

[Home](#) > [Barzakh \(Purgatory\)](#) > [Reward and Punishment in Barzakh](#) > Talking is not Limited to the Tongue

Reward and Punishment in Barzakh

[Quranic Description of Reward and Punishment in Barzakh](#)

“The fire; they shall be brought before it (every) morning and evening and on the day when the hour shall come to pass: Make Firon’s people enter the severest chastisement.” (Surah Momin 40:46)

It means that they will be thrown in fire in the morning and in the evening and when Qiyamat will occur (it will be ordered): Inflict the severest punishment on the followers of Firon.

This is one of those verses of Quran, which testify to punishment in Barzakh. The above verse refers to those people of the Pharaoh, who drowned in the Nile. Ever since that day, they are regularly brought near fire every morning and every evening. This will continue till the Day of Judgement, where after they will be given the severest chastisement.

Imam Ja’far Sadiq (a.s.) says that there is no morning or evening in the Hereafter, and that the said punishment in morning and evening refers to the world of Barzakh.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) said, “If the dead person is one of the people of Hell, his place in Hell is shown to him every morning and every evening in his grave (Barzakh period). If he or she is of the people of Paradise, he or she is shown his or her palace in Paradise and told that this will be your station in the Hereafter.”

[In Comfort or in Pain so long as Days and Nights Endure](#)

The Holy Quran says:

“So as to those who are unhappy, they shall be in the fire; for them shall be sighing and groaning in it: Abiding therein so long as the heavens and the earth endure, except as your Lord please; surely your Lord is the mighty doer of what He intends. And as to those who are made happy,

they shall be in the garden, abiding in it as long as the heavens and the earth endure, except as your Lord please; a gift which shall never be cut off.” (Surah Hud 11:106–108)

The Imam (a.s.) says that this verse also refers to the realm of Barzakh and the reward and punishment mentioned in it is also the consequence in Barzakh, because there is no question of earth or sky in the Qiyamat as the Holy Quran says:

“On the day when the earth shall be changed into a different earth, and the heavens (as well), and they shall come forth before Allah, the One, the Supreme.” (Surah Ibrahim 14:48)

Habib Najjar in the Paradise of Barzakh

Allah says:

“It was said: Enter the garden. He said: O would that my people had known; of that on account of which my Lord has forgiven me and made me of the honored ones!” (Surah Yasin 36:26–27)

This holy verse refers to Habib Najjar who was Faithful despite belonging to the community of Firon. When he invited his people to put faith in God’s messengers, people threatened him (as described at length in the explanation of Surah Yasin).¹ Finally they hanged him on an impaling stake and beat him to death. After his death, when he got his reward, he said: I wish my community had known that God has pardoned me and that my Lord has placed me among the respected.

Here comes the Divine Word: “He was told: Enter Paradise.” Imam (a.s.) says: Here Paradise means the Paradise of Barzakh. In another narration, it is mentioned that it means worldly heaven, which is lower than the Paradise of the Hereafter.

In short, this verse shows that as soon as the Faithful of the people of Firon was martyred, he entered Paradise instantly. Since his community till then was in the world, he wished that they might know how many bounties the Most Merciful Lord had given to him (so that they too would have obeyed) and repented for their misdeeds and turned towards God.

Hard Life and Punishment in the Grave

The Quran says:

“And whoever turns away from My reminder, his shall be a straitened life, and We will raise him on the day of resurrection, blind.” (Surah Taha 20:124)

Most commentators are of the opinion that here ‘Straitened Life’ means chastisement in the grave. Imam Sajjad (a.s.) also is reported to have taken this meaning.

Barzakh till Everyone would be Raised from the Graves on the Day of Judgement

Again the Quran says:

“Until when death overtakes one of them, he says: Send me back, my Lord, send me back; haply I may do good in that which I have left. By no means! it is a (mere) word that he speaks; and before them is a barrier until the day they are raised.” (Surah Mominoon 23:99–100)

This verse shows that man indeed has a life after death and before the Day of Judgement. It is in between the two. It is known by the name of Barzakh.

Personality of Man Due to his Spirit or Soul

In short, thinking over this verse and many other verses, it is clearly understood that human soul is a reality, which is different from body. There surely is a connection between the spirit and the body. Soul governs the body through intention and intelligence and manages the latter’s affairs. In fact, a man’s personality belongs to his or her soul and not to the body, which ends with death.

(Every movement comes to end and body turns into a heap of dust). Following the disintegration of its parts, the body becomes dust. Man’s reality and personality or individuality is his spirit, which survives even after man’s death and lives either in permanent happiness or eternal trouble depending on his pre-death intentions and performance, having nothing to do with the condition of his or her earthly (worldly) body. This is a universal truth.

Islamic scholars have, in order to prove that soul is something different from body and that it does not vanish due to death and that the rules governing it are different, put forth many arguments and logical evidences. But, after the presentation of the Word of God and the traditions and statements of the holy Prophet and pious Imams (a.s.) there is no need of reiterating the said scholarly statements. This issue is now brighter than sun for us.

Paradise in Barzakh for the Content Soul

One of the Barzakh-related verses in the Holy Quran are the last verses of Surah Fajr:

“O soul that art at rest! Return to your Lord, well-pleased (with him), well-pleasing (Him), So enter among My servants, And enter into My garden.” (Surah Fajr: 89:27–29)

In these verses, the satisfied soul is being addressed at the moment of death: “Enter My Paradise.” It has been explained as the Paradise in Barzakh. Similarly it is said, “Join and enter the group of My servant” (meaning: Muhammad and his Progeny).

There are other verses also hinting at Paradise and Hell in Barzakh, but what we have said is enough.[2](#)

Rewards and Punishments of Barzakh as Mentioned in Reports and Traditions

Many traditions discuss reward and punishment in Barzakh. Here we suffice with a few.

In Biharul Anwar, Vol. 3 there is a quotation from the Tafsir of Ali bin Ibrahim Qummi (who has quoted Imam Ali.) according to which the Holy Prophet said, “When the offspring of Adam (man) enters the last day of this worldly life and the first one of the Hereafter, his wealth and children and his deeds appear before him.

He turns towards his wealth and says, ‘By God! I had too much lust and greed for you and was also very stingy. Now, how much of portion of mine is with you?’ The wealth responds, ‘Take only that much, which can suffice for your shroud.’ Then he looks at his children and says, ‘By God. I loved you very much and was always protecting and defending you. Show me how much of my portion is now with you.’ They reply, ‘We only will take and bury you and that is all.’

Finally, he turns to his deeds and says, ‘By God, I was very careless with regard to you and I had disliked you. Yet am I to get any share from you?’ The deed says, ‘Yes. I will be your companion and friend in grave and will also remain with you in the Hereafter, until both of us would be made to stand before Almighty Lord.’”

If this person was an obedient one and so a friend of God, his deed will approach him in beautiful and handsome shape adorned in the best attire full of pleasing fragrance and say, “I give you good tidings that you will get Rowh and Raihaan (heavenly bounties) and divine graces. Welcome.”

He will ask, “Who are you?” He will reply, “I am your good deed. Come let us proceed to Paradise from this world.” This body recognizes the one who gives a wash to it and asks him, giving him an oath, to carry it speedily to his destination.

When this body enters the grave, two angels who examine every dead, come to him in a fierce form dragging their lengthy hair on the ground and tearing the earth with their teeth. Their eyes dazzle like lightning and their voice furiously roaring. They ask the body, “Who is your Lord? Who is your Prophet? What was your religion? (Etc.)”

