



# Until <sup>We</sup> Meet <sup>Again</sup>

THE PROPHEPIC APPROACH IN DEALING WITH LOSS

MUFTI ABDUL RAHMAN WAHEED



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مفتی  
MIFTAAH  
INSTITUTE



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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

TO THOSE WE'VE LOVED AND LOST:

The world we know now, is **less meaningful** without you. Though we are certain, **the world you now know is more meaningful for you.**

INTRODUCTION:

**Until We  
Meet Again**

## Introduction

A father lovingly kissed his infant son, sniffed in the pure scent, and tenderly embraced him one last time. He witnessed the child's innocent soul depart as he drew his last breath. Tears of sorrow began flooding the father's eyes as he mourned over his baby's lifeless body. This depicts the heartbreaking scene on the day the Prophet (PBUH) lost his beloved son, Ibrahim. It was a moment full of somberness, but the bereaved Prophet (PBUH) lamented:

إِنَّ الْعَيْنَ تَدْمَعُ وَالْقَلْبَ يَحْزَنُ وَلَا نَقُولُ  
إِلَّا مَا يُرْضِي رَبَّنَا وَإِنَّا بِفِرَاقِكَ يَا إِبْرَاهِيمَ لَمَحْزُونُونَ

The eye weeps and the heart grieves, but we say only what our Lord is pleased with, and we are grieved over being separated from you, Ibrahim.

Our lives are fused with the temporal and the eternal. In this present reality, we are weighed down every moment we lose a loved one – it is a bitter pill to swallow. However, peering through the window beyond this existence, the truth of the Hereafter ignites a bright spark of hope that keeps us looking forward to our infinite meeting with them.

The price of life is loss. There is no exception to the fate of a person's death; it is inevitable. Today, we might be grieving over someone's demise, but at any given minute, someone might be grieving over ours. In the end, everything will cease to exist except for Allah. He is omnipotent; there is no beginning, and there can never be an ending to Him.

﴿٢٧﴾ كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ ﴿٢٦﴾ وَيَبْقَىٰ وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ ﴿٢٧﴾

Everyone upon the earth will perish, and there will remain  
the Face of your Lord, Owner of Majesty and Honor.  
(Surah ar-Rahman, Verse 26-27)

Loss leaves the living with an open wound of grief. In time, the sadness that occupies the heart becomes an emotional scar. Navigating the journey of healing after loss requires readjustment. As believers, if we can lift the veil that covers the insignificance of this world and begin to fathom the vastness of the Hereafter, our discovery will allay the pain we carry. From this point of view, the blissful place where our loved ones are is exactly where we too would hasten to be.

There is a beautiful poem reported from Sawaar ibn Mus'ab Hamdani that reads:

*O You who is weeping over another human,  
Do not weep over him, but rectify yourself.  
For surely for the one in whose loss you are weeping,  
It is soon that you too will join the same ranks.*

We will never forget those we love; May Allah have mercy on them. We ask Him to comfort us through the words in the following pages.





CHAPTER ONE:

# The Body and The Soul

## The Body and The Soul

A human being is a synthesis of two separate substances; the body (jasad) and the soul (rūh). The former serves as a vessel while the latter is considered the sole essence of our existence. Our soul originated in the spiritual realm of the souls, known as 'ālam al-arwāḥ. It independently exists as an original creation of Allah and it is not impressed upon the body.

The body is governed by the soul; without it, a human being will be devoid of an identity or even feelings. Our soul is what makes us human. However, the association between the body and the soul is only temporal. While the body decomposes and returns to the earth, the soul remains as an eternal entity. Its nature is such that when it transitions, human life follows suit.

It is substantiated in the Qur'ān that our souls have long been acquainted with one another in this pre-existent stage, as Allah gathered them together on this plain and they made a primordial spiritual covenant to Him. He asked them to testify, "Am I not your Lord?" and they answered, "Yes, we have testified." This significant incident revealed in Surah al-A'rāf is reconciled by the Prophet's

statement with regards to the collection of souls:

« الْأَرْوَاحُ جُنُودٌ مُجَنَّدَةٌ فَمَا تَعَارَفَتْ مِنْهَا اتَّخَلَفَتْ وَمَا تَنَافَرَتْ مِنْهَا اخْتَلَفَتْ »

Souls are troops collected together and those who familiarized with each other (in the heaven from where these come) would have affinity with one another (in the world) and those amongst them who opposed each other (in the Heaven) would also be divergent (in the world).

