixed terms and counted days and ordained provisions that are already divided. If you would have asked Allah to save you from the Hell Fire and the punishment of the fire, that would have been better for you.” (Muslim)

Death will happen whenever and wherever Allah has decreed

In Riyadh: It is said that there was a construction that fell down from the seventh floor. He fell on solid concrete. Passersby were amazed to see that he stood up. He jumped up, happy that Allah didn’t take his life. People were amazed. He was so happy that he told everyone, “I’m going to buy you some drinks.” He was crossing the street, disoriented, and a car hit him and killed him. Why didn’t he die from the seventh story? Allah had appointed for him a specific spot and a specific time of day. Allah wanted to bring him to his place of death. Now, this man, when he stood up, he thought that he was given a long life. The last thought on his mind was that he would die in the next moment. If he was saved from that death, then he must have a long life ahead of him.

There was an earthquake in Egypt. There was a man who survived for a very long period of time. They thought that no one could be saved in the rubble. They were amazed to find a man to be living, even though all of the means of dying existed. It wasn’t time for him to die. There were two female relatives with him. They both died because of the unbearable conditions. It was not time for it.

Sometimes death comes so suddenly that you don’t have time to prepare for it.

There were two air planes that collided over India – it was a head on collision. They hit each other with a combined speed of 1600 miles per hour. Look at accidents on the freeway – how quickly a person can drive going 60 mph. This death was in a split second. There could have been a person who was lifting food to his mouth and before he could take the bite he died.

The Destroyer of Pleasures

“Frequently remember the destroyer of pleasures.” RasulAllah described death as the destroyer of pleasures. RasulAllah says: “Al-Mowtu Haqq.”

Hasan AlBasri says, “I have never seen anything that is certain with no doubt in it but people deal with it as if it is doubt, with no certainty like death.” We are certain about death – Muslim and nonMuslim. Have you ever seen someone deny death? Hasan AlBasri said that we deal with death as if it is doubtful. Each of us knows we are going to die – how much have we prepared for it?

When you look at how people prepare for death, they only do it in terms of this world: the funeral, the cemetery, and the worldly arrangements. What is done for the other side of death? There are elaborate preparations for the funeral and the food, etc. What will happen on the other side?

On an interview with Isaac Azmoth, a very prominent fiction writer, a few months before he died, he was asked “What do you think will happen after you die?” He said, “Nothing.” His knowledge and all of that intelligence and wealth makes him no different from the most ignorant Arab disbeliever 1400 years ago. His intelligence didn’t move him up one notch.

Allah says about the nonbelievers, when they see the reality, they will say: “If we had any understanding/intelligence, we wouldn’t have been in the hell fire.” What kind of a mind is that? Allah has told us why he has given us the mind: “We have given you the sights, ears and mind so that you may be grateful.” – to worship Allah! The eyes and ears are sources of input and the mind processes it for us. If we used these three together, it would lead us to imaan.

Back to what RasulAllah said: the destroyer of pleasures. If we talk about death and we realize the reality of it, this will take away the veils of ghaflah (unawareness) and we will see the truth and we will lose any appetite for whatever the dunya has to offer. We cannot see the truth, and that is why we have to talk about the death and akhirah.

Al-Ihtidaar

There is a period before death called al-ihthidaar. It is preparation for death. During this stage, the angels descend. Allah says: “Until when death approaches one of you. Our Messengers take his soul and they never neglect their duty.” During this stage, angels descend and the person going through death can see them. RasulAllah says: “If the believing soul is leaving this world and moving into alAakhirah [in the interface] angels will descend from the heavens. White, bright faces like the sun. They have with them a coffin from paradise and incense from paradise. So he can see them. And then the angel of death will descend. And then he will sit next to his face/head. He will say, ‘Oh you pure soul, come out to the forgiveness of Allah and His Pleasure.’ This soul will come out so smoothly, like a drop of water rolling out of a jug. For the kaafir, if he is leaving the dunya and approaching akhirah, then dark angels will come down.

They are carrying coffins made of harsh materials. The angel of death will come down, sit beside him and say, 'O you evil soul! Come out to the anger of Allah subhaana wa ta'aala and His Wrath!' When the angel of death will make that announcement, this soul will run around in the body. The angel of death will grab the soul and pull it out, as if you are pulling out wet wool from thorny branches."

During this stage, there may be some discomfort for the believing soul. Allah gives comfort to the believer. He says: "Verily, those who say that there Lord if Allah and then they stay firm. On them the angels will descend, saying 'Fear not, nor grieve, but receive the glad tidings of Paradise which you have been promised.'" (41:30) They did not say that 'Allah is our Lord' and then go on a crooked path. Not fasting one day and then drinking alcohol the next day. These people stayed firm, and the angels will give them glad tidings.

For the disbeliever, Allah says, "And if you could see when the angels take away the souls of those who disbelieve. They smite their faces and their backs, saying 'Taste the punishment of the blazing fire. This is because of that which your hands forwarded. Verily, Allah is not unjust to His slaves.'" Allah is not committing injustice to you. It is your actions that caused you this.