The body says, “My Lord is only one God, Who has no partner and my prophet is Muhammad (s.a.w.s.) and my religion is Islam.” Then the angels tell him, “May God keep you steadfast on the things, which you like.” The same has been hinted in the Holy Quran:

“Allah confirms those who believe with the sure word in this world’s life and in the hereafter, and Allah causes the unjust to go astray, and Allah does what He pleases.” (Surah Ibrahim 14:27)

Then they widen his grave as far as eyes can see and open therein a door in the direction of Paradise,

telling him, "Now you sleep restfully with cool eyes just as a lucky and successful youth goes to sleep."

Similarly, God has given a hint in this verse also:

"Allah confirms those who believe with the sure word in this world's life and in the hereafter, and Allah causes the unjust to go astray, and Allah does what He pleases." (Surah Ibrahim 14:27)

Then they widen his grave as far as eyes can see and open therein a door in the direction of Paradise, telling him, "Now you sleep restfully with cool eyes just as a lucky and successful youth goes to sleep."

Similarly, God has given a hint in this verse also:

But if the body is that of an enemy of God, his bad deed approaches him in the worst kind of dress emanating foul smell and tells him, "Take tidings of getting hot Hell water as drink of entering hellfire."

He also sees the one who washes him and tells on oath to the bearers of his body to leave him alone and not to take him to his grave. When they bury him, two examiner angels arrive. First they drag out his shroud and then ask him, "Who is your Lord? Who is your Prophet and what is your religion?" He replies, "I do not know." The angels tell him, "May God not allow you to know and be guided."

Then they hit him with a fire mace so harshly that it frightens everything in the world, except men and animals. Then they open up a door facing Hell in his grave telling him, "Now you may sleep in the worst condition."

Then they squeeze his grave to such an extent that it is almost sandwiched, making his brain matter come out from his nails and flesh and God makes snakes and scorpions etc. attack him and to bite and sting painfully till the Day of Resurrection. On that Day, he will be made to rise from his grave. The torture will be so severe that he will wish Qiyamat to come soon.

Faces in Barzakh would be like People's Faces in this World

There is a narration from Imam Sadiq (a.s.) in Amali of Shaykh Tusi (r.a.). At the end of it, the Imam has said, "When Almighty God recovers one's soul, He sends his soul in its worldly form and shape. There they eat and drink and when a new man (spirit of another dead) arrives to them they recognize him in his worldly face, form and shape."

In another tradition, the Imam has said that the spirits of the faithful meet one another and talk with one another and recognize one another; so much so that if you happen to see anyone of them, you will say this is so and so.

New Arrivals Questioned About Others

In another tradition, the Imam said, “The spirits dwell in body forms in a garden in Paradise. They recognize and know one another. They ask questions and get replies from one another. When a new spirit comes to them, they say, ‘Leave it (as it is) because it is arriving towards us after being freed from a great calamity (that is death).’ Then they ask it, ‘What about so and so and such and such person?’

If he replies, ‘He was alive until I came here’, the spirits express their hope that (God willing, he will also come to them). But if the newly arrived soul says that he had already left the world they say, ‘He has fallen down.’ It means that when he has not yet come here, he surely must have gone to Hell.”

Spirits Meet their Worldly Relatives and Friends

There are some narrations in Biharul Anwar, Kafi and other books. Their gist is: The spirits living in Barzakh come to visit their near and dear ones. Some of them come daily, some once in two days, and some once in three days, some on every Friday, some once in a month and some once a year. This difference depends on their condition, places of dwelling and their freedom or captivity.

According to a narration, a faithful soul sees nothing, except the well-being and pleasing things about his or her near and dear ones. If there is anything contrary to it, that thing is not shown to him or her (soul in Barzakh). Such disturbing things are kept unknown, so that it may not become unhappy. The spirit of an unbeliever sees nothing, except bad and painful things about its near and dear ones.

The Pool of Kauthar in Barzakh

Abdullah bin Sinan is quoted in several books of traditions and narrations. He asked Imam Sadiq (a.s.) about the Pool of Kauthar (a heavenly spring). He replied, “Its length is equal to the distance between Basra and Yemen (Sana).” When he expressed his astonishment, he asked, “May I show it to you?”

I said, “Yes, my Master!” Then the Imam took him out of Medina. There he kicked the ground on one spot and said, “See!” Veils before his eyes were removed by the order of the Imam. He says, “I saw a huge spring flowing, the shores of which were not visible, except the spot on which we stood and which was like a small island.

I saw a spring at one bank of which snow white water was flowing in waves and on the other bank whiter than snow milk flowing and in between the two, flowed wine, which had fine red color that was more attractive than topaz, both in sheen and fineness. I had never before seen such a wine of the best quality flowing between pure milk and snow white water.”

I said, “O Master! May I be sacrificed on you. From where does this spring flow?” The Imam replied, “As mentioned by Almighty God in the Holy Quran, there is a spring of milk, a spring of water and a spring of

wine in Paradise. All these three springs come from there.”

The narrator says, “I saw many trees on both the banks of this spring and a Hourie near every tree. She had such beautiful hair the like of which I had never seen before. There was a utensil in the hands of every Hourie. The said vessels were so beautiful that I had never seen such utensils in the world.

They did not belong to this material world. He hinted to a Hourie to serve water. She filled that utensil from that spring and presented it to the Imam. He drank from it. He asked her again to fill it. She complied with the command and the Imam gave that utensil to me. I drank from it and found that I had never tasted such a nice, delicious and pleasing drink ever before. It had a fragrance of musk.

I said, ‘May I be sacrificed on you. Whatever I observed today is such that I had not only never seen before but also never even imagined before, (that such things could ever be available in the world).’”

The Imam said, “What you have seen is only a small specimen of the bounties provided by God Almighty for our Shia. When somebody leaves the world, his or her spirit is taken to this stream and around this garden of Paradise. He eats its fruits and drinks its wines.

Whenever our enemy dies, his soul is taken to Wadi Barhut. He remains in its torture forever. He is forced to eat ‘Zaqqum’ (a thorny cactus tree) and drink hot Hell water. So pray to God for being protected from the said Barhut valley.”

Kauthar and Hameem at the Moment of Death

Among those who were shown the Paradise of Barzakh in this world are companions of the chief of the martyrs, Imam Husain (a.s.) to whom the Holy Imam had shown their places and stations in Barzakh.

In Biharul Anwar, Vol. 3, it is mentioned that Imam Baqir (a.s.) said, “No believer leaves this world unless, at his last moments, angels make him drink Kauthar water. Likewise no unbeliever dies, until he is made to drink Hameem (Hell water).

Barhut – A Sample of Hell in Barzakh

As stated earlier, ‘Wadius Salam’ (the Valley of Peace) is the abode of the fortunate souls who gather there and Barhut, which is a barren arid desert, is the place where dirty and evil souls are put to torture. It is a specimen of Hell of Barzakh. The following tradition makes the matter clearer:

One day a man went to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) the last messenger of God, and expressing his restlessness and anxiety, said, “I have seen a very strange thing.” The Holy Prophet asked, “What is it?” He replied, “My wife became seriously ill. People told me, ‘If you bring water from a well situated in the Vale of Barhut, her illness can be cured.’ (Some skin diseases are cured by mineral waters).

So I got ready and proceeded towards that valley with a skin to fill that water and also a cup for fetching it from the said well. There I saw a very frightening forest. Despite being afraid, I gathered courage and went in search of that well (At last I found it). Suddenly I heard the clanking of a chain from above. That chain came down. I saw a man caught in that chain requesting me to give him some water as he was dying of thirst.