(Sahih Muslim)

Despite not having any recollection of this indiscernible account, it is an elemental factor that explains the unbreakable bond we have with certain people in this world. Those whom we have an especially profound feeling of familiarity with are the souls we were once inclined and attached to before our life on earth. Our souls have a powerful presence in our bodies – they never forget.

While the nature of the soul might be inconceivable with rational understanding, as only Allah knows its true nature, its presence should never be ignored. We must value our souls as it is a fundamental component that brings us closer to Allah. Therefore, it should be adorned with everything that is pure and good.

Just like the body, which is confounded in dirt, needs nourishment from the properties of the earth, the soul's nourishment can only be fulfilled through the commandments of Allah because it was endowed to us by Him, as mentioned by Imam al-Ghazali.

When our time in this world comes to an end, our body goes back to the dirt, but our soul moves on to an imperceptible realm. Although our soul will still be linked to our body in the grave, it will be a completely different connection from the one in the physical realm. It will no longer be confined by the dimensions of this world. And Allah tells us that when the time comes, we will all be resurrected by virtue of our souls.

مِنْهَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ وَفِيهَا نُعِيدُكُمْ وَمِنْهَا نُخْرِجُكُمْ تَارَةً أُخْرَى

From the earth We created you, and into it We will return you, and from it We will extract you another time.

(Surah Taha, Verse 55)



CHAPTER TWO:

Stages of  
Life

## Stages of Life

We were created for everlastingness. This world is merely a bridge over which we pass on our journey to our eternal life. Ibn al-Qayyim underlines that the transitioning of human life occurs in four stages and the soul occupies each of these realms.

The first realm is *‘ālam al-raḥim*, which is the life in the mother’s womb. At this stage, the body is not fully formed. Only when a hundred and twenty days of conception pass, after being constricted in darkness, the body will be ensouled.

The next domain is the life in this world; the one in which we live and grow up and are accustomed to. In this stage, the body and the soul are intimately connected to one another. The body is physically alive as a vehicle of the soul which can bring about sensations and acquire good or evil.

The subsequent stage occurs after our death. The soul will be separated from the body, transitioning into an intermediary realm known as *‘ālam al-barzakh*. When we die, our life continues in a different form in this expansive, metaphysical world.

« كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ وَنَبَلُوكُمْ بِالْأَسْئَرِ وَالْخَيْرِ فِتْنَةً وَإِلَيْنَا تُرْجَعُونَ »

Every soul will taste death. And We test you 'O humanity' with good and evil as a trial, then to Us you will 'all' be returned.

(Surah Al-Anbiya, Verse 35)

**انتقل** means the traveling of the soul – it transitions from one stage to the next. Its final destination will be the life in the Hereafter, 'ālam al-ākhirah, where the soul is attached to a new body in an everlasting domain.

Our ending of bliss in Paradise or torment in Hellfire is determined by our performance in this world - whether or not we have successfully strived to manifest our obedience to Allah and live piously, by dedicating our lives to everything He loves and staying away from everything He dislikes.

It is essential to ask Allah for the goodness of this life and of the afterlife, so when death comes to us unbidden, we will be safeguarded from the trials of the grave, which should not be taken lightly. The Prophet (PBUH) would seek refuge from the evils of life and death by making this supplication:

« اللَّهُمَّ أَصْلِحْ لِي دِينِي الَّذِي هُوَ عِصْمَةٌ أَمْرِي، وَأَصْلِحْ لِي دُنْيَايَ الَّتِي فِيهَا مَعَاشِي،  
وَأَصْلِحْ لِي آخِرَتِي الَّتِي فِيهَا مَعَادِي، وَاجْعَلِ الْحَيَاةَ زِيَادَةً لِي فِي كُلِّ خَيْرٍ،  
وَاجْعَلِ الْمَوْتَ رَاحَةً لِي مِنْ كُلِّ شَرٍّ »

O Allah, rectify for me my religion which is the safeguard of my affairs, and rectify for me the affairs of this world wherein is my sustenance, and rectify for me my Hereafter to which is my return, and make life for me an increase for every good, and make death a relief for me from every evil.

