

Every Soul Shall Taste Death – How Do You Want To Depart

by: Shaykh Ḥasan Ṣomāli (حفظه الله)

Video Podcast: Sunday 21st Sha'bān 1442 | 4th April 2021

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الحمد لله والصلاة والسلام على رسول الله وعلى آهله وصحبه أجمعين

The following verse in Sūrah Āl 'Imrān will be broken up and discussed in four sections:

﴿كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ﴾

1. Every soul shall taste death

﴿وَأِنَّمَا تُؤَفَّقُونَ أُجُورَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ﴾

2. And you shall be repaid or rewarded in full on the day of resurrection

﴿فَمَنْ رُحِجَ عَنِ النَّارِ وَأُدْخِلَ الْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ﴾

3. And whoever is distanced from the hellfire and entered into paradise then surely they are successful

﴿وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْعُرُورِ﴾

4. And the life of this world is nothing but a deceiving enjoyment

[Sūrah Āl 'Imrān 3:185]

This verse in Sūrah Āl 'Imrān has a number of benefits, which are discussed in four parts:

1. The saying of Allāh (عز وجل):

﴿كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ﴾

Every soul shall taste death

كُلُّ - Every

The word (كُلُّ) is used in Arabic to indicate that the rule is general- every soul of every human being and jinn will taste death.

Many ask, why do Muslims always talk about death. Reflection upon death has many benefits. From these benefits is realizing that regardless how much wealth we have, how famous we are, our lineage, our tribe or race, every human being will die. We are weak and needy. The one that deserves to be worshipped alone without any partners is (الْحَيِّ) Allāh the All Living that never dies.

There is a beautiful supplication of the Prophet ﷺ which is found in Bukhārī and Muslim, that the Prophet ﷺ used to say: "I seek refuge with Your might and none has the right to be worshipped except You alone, who does not die, and the jinns and the humans, they die."

So the One who deserves to be worshipped alone without any partners is (الْحَيِّ الَّذِي) (لَا يَمُوتُ), the All Living- Allāh (عز وجل) who never dies.

In the book of Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) Allāh commands us to place our trust in the All Living Allāh (عز وجل) alone who never dies, because only Allāh is deserving of all worship. To direct worship to other than Allāh is shirk (polytheism), and that is the greatest crime.

The human being is weak and needy; the human will perish, so regardless of who they are and what station Allāh gave them, they deserve absolutely nothing of worship.

الموت - Death

الموت - Death is the opposite to life, reflecting over it is one of the most effective ways to overcome any difficulty a person faces in life and allows us to be patient. An example of this in the Qur'ān is where Allāh (عز وجل) mentions the same thing:

“Every soul shall taste death” - Sūrah Al-‘Ankabūt [29:57]

Allah commanded the companions to migrate- to perform al-hijra. Imagine being commanded to leave your homes, families and where you grew up. It is not easy for everyone, so when Allāh (عز وجل) commanded the companions to migrate; he reminded them about death to make this decision easier for them. He said:

﴿ يَا عِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّ أَرْضِي وَاسِعَةٌ فَإِيَّايَ فَاعْبُدُونِ ﴾

O my slaves my/ servants who believe, verily my earth is spacious, it is vast so therefore worship me alone.

﴿ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ ۗ ثُمَّ إِلَيْنَا تُرْجَعُونَ ﴾

Every soul shall taste death. And then to us you will all return.

[Sūrah al-‘Ankabūt 29:56-57]

Another example in Sūrah al-Anbiyā’ highlights that reflecting over the reality of death is one of the most effective ways to overcome tests and difficulties in life. We will all be tested in different ways, nobody’s life is perfect.

﴿ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ ۗ وَنَبْلُوكُم بِالشَّرِّ وَالْحَيْرِ فِتْنَةً ۗ وَإِلَيْنَا تُرْجَعُونَ ﴾

Every soul shall taste death. And We shall trial you and test you with good and evil as a test. And to Us you will all return.

ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ – shall taste death

To reflect on the saying of Allāh (عز وجل) : ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ – “shall taste death”, Allāh (عز وجل) said ‘shall taste death’ because this is more powerful and emphatic in conveying the intended meaning.

This statement is from the amazing treasures of the book of Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى). The more you read and study the Qur’ān, the more you will discover amazing benefits and lessons that will inspire you in this life.

This statement highlights that this is (حق اليقين) - it is absolute certainty. Every soul shall taste death meaning you shall experience it, feel it and this is the highest level of certainty.

Because (اليقين) – certainty, is of three levels:

- **Lowest level (علم اليقين) – certainty of knowledge**
- **Second level (عين اليقين) – certainty of sight, something that you witness**
- **Highest level (حق اليقين) – absolute certainty that you taste and experience**

This is the highest level of certainty, every soul shall taste death, you will taste it and experience it.

للموت كأس والمرء ذَائِقُهَا

Death has a cup and every person shall taste it (this is a saying of a poet that is often quoted by the scholars, from them Imām al-Qurtabī and others.)

Examples for the levels of certainty:

- **Lowest level** – If a trustworthy person tells you that they have a bottle of water in their bag, you know that in that bag there is a bottle of water- This is certainty of knowledge.

- **Second level** – If they remove the bottle of water and show it to you, you see the bottle itself- This is certainty of sight.
- **Highest level** – If they give you the bottle of water and you drink it, you have tasted the water- This is absolute certainty.

2. The saying of Allāh (عز وجل):

﴿وَأَمَّا تُوفِّونَ أَجُورَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ﴾

Only on the day of resurrection shall you be repaid or rewarded in full

A benefit from this to be used on a daily basis, is that whatever decision a person makes in this life there will be complete recompense in the hereafter. If you busy yourself with good, you will be rewarded with good fully in the ākhirah. Likewise, if you busy yourself with evil, transgression and oppressing people in this life, you will be repaid in full in the hereafter.