When I raised my head to offer him a cup of water I saw that he was fastened to that hanging chain. Whenever I tried to give him water he was dragged up to the red-hot sun. Then I tried to fill my bag with water. That man was again lowered by the dangling chain suddenly and complained bitterly about his deadly thirst. I tried to hand over the cup to him, but again he was pulled up right up to the sun. It happened for the third time too.

At last I tied my water bag and could not give any water to him. I have become terribly frightened by observing all this and have come to your honour to ascertain the reason of all this.” The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) replied, “That unfortunate man is Qabil, son of Adam (a.s.). He had killed his brother Habil.

“Then his mind facilitated to him the slaying of his brother so he slew him; then he became one of the losers.” (Surah Maidah 5:30)

He will remain in this condition of torture till the day of Judgement and will finally fall in the painful punishment of Hell.”

Reason Perceives Resurrection and Good and Evil

Among the glories and signs of intellect that the Almighty Allah has bestowed to man is that he can understand his Maad (Hereafter). In words of an elder, just suppose that even if divine revelation had not been there, human intellect would have been able to realize Maad.

There should be an aim to the life of the world in which a person should be able to reach up to his success and he can understand what is good and what is bad for him in an accurate way and he should be able to perceive what is best for him. Since evil is nothing in reality. Whatever is there is absolute good; that they may be able to recognize the good acts. They should be able to distinguish between good and bad deeds.³

Decrease or Increase of Intellectual Reason

Therefore intellectuals say that there are two sections of intellect: theoretical and practical intelligence. Theoretical perceptions are same, which are the Almighty Allah, His names, qualities of perfection, which are related to things. Theoretical intelligence is discrimination of good and evil deeds through which a person knows what is good and what is bad, so that he may perform it and what is evil, so that he may leave it.

He should be able to understand his fortune and misfortune and know the flow of his life that it is a natural issue, which the Almighty Allah has placed in the primary make up of man. Reason is given to all human beings generally. Some are given more. It increases with use. Thus, in the beginning all are given this capacity equally and if it is kept aside and not acted upon, it would go on decreasing. It is such creation that the Almighty Allah has included in the make of every human being.[4](#)

In order to recognize resurrection and hereafter, one should adopt the mediums of divine grace like the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) and the Holy Imams (a.s.); he should also adopt practical intelligence.

What have you Prepared for Your Hereafter?

There is no house for man after his death, but that which he has prepared for himself and to what extent he has prepared the provisions. If he has based it on truth and goodness, he would be in a happy condition. One who prepares fragrance for his grave would take advantage it himself, but if a person has sent fire to it, he would get his garments, house and food burnt.[5](#)

Paradise of Barzakh and Paradise of Qiyamat

Allamah Majlisi (r.a.) in commentary of Al-Kafi has mentioned a very appropriate interpretation of 'Jannataan' (two paradises). It is possible that one Paradise might be in Barzakh. When the soul of a believer is removed, he is placed in the comfort and blessings of the Paradise of Barzakh, which is a garden of different types of vast bounties. Various evidences regarding the Paradise of Barzakh are mentioned in the Holy Quran.[6](#)

Doubt about Barzakh

Atheists have expresses a doubt regarding the world of Barzakh, which is rarely heard today, but its origin is present from before. Regarding the interrogation of Munkir and Nakeer they say: If we place something in the mouth of the deceased and then when we reopen the grave and check, we find that thing intact. If the deceased had been interrogated, his mouth would have moved and that thing would not have remained in the mouth, whereas we see that thing remains as it is in the mouth of the deceased.

The atheists also say that we don't see any sign of the getting up of the deceased, or they say that after death, the human body gets decayed and is completely destroyed. Thus what is the meaning of the world of Barzakh till Judgment Day? It is mentioned in confirmed traditional reports that the grave of a believer is extended to seventy yards or a distance of seventy years.

There are clear verses in the Holy Quran that what should be done to rebut these doubts. Its reply is that if man is aware of the terminologies of traditions and traditional reports this matter would be solved for him.

When Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) was explaining the chastisement of the Hereafter, the narrator asked: What is the time of Barzakh? He replied: It is from death to the Judgment Day and the depth of the grave is one of the stages of the world of Barzakh and soul.

The world of Barzakh does not come to an end with the decaying of the body. The Late Allamah Majlisi used to say: There is a category of traditions, in which grave is mentioned. In those traditions, grave implies Barzakh and not the material grave. And that which is mentioned in traditional reports that the Almighty Allah expands the grave of the believer, it implies the spiritual world of Barzakh.

The darkness of grave is not material and bodily and alas if it had only been material.

Dream is a Small Example of Barzakh

In Usul Kafi it is mentioned that human beings did not have dreams since creation. When the Almighty Allah appointed a prophet on his nation and he preached to them about Barzakh, questioning of the grave and reward and punishment, the people did not believe him and they used to say how a dead man can be questioned. After death, we would be mixed up with dust. Thus the Almighty Allah bestowed dreams to all the people of that nation.

That Prophet told them that it was an example of the world of Barzakh and hereafter. It is mentioned in traditional reports that the soul of the believer remains in the neighborhood of Imam Ali (a.s.) in Wadius Salam and the soul of the disbeliever is lodged in Wadi Barhut.

Some Examples

It is mentioned in Safinatul Bihar, Vol. 2, Pg. 568, that when on the orders of Muawiyah, they were digging to make a road through Mount Uhad, a spade struck the finger of His Eminence, Hamza and it began to bleed. In the same way, Amr bin Jamuh and Abdullah Ibn Amr, both of whom were from the martyrs of Uhad and their graves lay on way of digging.

When they were taken out of the grave, both their corpses were fresh. Another grave was dug up and both were buried in the same grave. A period of forty years had passed from the time of their martyrdom till the period of Muawiyah.

In other words, the cause of belief in the world of Barzakh and reports from the death of the human soul till Judgment Day all these are divine revelation, which have reached us through the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.s.) and Ahle Bayt (a.s.). Thus, as we mentioned before, in the same way the angels, Qiyamat, Siraat, Balance of deeds, Paradise and Hell; we have unseen belief in all these and its cause is also divine revelation.

Every sort of ignorance about reward or punishment of Barzakh can be cured. In order to remove the doubts of the deniers that how is it possible for souls to be in punishment and we should be unaware of

it we can say that all these are good and bad dreams. There is noise and action in dreams, but the people around the dreamer cannot see or hear it.

Sometimes they see a deceased person in dream that he is in a good condition and in comfort. Sometimes they see that he is in bad circumstances. But all such dreams cannot be relied upon, because many dreams are result of worries and mental turmoil and some are confusing and complicated and needful of interpretation.

Some parts of true dreams are related to the condition of the deceased at that particular time. For example, if someone sees a deceased in a comfortable position, it cannot be said that he would remain in that same condition, because it is possible that at that time he might have been receiving the rewards of his good deeds and obedience of God and the next moment he might be punished for his evil acts.

In the same way, the opposite is also possible. That is if we see a deceased in throes of death and illness, it cannot be that he would remain in that condition forever. Because it is possible that the circumstances of that time might be due to his sinfulness and later he might be rewarded for his good deeds.

“So he who has done an atom’s weight of good shall see it. And he who has done an atom’s weight of evil shall see it.” (Surah Zilzal 99:7-8)

The aim of this is that if we see a deceased in a bad condition, we should not be aggrieved; on the contrary, we should assume that he would obtain pleasure later on. We should save him from supplications, Sadaqah and good deeds on his behalf. And if we see a deceased in happy circumstances, we must not be sure that he would be as such forever and that he is not in need of the help of the living ones.