Ataa' ibn Rabah says: "There are three benefits of remembering death:

1. Ta'jeel at-tawbah: hastening repentance. You would prepare for akhirah and you would repent.
2. Ar-Rida bil Qaleel: content with the minimum. You will be happy with whatever Allah has given you because you know it is a temporary residence. This is not where we belong; therefore you wouldn't give it much concern and attention. Whatever Allah gives, Alhamdulillah.
3. Not fight and compete with people of this world over this world. And that would cause you to have tranquility in your heart. What makes people anxious and obnoxious is competing over material things. This world is large and our desires are large. RasulAllah says that if the son of Adam has a valley of gold he would request another one and nothing would please the son of Adam except dirt. Nothing would satisfy this greed except the dirt. When you go back to the dirt, it will close all of those desires. This world is not worth fighting.

Sakaraat al-Mowt

Sakaraat ul-Mowt: the stupor of death. What is the meaning of it? Sakaraah is the dizziness and unconsciousness that is caused by pain. A person in the state of sakarah is going through stages of unconsciousness and dizziness caused by pain. Allah says: "And the stupor of death will come in truth. This is what you have been avoiding." Death is true, and it will arrive even though you try to avoid it. It will happen to everyone. It happened to RasulAllah. RasulAllah had a pot of water. He would dip his hands in the water and then he would wipe his face and say "La ilaaha illallah. There is agony/stupor of death." Even RasulAllah was feeling it.

If RasulAllah felt that, what would you and me feel? What would the non believers feel?

Allah says: “And if you could but see when the wrongdoers are in the agonies of death when the angels are stretching forth their hands saying ‘This day you shall be recompensed with the torment of degradation because of what you used to utter against Allah other than the truth and you used to reject His ayaat with disrespect.’ Taste the pain of death.

Although everyone goes through this pain, there are levels. The non believers go through the most. There is a category that feels almost no pain – the shuhadaa`. RasulAllah says, “The shaheed feels the pain of death like one of you would feel the sting of an insect.” Allah has honoured the shaheed with many honourings. Why would anyone want to run from this honour?

When man leaves this world, he desires to come back. If he’s a kaafir, he wants to become a Muslim. If he’s an ‘Aasiy (a sinner), he wants to come back to make Tawbah.

Allah says: “Until, when death comes to one of them (those who join partners with Allah), he says: ‘My Lord! Send me back, So that I may do good in that which I have left behind!’ No! It is but a word that he speaks, and behind them is Barzakh (a barrier) until the Day when they will be resurrected.” (23:99-100) They were given a chance in this world, and they didn’t take advantage of it. Now, when it’s too late, they ask to come back to repent and do good. Allah says that there is a barrier between them and going back; it’s too late. Right now, the door of opportunity is open and Tawbah will not be accepted later.

Allah says: “Allah accepts the repentance of those who do evil in ignorance and repent soon afterwards; to them will Allah turn in mercy: For Allah is full of knowledge and wisdom.” (4:17) Ibn Katheer gives the explanation of this word close. When is it soon enough to make Tawbah. You have the opportunity of making Tawbah until the moment of al-gharghara – when the soul is preparing to leave the body.

Allah says: “And of no effect is the repentance of those who continue to do evil deeds until death faces one of them and he says: ‘Now I repent;’ nor of those who die while they are disbelievers. For them We have prepared a painful torment.” (4:18) When it’s time for death, no Tawbah is accepted. That is what Fir’awn did.

“...he [Fir'awn] said: ‘I believe that La ilaha illa (Huwa): (none has the right to be worshipped but) He, in whom the Children of Israel believe, and I am one of the Muslims (those who submit to Allah’s Will).’ Now (you believe) while you refused to believe before and you were one of the Mufsidun (evil-doers, corrupts, etc.).” (10:90-91) Allah did not accept his Tawbah because it was too late. So Allah will accept the Tawbah, as long as it is spoken before this time when the soul is leaving the body.

Death comes suddenly – you are not given a notice. It comes unannounced and there is no way you can change it, or no matter how much you try to convince the angel of death or no matter how busy you are. The best time for Tawbah is NOW.

The Time for Tawbah is now!

“Isn’t it time for those who believed that their hearts will soften from the remembrance of Allah?” (Qur’an) The time for Tawbah is NOW. Don’t delay and procrastinate. If you read Qur’an, you will find that the majority of the screaming of the people of hell fire is because of procrastination. They will be saying, ‘O Allah, let me go back so I may do such and such.’ They procrastinated from good deeds.

“Whoever desires or looks forward to meeting Allah, Allah would love meeting him. Whoever dislikes meeting Allah, Allah dislikes meeting him.”

‘Aa`isha, whenever she didn’t understand something, she would question it. So when she heard this, she said to the Prophet saw: “And who of us does not dislike death?” (Does disliking death mean we dislike meeting Allah?) Prophet saw said, “This is not what I meant. When the believer, he is about to die, he will be given the news that Allah is pleased with him. So that the most beloved thing to him would be his future. So he would love to meet Allah, and Allah would love to meet him. When the non believer is about to die, he is given the news that Allah is angry with him and will punish him. So he will dislike meeting Allah, and Allah will dislike meeting him.”

The Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam said: “When the janaazah is placed and the men carry it on their shoulders, if it is a righteous person, it will say ‘Go as fast as you can!’ If it is otherwise, then he will be say: ‘Woe to it! Where are you taking me?’ Everyone would hear that sound except the human beings. And if the human beings would hear it, they would die due to that shock.”

RasulAllah says: “If it wasn’t for the fact that none of you would bury the dead, I would ask Allah to let you hear the sounds of the people in the graves.”

He would be afraid of us not burying the dead because we hear the punishments they are going through in the grave.