A person may be repaid in this life partially, for example a person who performs righteous deeds may receive a partial payment in the life of this world and in the grave. However, full repayment is in the ākhirah. None of us should think we are going to escape justice, we should deal with people the way Allāh commanded us to and the way we would like people to deal with us.

This verse is (بشرى)- glad tidings to the Muḥsinīn- the ones who are doing good. If you are obeying Allāh (عز وجل) and striving to be upright in this life, and if you fall short you repent to Allāh (عز وجل), then this is glad tidings.

This verse is also a warning to the musīn- those who are busying themselves with evil.

3. The saying of Allāh (عز وجل):

﴿فَمَنْ زُحِرَ عَنِ النَّارِ وَأُدْخِلَ الْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ﴾

And whoever is distanced from the hellfire and entered into paradise, then surely they are successful.

This part of the verse highlights why we should reflect on death and the Day Of Resurrection. There are going to be two groups of people in the hereafter:

- a) A group in paradise- Jannah
- b) And a group in the hellfire- sa'īr.

Here Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) informs us of the true meaning of success. Success is only true success with two things:

- a) Being saved from the hellfire
- b) And entered into paradise

It is understood from this verse that whoever is not saved from the fire of hell and is not admitted into paradise, they are not successful but rather an absolute failure. Regardless of how many million followers they may have had on social media, or how much fame they had, how much money they had, their lineage, or their name. Whoever is not saved from the fire of hell and admitted into paradise is a failure facing the eternal punishment and torment of the fire of hell- and refuge is sought with Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى).

This verse puts everything into context: our existence, the reality of this world, how to overcome our trials and tests, how to remain firm, how to address our shortcomings in times of weakness and so on.

4. The saying of Allāh (عز وجل):

﴿وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْعُرُورِ﴾

And the life of this world is nothing but a deceiving enjoyment

One of the Salaf said: (الدنيا خمر الشيطان)- this world is the drug/intoxicant that is pushed and promoted by the devil. Whoever becomes intoxicated by it will not become sober until they are among the army of the dead. Meaning until they are in the graveyard in a state of regret amongst those who are in loss.

Again, one of the most effective ways to avoid this intoxication or recover from it, is by reflecting over death.

Abū Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said: أَكْثَرُوا ذِكْرَ هَاذِمِ اللَّذَاتِ – “*Often reflect over the destroyer of pleasures*”, meaning death.

We live in this world, but Allāh (عز وجل) directs us to and shows us what is beneficial and what is harmful. It is like a maze and we are trying to find the exit to escape. Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) gives us everything which is needed for us to successfully find our way to the exit of this maze.

If you successfully navigate yourself on this journey by implementing the admonition and advice of Allāh (عز وجل) then you will successfully reach the destination, the final destination- the hereafter.

If a person dies upon tawhīd, piety and uprightness then for them is paradise.

There are glad tidings in this verse and no doubt warnings also. When Muslims oppose what is in these verses and become distracted by this world forgetting the purpose of this world, forgetting their purpose in this world and the purpose of their existence, they hate to think about or reflect over death, and as a result, they fail to prepare for death through righteous deeds.

The prophet ﷺ in his ḥadīth collected by Abū Dawūd in his Sunan, narrated by Thawbān (رضى الله عنه) said:

يُوشِكُ الْأُمَمُ أَنْ تَدَاعَى عَلَيْكُمْ كَمَا تَدَاعَى الْأَكْلَةُ إِلَى قَصْعَتِهَا " . فَقَالَ قَائِلٌ وَمِنْ قَلَّةٍ نَحْنُ يَوْمَئِذٍ قَالَ " بَلْ أَنْتُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ كَثِيرٌ وَلَكِنَّكُمْ غَتَاءٌ كَغَتَاءِ السَّيْلِ وَلَيَنْزِعَنَّ اللَّهُ مِنْ صُدُورِ عَدُوِّكُمْ الْمَهَابَةَ مِنْكُمْ وَلَيَقْذِفَنَّ اللَّهُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمُ الْوَهْنَ " .
فَقَالَ قَائِلٌ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَمَا الْوَهْنُ قَالَ " حُبُّ الدُّنْيَا وَكَرَاهِيَةُ الْمَوْتِ

“The people will soon invite one another to attack you, like people who are eating from a dish invite one another to eat. One of the companions said, ‘Is it because we are few in number at that time?’ The Prophet ﷺ said, ‘rather at that time you are many but you are like the scum/froth that is on top of the flowing water. Allāh will remove from the chests of your enemies any respect or any fear that they had for you and Allāh will place weakness and febleness in your hearts.’ One of the companions said, ‘Oh Messenger of Allāh what is this weakness?’ The Prophet ﷺ said, ‘the love of this world and hatred of death.’”

We can see the ramifications of not following the direction and advice of Allāh (عز وجل) that we find in this ’āyah and other verses of the Qur’ān because death is mentioned in many places in the Qur’ān.

The goal for many people will be chasing after this world at the expense of the ākhirah (the hereafter), whereas the goal of the believer should be to use this world to attain the ākhirah - the hereafter. The Prophet ﷺ said: “*When the human being dies, his deeds end except for three: ongoing charity, beneficial knowledge, or a righteous child who prays for him.*”

This is a person’s actions. A person prepares for death by performing the obligations, staying away from the prohibitions and if we fall short because we are human beings then we rush to repent to Allāh (عز وجل), and we never despair of the mercy of Allāh nor do we feel safe from the punishment of Allāh (عز وجل).

وصلى الله على نبينا محمد وعلى آله وصحبه وسلم