Another aim of this long discussion is that we should come to know that our condition will be revealed to others to a lesser extent; hence it would be difficult for them to know how we can be benefited; hence it would be better that as long as we are alive, we should prepare for the Hereafter in the best way and as much as possible, we should perform good deeds.

We should especially check our past deeds and make as much amends as much as is possible and through charity and good deeds, provide the provisions for the hereafter.

Death Terminates the Relationships

Another important thing, which we should know is that among the hardships of Barzakh, is to feel nostalgic for the separation of worldly things and relations. When a person is separated from someone with whom he has developed attachment, he feels aggrieved. For example if one is having a lovely wife, how terrible he would feel when he dies.

Sometimes such incidents cause people to lose their sanity. A twenty year old son of a relative of ours became ill with smallpox and was near death. When the father saw the condition of his son, he performed Wudhu' and started to supplicate the Almighty Allah: O God, if You want to take away my son, take me away before him. Thus his supplication was accepted. He died and the son survived.

But what death is? Death means the separation of what we love. To feel aggrieved in the separation of wife, children and wealth. This is also a kind of a punishment of Barzakh, whose example is present in this world as well. In other words, man becomes addicted to opium, cigarette and newspaper.

But there would no such activities in Barzakh. That is man should break away his attachment with such things before his death, so that he should not become restless in their separation in Barzakh.

Qays bin Asim arrived in Medina with some people of his tribe, Bani Tamim to meet the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.s.). He met the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) and requested him to dispense some advice to him. [We should know that Qays was among the senior scholars of that time and before he embraced Islam, he was considered among the intellectuals of that period.] His Eminence said:

There is downfall for every honor and after life, there is death and there is a recompense for every act. The aim of this discourse is that you should not think that you can do whatever you like. Every act will be accounted for.

Only Actions Would be Present With You in Barzakh

That which is useful for man in Barzakh is his good deed, which is near to him and which he observes. If it is an evil deed, neither his protests would be accepted nor would he gain salvation.

His Eminence, Amirul Momineen (a.s.) says: A dying person looks at his wealth and says: I bore many hardships and grief to gather you. His wealth replies: You cannot get anything more than a shroud from me. Then he turns to his children and they also reply: We shall accompany you till the grave. After that he turns to his act. He says: I am always with you.

Be Patient on the Command of Allah

“And wait patiently for the judgment of your Lord, for surely you are before Our eyes.” (Surah Tur 52:48)⁷

That is: O Prophet, be patient for the command of your Lord, indeed you are under our surveillance...”

Here judgment implies giving respite to the idolaters and the inviting them to Islam by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) and also assuming patience on their harassments. He did not ask him to be patient on the harassment and tortures of the idolaters. On the contrary, He told him to be patient on the command of his Lord as the consequence of both is one and the same and also so that patience may be easy for His

Eminence, because Muhammad is the perfect servant and is the true devotee.

When his Lord orders him to be patient for His judgment, because He has decided to give respite to the idolaters for the time being. He says: You also must not refrain from inviting them to Islam. You must bear hardships and discomforts; then patience would become easy for you, especially because of the words of 'our eyes'.

In other words, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) remained in Mecca for thirteen years and bore hardships and pains for the sake of Almighty Allah, till he can take revenge from them in Badr. Because if it is decided that the Almighty Allah should not give respite to them and the liars cause harassment to him and die, the divine call would have remained without conclusion.

On the contrary, respite has to be given for a long period of time, so that some of them might accept faith and the proof may be exhausted for those who are insistent on disbelief. Such had been divine practice with regard to all prophets; on the contrary He even gives respite to the sinners.

It is mentioned in traditional reports that when Prophet Musa (a.s.) cursed Firon, he died only after forty years. The

Almighty Allah gives respite, but there are very few who take advantage of that respite to reform themselves.⁸

Your Soul Asks for Nourishment in Barzakh

Come make arrangement for that real elegance, the elegance, whose origin is Aale Muhammad (a.s.). No problem if there is no Sun, Moon and earth in the hereafter; but the elegance of Muhammad should be there and one who becomes a true follower of Muhammad would have the elegance of the soul and not mere material elegance. Do not oppress yourself so much and do not become oblivious of your soul.

So many comforts and facilities are there only for the physical body; do something for your grave as well. Not the body, on the contrary your soul asks from nourishment in Barzakh; it asks for clothes. It is regretful that if your garments are of fire; if you can see how terribly the fire surrounds you; you will lose your senses. The fire engulfs you.

O Supporter of Religion, Come to Barzakh Paradise

"It was said: Enter the garden." (Surah Yasin 36:26)

Regarding the above verse, commentators have said that just as a prophet was killed, immediately his soul was addressed: enter Paradise; the command of the mercy of God has come; enter the divine garden, however, here the implication is about the Paradise of Barzakh and not the Paradise of hereafter and Qiyamat. The Paradise of Barzakh is there from the time of the death of man to Judgment Day. That

is Barzakh is there since the moment there is separation between the body and soul.⁹ Since the time of death till Judgment Day Barzakh is such a medium, in which there are neither the filths like that of the earth nor the pleasures of Paradise; on the contrary, it is within the limits of moderation. Barzakh is present now also and it is present in the world; but in the unseen, this world is a matter and the perceptions are concealed.

Our material body cannot see it. Pay attention at this moment: air is present and the compound body is also there, but the eye cannot see it, because it is subtle. It is the defect of our and your eyes, which cannot see anything other than matter. After this body is destroyed, the body of Barzakh is capable of seeing, because it is not material. Whatever the Almighty Allah has promised in the Holy Quran about the Paradise of Hereafter is mentioned about the Paradise of Barzakh as well.

So as soon as the soul is separated from the body, it is given glad tidings to enter Paradise. All the sins of a martyr are purified. There is no good greater than martyrdom.¹⁰ Paradise of Barzakh is there for a believer from his death till Judgment Day. They eliminated the believer of Aale Yasin; martyred the supporters and helpers of the Prophet; they were told: Enter Paradise.

When they entered Paradise, they remarked: O would that my people had known; of that on account of which my Lord has forgiven me and made me of the honored ones! It is true that prophets and divine missionaries are our well-wishers and other than being concerned for our well-being, they do not have any other aim, in spite of the fact that they were tortured and killed.

Yet they did not lay curse on their enemies. On the contrary, they continued to exhort the people to the path of righteousness. If only these foolish and ignorant people had understood something from it. We had said that the Paradise of Barzakh is implied; which is there from death to Judgment Day.

If he is a believer, but has also committed sins, and he dies without repenting, according to the duration of his life, the reward and punishment is of Barzakh till his decision is over. Sometimes he is purified of his sins in this Barzakh only.

When he enters the fields of Mahshar, there is nothing to account for. Some commentators have said: In the verse of:

“It was said: Enter the garden.” (Surah Yasin 36:26)

First information is given about the killing of that believer. Then He says: They were asked to enter Paradise...Why killing is not mentioned here? It is so, because death was already mentioned before. In the same verse:

“And We did not send down upon his people after him...” (Surah Yasin 36:28)

...it is concluded from the words of ‘after him’ that it was after death.

Now it is not necessary to say that he was killed.