(Muslim)



CHAPTER THREE:

**Death for  
A Righteous  
Believer**

## Death for A Righteous Believer

The harmonious relationship of the soul and the body is such that when the soul leaves the body, our life ends and death begins. For a believer who leaves with *īmān*, death will be a gift and a relief. It is a pathway to Paradise and the gateway to a guaranteed meeting with Allah.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ ﴿٢٧﴾ ارْجِعِي إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَّةً ﴿٢٨﴾  
فَادْخُلِي فِي عِبَادِي ﴿٢٩﴾ وَاَدْخُلِي جَنَّتِي ﴿٣٠﴾

[To the righteous it will be said], “O reassured soul, Return to your Lord, well-pleased and pleasing [to Him], And enter among My [righteous] servants And enter My Paradise.”

*(Surah Al-Fajr, Verse 27-30)*

The luminous Companions understood that this life is only a matter of moments, so they focused on the life of the Hereafter. Abu Dardā’ RA, a distinguished Companion who led an ascetic life, lived for death. He even regarded the news of a believer who passed away with *īmān* as the best news received.

Whenever Abu Dardā’ RA heard of a righteous person’s passing, he would say, “Congratulations! O, I wish I was in your place.” When



his wife objected to his desire to die, he responded, “You do not know that a person rises in the morning with *īmān* and by the evening he becomes a *munāfiq* (hypocrite) and his *īmān* is taken away from him in this oblivious state. It is for this reason that I envy this deceased (who has gone with *īmān*), and I give preference to it (death) over this life in which there is praying and fasting.”

The state of a person’s death plays a pivotal role in determining the outcome of their finality; whether they will be rewarded with lasting pleasure or torment. Before a person leaves this world, they can sense the nearing of their death. Their soul will only be seized by the Angel of Death at the command of Allah. Allah enlightened:

اللَّهُ يَتَوَفَّى الْأَنْفُسَ حِينَ مَوْتِهَا وَالَّتِي لَمْ تَمُتْ فِي مَنَامِهَا

Allah takes the souls at the time of their death, and those that do not die [He takes] during their sleep.

(*Surah Az-Zumar, Verse 42*)

A pious soul excitedly anticipates its exit from this world, knowing it will return to Allah. This moment of jubilation was highlighted by Ibn Abī al-Dunyā who reported, “When the believer is about to die and he sees what Allah has prepared for him, he will try to induce his soul to exit his body out of enthusiasm to leave this world, knowing it will return to Allah.”

To seize the pious soul, angels descend from the heavens in large numbers, carrying a white silk shroud emanating musk and the floral fragrance of Paradise. Varying reports, state either five hundred, five thousand, or more angels are present in the sphere, depending on the piety of the believer.

Because the angels are made of light (*nūr*) and are void of physical weight, according to Ibn al-Qayyim, when they descend copiously, they either line up vertically or pile up on top of one another.

On one grand occasion, seventy thousand angels descended to receive the honored soul of Sa’d ibn Mu’ādh, the venerated

Companion who earned a lofty status after being martyred. His distinction in gaining Allah's pleasure was described by the Prophet (PBUH):

« هذا الذي تحرَّك له العرشُ، وفُتِحَتْ له أبوابُ السماءِ، وشَهِدَهُ سبعون ألفاً من الملائكة »

This is the one at whose death the Throne shook; the gates of heaven were opened for him; and seventy thousand angels attended his funeral.

*(An-Nasaa'i)*

Before pulling the pious soul out of the body, to relax them, the angels massage every limb of the believer, never leaving their side. As moving into a realm that one has never been to before and leaving everything behind can be frightening, the angels console and comfort the believer with the words:

أَلَّا تَخَافُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَبْشِرُوا بِالْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي كُنْتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ

Do not fear and do not grieve but receive good tidings of Paradise, which you were promised.

*(Surah Fussilat, Verse 30)*

Out of Allah's love for the pious soul, He orders the Angel of Death to remove it delicately with rifq (gentleness), the way a mother cradles her child in her arms. Sitting at the head of the believer, the Angel of Death fulfills this command and begins pacifying the pious soul, saying:

أيتها النفس الطيبة اخرجي إلى مغفرة من الله ورضوان

O pure soul, come out to forgiveness  
and acceptance from Allah.