“Alas for the servants! There comes not to them an apostle but they mock at him. Do they not consider how many of the generations have We destroyed before them, because they do not turn to them?” (Surah Yasin 36:30–31)

Human Soul Exposes Realities in Barzakh

It is mentioned in the verse of:

“Alas for the servants...” (Surah Yasin 36:30–31)

...that human soul indeed perceives the realities in Barzakh and Qiyamat. Whatever was previously concealed from them is exposed. Those who ridicule the prophets and their followers; those make fun of the callers of creatures to the hereafter; how regretful and painful would be exposure of reality for them? In the Holy Quran, Qiyamat is mentioned as ‘the day’, ‘day of tasting’ ‘Judgment Day’ ‘day of happening’. In Qiyamat, there would be no sun like it is there in the earth. [11](#) There will be no sun and moon in the field of gathering (Mahshar).

No Light Would Shine in Barzakh, Except the Elegance of Muhammad

Thus, on the basis of this why is it called ‘the day’? That is light as opposed to the night, which is dark in the world. Its reality is hidden and its inside is concealed. Reality is not visible. Since the first day of death, there is actual dawn of reality to realize the facts.

For example, no matter how much you endeavor, you cannot gain the recognition of Amirul Momineen (a.s.), because he is concealed. In the beginning of death, when your eye of Barzakh opens up, as long as you wish you can understand the loftiness and greatness of Imam Ali (a.s.).

The powerful hand of God, bounties of Allah on the righteous people and divine punishment is for the evil persons. [12](#) Thus, there is night since birth till the time death and after death there is day and exposition of reality. See what calamity has befallen those who ridiculed the holy prophets. When they saw scholars and practical doers of good, how they looked upon them with disdain and made fun of them. In what punishment are they involved today?

A Point Regarding Grave and Barzakh

Grave is the noun of place, meaning place of sleep. On Judgment Day, when the dead rise up their heads from the grave they would say: Who has made us to arise from our place of sleeping, whereas they were under punishment in Barzakh? Whoever died was in Barzakh and he was rewarded and

punished till he reaches the true Paradise and Hell. Whatever sin a man commits; its repercussion catches up with him. Sometimes man is purified in this Barzakh and it is due to this that it is referred to as the place of repose.

We are asleep in this world and when we enter Barzakh, we in fact enter the state of wakefulness, because in comparison to the earth, the power of effect of Barzakh is much more. All the living beings are asleep; when they die, they will be awake. This traditional report is quoted from Amirul Momineen (a.s.) regarding those who have had true dreams of death. Many such examples are mentioned in the book of Dastanhai Shaguft. In the same way, in Darus Salam, Haji Noori has also mentioned some evidences.

In Relation to Barzakh, Qiyamat is Waking Up from Sleep

Thus Qiyamat with relation to Barzakh is waking up from sleep. Its real effect is present in Qiyamat. Barzakh: whether its reward or punishment; both are within the limits of moderation. With relation to earth everything is wakefulness; but with relation to life after death, it is sleep. Therefore, when they will be raised from the grave, they would say: Who has awakened us?

When they notice a spark of Hell, it would seem to be a flame. On one side there would be severe angels to herd the creatures to accounting and on the other side black faces would be seen. ¹³ They will see some strange things, which were not even present in Barzakh. It would so shocking that all would be crouching. ¹⁴ All would be entreating: O Lord save me; except Prophet Muhammad, who would be saying: O Lord, help my Ummah. All would be bewildered.

Pregnant females would suffer miscarriages due to fear. The nursing ladies would become oblivious of the children they had been nursing. They would see people in a stupor, whereas they would not be intoxicated. Divine punishment is very severe indeed. ¹⁵ With regard to Qiyamat, we hear that no matter if a person is involved in the punishment of Barzakh, but what is the punishment of Barzakh?

The sting of a mosquito is nothing in comparison to the sting of a scorpion. Yes, it is the same prophetic promise, which he saw and verified as true.

A House, Which Murdered its Occupants

Agha Sibt has narrated that the Late Sayyid Ibrahim Shustari, who was a congregation leader of Ahwaz, was an extremely pious man. After marriage, he became a victim of extreme poverty and was even unable to bear the expenses of his family. At last he went to Najaf Ashraf and lodged with a student of Shustar in a Madressa.

After some months a caravan arrived from Shustar. People informed Sayyid Ibrahim that his wife and parents had also arrived in the caravan and they were extremely worried about him.

He was very much worried, because at that time he neither had the means to afford them shelter nor means to feed them. In any case, he started searching for accommodation. Someone directed him to a shopkeeper, who was having the keys to a vacant house. He said: Yes, the house is vacant; but whoever has stayed in that place was involved in misfortune and died a premature death.

The Sayyid said: What difference does it make? Even if I die, it would be better than this life of poverty. If I were to die, I would get rid of my deprivation sooner. So he took the keys and went to see the house. He found that it was extremely dirty having cobwebs in every room, which showed that no one had lived in it since years.

After cleaning up the place, the Sayyid lodged his family members in it. When they went to sleep at night, suddenly the Sayyid saw a person wearing an expensive head gear appear and mount his chest with full force, saying: Sayyid, why have you trespassed my house, I will strangle you this moment. Sayyid said: I am a Sayyid and I am a descendant of the Prophet. I have not committed any sin. The Arab said: Why have you occupied my house? The Sayyid said: I will do as you say; and I seek your permission to live here.

The Arab said: All right go down to the cellar and clean it up. And when you remove the asbestos sheet, you will notice my grave. Clean up the grave and recite the Ziyarat of Amirul Momineen (a.s.) every night [apparently he said: Ziyarat Aminullaah]. And you must recite Quran daily to such an extent. And then I will have no objection if you live in this house. The Sayyid says: I did as he had directed. Cleaned up the cellar and reached till the grave and cleaned it as well.

Every day I recited Ziyarat Aminullaah and the Holy Quran. But I was still in difficult financial position. One day I was in the holy courtyard of Amirul Momineen (a.s.) when a person asked about my well-being. About whom I later learnt that he was an influential businessman related to an acquaintance of mine.

He then paid me a sum of money according to the number of my dependents and also fixed a monthly stipend. In other words, my financial condition improved and my life became comfortable.

Like other incidents, this story also proves the endurance of the soul in Barzakh. It also shows that souls are attached to the place of their burial (their grave). The explanation of this point is that because the soul remains with the body for years and acts through it and gains recognition and performs acts of divine obedience through it.

It has served through it and bore hardships in its training and development. According to scholars the relationship of the soul to the body is like the relationship of the lover and the beloved.

When he dies, he would not completely sever relations with it and wherever the body is kept, it will keep it under surveillance. Thus if he sees that the place has become a garbage heap or a place of sin and dirt, it becomes extremely distraught.

It expresses displeasure. Indeed the hatred of souls is very effective, thus it was mentioned in this story that those who lived in such a house; according to their mistaken notion they said that the house was unlucky. But if one keeps his grave clean and performs good acts like recitation of Quran etc. he would remain happy.

Hence it was said about the Sayyid that what a nice reward he earned due to the blessings of Ziyarat and recitation of Quran. [16](#)

A Miracle of Imam Musa Kazim (a.s.) Regarding Barzakh

Please pay attention to this incident. Kashful Ghumma, which is a reliable reference book of Shia it is mentioned in the chapter of miracles of the seventh Imam, Imam Musa Kazim (a.s.) that a vizier of Abbaside Caliph possessed much wealth and power.

He was always busy in official affairs and was deeply devoted to the Caliph. When he died, the Caliph acknowledged his valuable services and ordered that he should be buried in the mausoleum of Imam Musa Kazim (a.s.) next to the holy grave.

The caretaker of the tomb was a pious and a righteous man. He went to sleep in the chamber of the grave at night. He saw in dream that the grave of that vizier split and fire arose from it. Along with the stench of the burning of bones, smoke came out of it, till the whole mausoleum was engulfed in smoke and fire.

Imam (a.s.) was standing on one side and addressing the caretaker in a loud voice: Tell the Caliph that he has caused distress to me by burying this oppressor here.

The caretaker awoke in terror and wrote to the Caliph whatever he had witnessed. That same night the Caliph came from Baghdad to Kazmain. He got the holy mausoleum vacated and ordered the opening up of the grave and taking out of the corpse to bury it somewhere else. When the grave was dug up before the Caliph nothing, but ashes of a charred body were found.

Questions about Barzakh

A senior Sadaat scholar, who was not prepared to disclose his name, writes that when I saw my father in dream I asked him about the questions which he was posed and heard his replies, which are as follows:

The souls, which are involved in punishment in Barzakh; what kind of hardships do they suffer?

Reply: It is like you enter a mountain pass and all around there are high mountains, which you are incapable of scaling; in those circumstances, a ferocious wolf starts chasing you and there is no way to escape.

Have the charitable and good deeds that I have performed on your behalf reached you?

Reply: All of it has reached me, but I will explain to you its details through example.

When you are in crowded public hot bath, where it is difficult to breathe due to smoke and crowd, in such a situation a corner of the bath opens up and cool air reaches you; how nice would you feel? Thus same is our condition at the time you send some gifts to us.

When he saw the body his father in health and radiance and only found the lips injured and smeared with blood, he asked the reason for it and said: If I perform a good deed, would the injuries of your lips be cured?

Reply: Its cure is only with your respected mother, because it is due to the insult I committed on her; because her name is Sakina and whenever I called her, I used to say: Sakku Khanam and she was displeased with it. If you can make amends on my behalf with her, there is hope I would be cured.

The respected narrator said: I related the whole incident to my mother. She replied: Whenever your father called me, he referred to me as Sakku Khanam in a ridiculing way. I was extremely angry at that, but I never expressed any displeasure and did not utter a single letter against him, but since at this moment he is in pain and distress, I will forgive him and pray for him with absolute sincerity.

These three questions and replies contain many subtle points to understand which is very important. I explain them to the readers in brief.

Good Traits of Character are Beautiful Forms in Barzakh

It is proved from logic and textual evidences that man is not destroyed with death. On the contrary, his soul leaves his material body and is joined to a subtle body and is accompanied with all senses that it possessed in the world: sight and hearing, joy and sorrow, which are more severe and powerful than the world, because the facsimile body is at the peak of subtlety, so the material eyes cannot see it. As if it is lesser than the material body, like the air; although that body is a compound, but since it is subtle, it cannot be seen.

From death till Judgment Day; this condition of soul is called as facsimile world and world of Barzakh. [17](#) The point to be reminded is that those who have departed from this world with fortune, in Barzakh they would witness their good traits of character and good moral acts and gain advantage from them like the unfortunate souls will be regretful and punished, because of its bad character and acts and see it in the worst and horrifying forms and wish to get away from them, but they would not be able to get away.

Thus in the words of the scholar quoted above; it is akin to being chased by a ferocious wolf to escape which is impossible. Pay attention to this holy verse:

“On the day that every soul shall find present what it has done of good and what it has done of evil, it shall wish that between it and that (evil) there were a long duration of time; and Allah makes you to be cautious of (retribution from) Himself; and Allah is Compassionate to the servants.” (Surah Aale Imran 3:30)

It is one of the graces of the Almighty Allah that He has warned about the pitfalls of the hereafter in this world only, so that His servants may not be involved in any hardship and difficulty. [18](#)

Dog on the Bier

The pious personality, late Dr. Ahmad Ahsan, who lived for years in Kerbala Moalla, in his last days, he was a caretaker of the Qom mausoleum. He died there and was also buried in the same place. He has narrated an incident of Kerbala, which he witnessed twenty-five years ago. One day he saw a bier being carried to the tomb of Imam Husain (a.s.) to get blessings from it.

He also started walking with the bier. Suddenly he saw a dark and horrible dog perching on the coffin. He says: I was shocked and in order to find if other people were also seeing it, I asked a person walking to my right: What type of cloth it is on the coffin.

He replied: It is a Kashmiri shawl. I asked him if he was able to see something else. I posed the same question to a person walking to my left. But he also replied in the same way. Thus I understood that except from me, no one was seeing that scene.

When they reached the courtyard of the mausoleum, I found that the dog separated from the coffin. When they brought the coffin out again after encircling the Zari, I saw that dog on the coffin once more. I accompanied the corpse to the graveyard to see what unfolds. I saw the dog with the corpse all the time. When they started to bury the corpse that dog also disappeared from my sight into the grave.

Character of Man in Barzakh

The example of this incident is given by Qadi Saeed Qummi in Arbeenat, quoting from Shaykh Bahai (a.r.). Its gist is that a scholar and pious man was the caretaker of the Isfahan cemetery. Once Shaykh Bahai came to meet him. The Shaykh said: I saw a strange spectacle that day. I saw people arriving with a corpse, which they buried at so and so spot and then they went away from there.

After some time a nice smell was perceived from there and it was not from the fragrance of this world. I looked around myself to find out its origin. Just then I saw an extremely beautiful form, which went near the grave and went out of sight. Not much time later I perceived a very severe stench, which was worse than all the stinks of the world.

When I looked around, I saw a dog ambling to that grave and as soon as he reached the grave, he disappeared. I was confused and astounded. Just then I saw a youth in an injured condition and he was

returning from where he had come. I followed him and asked him to explain his condition.

He said: I was the good deed of this corpse and was appointed to be his companion; and the dog which you saw were his bad deeds. Since they were more in number, they were able to dominate me and did not allow me to remain with that deceased and they expelled me.

The Shaykh says that this incident is true, because it is our belief that in Barzakh, the deeds of man assume a form according to their being good and bad. Their personification is a confirmed fact.

Therefore, our elders have said that on Judgment Day, when the veil is moved aside and the realities are exposed,¹⁹ we would see the deeds as we have performed them.

He would see it and would be so ashamed that he would wish to be sent to Hell at the earliest so that he can escape this embarrassing situation.

Another interpretation of this is mentioned in traditional reports. When we shall be raised from the graves and the reality is exposed, everyone will realize what he has said with regard to the Imam and so much will they perspire due to embarrassment that some people would be drenched in it.

It is narrated from Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) that he said: There is no time for Zuhr, Asr, Maghrib, Isha and Fajr Prayer, in which angel does not call out: O people arise and extinguish through your prayers, the fire that you have ignited from your deeds.

The world is not worth that we should be released from slavery in the world. Apparent freedom is to end very soon. May Allah bestow true freedom; which is freedom from divine chastisement. It is possible that man may cross the Siraat Bridge easily. May the Almighty Allah be merciful on him and He allows a person to cross the Siraat Bridge like lightning. Yes: Remember me in the world and I would remember you in Siraat, Balance of deeds and in the hereafter.

Salaam (Safety) is Also a Name of God

The Almighty Allah commands His Messenger: When those who have believed in My signs visit you, you must say Salaam to them.²⁰

Widening of Grave and Barzakh

If you wish that your grave should be expanded, you should be concerned about your believer brother. The Almighty Allah expands the grave of some people to extent that an eye can see.

But this widening is different according to different people in grave, Judgment Day and Paradise.²¹

We will Plead Even if We are Involved in the Darkness of Grave

If we are involved in darkness in Barzakh, we would weep and wail against it: O Lord, even though we are sinners, we are devotees of Imam Ali (a.s.). Even if we fall down in the corner of Hell, according to Imam Sajjad (a.s.), we will inform the folks of hellfire that we are followers of Imam (a.s.) and lovers of his followers. We are devoted to Imam Husain (a.s.).[22](#)

It is mentioned in traditional reports that such people will tell the angels: Convey our greetings to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) and tell him about our circumstances.