To bring peace to the soul, the splendor of the divine realm will be in full view, showing the soul its eternal abode. When the soul is pleased with the glad tidings it receives, it effortlessly glides like a drop of water. Once the soul is seized, the angels make sure to treat it with utmost care, and the fragile packaging that is carefully wrapped is delivered to the seventh heaven.

During every moment of the soul's elevation through layers upon layers of skies, it will be greeted with salām by the angels. In fact, the soul will hear the greetings of salām on four different occasions after leaving the body; when it leaves this world, in the grave, upon being raised on the Day of Judgment, and finally, when it enters Paradise.

As the angels escort the soul, the gatekeepers of each sky will ask: "Who is this person?" and they will answer, "We are bringing so-and-so", addressing the individual by their name and calling them by their best names which they were recognized by in this world. The soul then stops at the lowest heaven and seeks entry, which it will be permitted.

Along the way, the soul will be acquainted with other pious souls and eventually, it comes to a halt with its highly anticipated meeting with The Almighty. Allah will say:

اَكْتُبُوا كِتَابَ عَبْدِي فِي عِلِّيِّينَ وَاَعِيدُوهُ اِلَى الْاَرْضِ فَاِنِّي  
مِنْهَا خَلَقْتَهُمْ وَفِيهَا اَعِيدُهُمْ وَمِنْهَا اُخْرِجُهُمْ تَارَةً اُخْرَى

Write the record of My servant in the righteous register  
and return him to the earth, for from it I created them, to it  
I return them, and from it I will take them out once again.

From these narrations, we can visualize that the soul is in an extremely beautiful environment in which it is loved, enjoined by the company that it loves, and with its most beloved, Allah. This notion should leave us comforted by death, and it is the sole reason the Prophet (PBUH) eagerly desired to depart from this world. On his deathbed, as he lay on her chest, 'Ā'ishah recounted the Prophet's display of enthusiasm to meet Allah, speaking these last words:

« اللهم اغفر لي وارحمني، وألحقني بالرفيق الأعلى »

O Allah, forgive me and have mercy on me, and  
join me with the Highest Company.

As soon as the body is laid in its resting place, the next stage of the journey commences – the questioning of the grave. Two angels

known as Munkar and Nakīr will interrogate the believer: “Who is your Lord?”, “What is your religion”, “Who is this man sent you? and “How did you know?” — all of which the believer will successfully answer.

In response to this triumph, the believer will hear a voice proclaiming:

أَنْ صَدَقَ عَبْدِي فَأَفْرِشُوهُ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ وَالْبَسُوهُ  
مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ وَافْتَحُوا لَهُ بَابًا إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ

My servant has spoken the truth! Spread out carpets  
for him in Paradise, clothe him for Paradise, and  
open a gate for him to Paradise!

Following this call, a fine-looking man, pleasantly perfumed and dressed in the finest of clothing will approach the believer, saying:

أُبَشِّرُ بِالدِّيِّ يَسْرُكَ هَذَا يَوْمَكَ الَّذِي كُنْتَ تُوعَدُ

“Glad tidings of what pleases you, for  
this was your Day you were promised!”

To which the believer will praise his remarkable beauty:

مَنْ أَنْتَ فَوَجْهُكَ الْوَجْهُ يَجِيءُ بِالْخَيْرِ

“Who are you with such a handsome face?”,  
and he will respond:

أَنَا عَمَلِكِ الصَّالِحِ

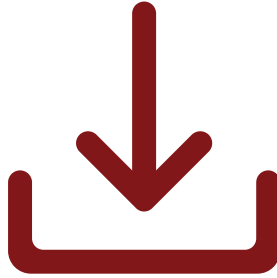
“I am your righteous deeds!”

Succeeding the trials of the grave, the pious soul will be stationed in the ‘illiyyūn — a gateway to Paradise. Some narrations described the ‘illiyyūn as the station in Jannat al-Ma’wā, situated below Sidrat al-Muntahā, the highest point of the heavens. Simply put, the ‘illiyyūn is equivalent to a lobby or waiting lounge in Paradise. Even when the soul continues enjoying its time here, the body of the gravesite remains connected to it. In sheer bliss, it will reside there, as long as

Allah wills.

Let us pray to be among those whose souls go forth on an easy trip to the Hereafter and are spared from the torment of the grave, so we can enjoy these blessed angelic gatherings and be ennobled by Allah, 'In shā'Allāh.





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