The Honor of Imam Husain (a.s.) Would be Seen in Barzakh and Qiyamat

Honor belongs to the Almighty Allah and He can do whatever He wants. It is mentioned in traditional reports that Ubayy bin Kaab said: I came to the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.s.) and saw Imam Husain (a.s.) in his lap and His Eminence was kissing him.

I said: O Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.s.), are you very much fond of Husain?

He replied: The folks of heaven love Husain more than the folks of the earth. Indeed it is so. The folks of the earth are ignorant. The greatness and honor of Husain would become clear in Barzakh and Judgment Day. Debasing is for Yazid and his followers and is a share of every infidel and apostate.[23](#)

O man, you are not going to be annihilated. You are not like animals, grasses and plants; that your life should end with your death. Your body would be destroyed apparently, but your soul is enduring by the power of Allah. When you die, you will enter Barzakh, which lies between this world and Judgment Day and it is joined to Qiyamat.

The most important training is recognition of Islam. Man should recognize himself and come to know that he is different from other entities. He is subject to the grace and mercy of the Almighty Allah. [24](#) Allah, the Mighty and the High is merciful to the human beings. Everything is for his sake and this is the aim of creation. In the Holy Quran, there are many explanations of this point.

What a nice poem the late Shaykh Bahai has penned in this regard:

O centre of the circle of possibility O essence of the world of being

You are the king of the essence of life

You are the sun of the expressions of the ethereal world A hundred kingdoms and seas are there for your sake You are the Yusuf of Egypt, a survivor of the well

Till he became the ruler of a vast kingdom

He became the undisputed ruler of his kingdom²⁵

Barzakh and Saiqar, Worlds of the Life

The Holy Quran considers human life to be a continuation and after death, there is Barzakh.²⁶ It is a medium to the hereafter and is placed between the world and the hereafter. When soul is released from this material world, it enters another world. It is mentioned in Surah Mulk: That (it is) God, who created the kingdom and life.²⁷ It is not necessary for us to interpret this verse (and consider the creation to be destined and say that the Almighty Allah destined death and life).

Death is not an abstract matter. It is an existing matter. That is the perfection of soul is its salvation from the material body. That is freedom from a cage of the body. It is escape from the world of matter and difficulties of it. That is the completion of deeds and reaching upto the conclusion.²⁸

Celebration of the Entry of Believer in Barzakh

It is found in the biographies of two great scholars that they made a pact that if either of them died first he would inform the other about his circumstances in Barzakh. Thus when one of them died, he appeared to his counterpart in dream and the living friend asked: Why did you not remember us for so long?

He replied: Here we are making a long celebrating and we were busy in it. The living friend asked: What is that celebration for. The dead friend said: Do you not know that Shaykh Ansari has passed away from the world and he has arrived here. That is we are having a celebration since forty days.

Chastisement of Barzakh According to the Sin

“So on that day neither man nor jinni shall be asked about his sin. Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny? The guilty shall be recognized by their marks, so they shall be seized by the forelocks and the feet. Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?” (Surah Rahman 55:39–42)

This verse says that it is with contradiction of time and space that in the initial stages, no one would be questioned about his sins; like the stage of terror and fear. The stage of interrogation is only later and another reason of contradiction is that the Shia would not be asked about their sins on Judgment Day.

It is so because they have departed from the world after repenting for their sins, or they have suffered the punishment of their sins in Barzakh. Many traditional reports are recorded on this subject. It is possible that some sins might require them to wait for a thousand years in Barzakh or there might be

rights of others upon them, which they had not fulfilled. Let me mention an interesting story in this connection.

Punishment for a Year in Barzakh for Non-Fulfillment of Rights of Others

The Late scholar, Haji Noori has quoted in Darus Salaam from Late Sayyid Muhammad (who was among the great scholars of Isfahan) that he said: One year after the death of his father, he saw him in dream and asked about his well-being. He said: I was in punishment till today; I have just been released from it. The son asked in astonishment: How can you become liable to punishment? He replied: I was supposed to pay Mash-Hadi Reza Saqqa for reciting the Holy Quran eighteen times, which I forgot. I made bequest that it should be paid. I was in punishment since I died.

But yesterday Mash-Hadi Reza forgave me, so I got relief. Sayyid Muhammad saw this dream in Najaf Ashraf. So he wrote to his brothers and asked them to find out if father owed any debts, they should repay it.

They searched for Saqqa and asked him about it and he said: Yes, he owed me payment for reciting the Holy Quran eighteen times; since I was not having written proof, I did not make any demands even after he passed away for it would have not been of any use and the successors would have demanded written proof from me.

I began to think that even though the Sayyid made a mistake of not giving any document to me and did not even made a bequest about it; however for the sake of his great grandfather, I will forgive him so that he may not have to suffer divine chastisement. The sons of the late Sayyid offered to pay him for reciting the Holy Quran eighteen times, but Saqqa refused the money saying: I cannot take the money when I have condoned it.

The conclusion of this story is that delay and punishment of Barzakh is also connected to fulfillment of the rights of others; but the followers of Imam Ali (a.s.) would be clear of all sins in Barzakh.[29](#)

Punishment of Usurers in Barzakh

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) has also stated: “On the night of ascension (Meraj), I saw some people trying to stand up, but did not succeed because of their huge bellies, I asked, O Jibraeel , who are these people?”

Jibraeel replied, “They are those who have taken usury. Now they can only stand up like those who have been possessed by the Devils.”

The Prophet (s.a.w.s.) continues, “Then I saw them being herded on the path of the followers of Firon.

Seeing the extreme heat of the fire, they exclaimed. O God! When will Qiyamat be?” (It is clear that the fire mentioned in the tradition is of the punishment of Barzakh).

The liar has a human form only in this world. In Barzakh, he does not retain the human form. While describing the scenes of Meraj, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) told Janabe Fatima Zahra (s.a.):

“On the night of Meraj, I saw a woman whose head resembled a pig and her body was like that of a donkey. It was due to the fact that she spread discord and told lies.”³⁰

There are many traditions and incidents that prove that the deceased persons benefit from good deeds performed by living people on their behalf. The following is such type of incident mentioned in Darus Salaam of the late Agha Noori (r.a.):

The most pious and good-fearing Haji Mulla Ali Tehrani narrates from his father, the late Mirza Khaleel that he said, “In a public bath of Tehran was a servant whom people called by the name of ‘Paadu’, and he never performed prayers or fasted. One day he went to a mason and told him that he would like a bath (hamam) be constructed for him.

The mason wanted to know the source of his finance, but he was told to take the cash and build the hamam. Thus the mason built a hamam named after Ali Talib.” The late Mirza Khaleel says that when he was in Najaf Ashraf, he saw Ali Talib in his dream and that he had come to Wadius Salam. – The valley of peace (a part of Barzakh). “I was surprised and asked, “How did you reach this great position while you neither prayed nor fasted?”

The person replied, “O man! When I died, I was tied in iron collar and chains and was being dragged towards punishment when Mulla Muhammad Kermanshahi (a scholar of Tehran), May Allah bestow him a good recompense, appointed a particular person to perform Hajj in my place and made a substitute to pray and fast in my lieu.

He gave Zakat on my behalf and restored the rights of those whom I had oppressed. That is, he did not leave anything that could have been performed on my behalf and saved me from divine chastisement. May Allah give him a goodly reward.”

Then I was filled with terror and woke up. I was astonished at this dream. After a few days some people came from Tehran and I asked them about Ali Talib. Whatever they told me matched perfectly with what I had seen in dream. Even the persons who were appointed substitutes were same. I was extremely surprised at this dream.

[The World of Barzakh](#)

The Shaykh relates a tradition from Imam Ja’far Sadiq (a.s.) in which he says: “Indeed, between the world and the Hereafter (that is Barzakh) are one thousand valleys, among which the easiest is Death.”

The statement of the dead man to Prophet Isa (a.s.) that: "I was with them, but I did not share their deeds" is worth paying attention to, because it is necessary for the believer to refrain the sinners from evil deeds. And if they do not accept his advice, he should become aloof from them. If not, his end would also be like theirs. (Shaykh Bahai has supported his arguments with Quranic verses and traditions. For more details we may refer to his book, Arbaeen.)

Prophet Isa (a.s.) asked, "How was your love for the world, and to what extent were you fond of it?"

He replied, "We loved the world as much as a child loves its mother. When the love of the world used to be kind to us, we became happy; and when it turned away from us, we used to lament and become aggrieved." Prophet Isa (a.s.) asked, "How were you worshipping false gods?" He replied, "We used to obey the sinners."

"Then what was your ultimate end? Up to where has your Hereafter reached?"

He replied, "We spent the night in mirth, but when morning came, we were accosted by 'hawiyah' (fire of Hell).

Isa (a.s.) asked, "What is Hawiyah?" "It is Sijjin (another name of hellfire)." "What is Sijjin?"

"They are twisted mountains of fire, whose flames would flare upon us till the Day of Judgment."

"In such a condition, what did you say and what was the reply that you received?"

"We said, 'Send us back to the world so that we can perform good deeds.' We were told, 'You lie.'"

Prophet Isa (a.s.) asked, "Woe be unto you! Why did not others speak to me?"

He answered, "O Spirit of Allah! Their mouths are bridled with fire and very menacing angels are punishing them. I was living with them in the world, but I was not like them. But when the chastisement descended, I was also surrounded by it. I am hanging at the side of Barzakh with a single strand of hair. I don't know whether I would continue to hang like this or get salvation."

Prophet Isa (a.s.) turned to his companions and said, "O devotees of Allah! To eat dry bread with salt and to sleep on a bed of hay are great deeds. The success of the world and the Hereafter also lies in this."

The incident shows how deadly a sin, the love of the world is. In the light of this tradition it can be said that the love of the world hastens the descent of chastisement and causes everlasting destruction for a nation.

'Maad' begins with death and then passes through grave and then Barzakh and then Qiyamat Kubra (the great resurrection) and ends with either Paradise or Hell. It cannot be comprehended by the apparent senses and even though the occurring of the original 'Maad' or Resurrection is proved by logic or brain,

it is impossible for one to ponder in solitude over it and to understand what will happen after death, and through which stages one will have to pass.

For understanding this, there is no way except to rely on and take help from divine revelation, because man wherever he is, his power of understanding cannot cross the limits of his world. For example, it is impossible for a baby in the womb to get the idea of the outside world and to fathom its vastness. Similarly it is also beyond his powers to understand the endlessness of space and to know about the things therein.

Likewise, the man who lives in this world like a captive of matter and nature cannot have the ability to understand the world of angels and spirits, which is hidden from him. To reach that state will be possible only after getting freedom from this material world. In short, a man who is living in this material world can never be able to know the details of the world after death, unless he puts faith and trusts in the truths made known by the Creator of this Universe.

Characteristics of the Hereafter have Nothing to do With Intellect

So if anyone says, “It is far from my brain that such and such thing will happen after death,” then his saying so is absolutely unacceptable, because the conditions and events after death have no relation with the bodily brain.

Even if all the thinkers and philosophers join together and make collective efforts to understand the conditions beyond death (in the other world) through the materials available to them in this earthly life, they can never succeed in their maneuverings.

So if we do have any source, it is only those things and those words, which the Holy Prophet, Muhammad Mustafa (s.a.w.s.) and His Holy Progeny have shown to us. Hence, we also confirm them, as all of those great persons who are Infallible are those to whom God Almighty, the Lord of the Universe sends revelation.

Does a Dead Body Talk?

This discussion will prove that the doubts and distrusts expressed by some senseless people are totally baseless. For example, they say that the body of a man who has died is just like dust and stone or like dry wood and so how can it be questioned in a grave? In other words, can stones talk? If we fill up the mouth of a dead body with something and on the next day open his grave and see, we will find that nothing has gone out of that mouth.

Talking is not Limited to the Tongue

Possibilities and probabilities are essential to intellect. An intelligent man (having brain) hears a thing

and if it is impossible according to intelligence, he doubts its being either true or untrue. But if the one from whom he heard that thing is an infallible person, then the former will at once say that whatever he has said is true.

But if the hearer is unwise and ignorant, he would exclaim, “What kind of talks are these, which we fail to understand!” So not to accept the words of the infallible would be based on senselessness and foolishness. Such a fellow is like a quadruped, but has two feet whose senses are limited only to eating, sleeping and intercourse with the opposite sex.

Obviously if it is told to an ox or an ass that an angel appears before our eyes at the time of death or that there will be a questioning in our graves, they will not be able to agree, because their intelligence is limited and cannot go far from their bellies and genitals. Only a higher level of soul can accept such news and matters.

There is no scope here to deal at length and with full details. Therefore, we mention briefly what has been narrated by Ahle Bayt regarding what happens right from the first stage (death) up to the last one (Resurrection).

- [1.](#) Refer Qalbe Quran by Ayatullah Dastghaib
- [2.](#) Ayatullah Dastghaib (r.a.), the Martyr of the Niche, has explained these verses in detail, which are published in Nafse Mutmainnah
- [3.](#) Kitab Tauheed, Pg. 418
- [4.](#) Surah Rum 30:30
- [5.](#) Kitab Tauheed, Pg. 343
- [6.](#) Surah Yasin 36:26
- [7.](#) Qiyamat wa Quran, Pg. 124–131
- [8.](#) Surah Ibrahim 14:50
- [9.](#) Surah Mominoon 23: 100
- [10.](#) Safinatul Bihar, Vol. 2, Pg. 687
- [11.](#) Surah Takwir 81: 1
- [12.](#) Sixth Ziyarat of Imam Ali (a.s.).
- [13.](#) Surah Abasa 80:40
- [14.](#) Surah Jathiya 45:28
- [15.](#) Surah Hajj 22:2
- [16.](#) Dastanhai Shaguft, Pg. 300
- [17.](#) Surah Mominoon 23:100
- [18.](#) Dastanhai Shaguft, Pg. 312
- [19.](#) Surah Qalam 68:2
- [20.](#) Surah Hashr 59:23
- [21.](#) Razgoi Quran, Pg. 96
- [22.](#) Dua Abu Hamza Thumali
- [23.](#) Kitab Wilayat, Pg. 174
- [24.](#) Surah Isra 17:70
- [25.](#) Kitab Wilayat, Pg. 202
- [26.](#) Surah Mominoon 23:100
- [27.](#) Surah Mulk 67:2

[28.](#) Kitab Wilayat, Pg. 214

[29.](#) Behist Javidaan, Pg. 287

[30.](#) Uyun Akhbar Reza

Source URL:

<https://www.al-islam.org/fr/barzakh-purgatory-sayyid-abdul-husayn-dastghaib-shirazi/reward-and-punishment-barzakh#comment-0>