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## The Returning (Ma'ad)

Ma'ad is derived from the root word Aud, which means to return. Hence, the returning of the spirit (rooh) back to its body is called Ma'ad. Ma'ad is one of the fundamental principals of Islamic faith and belief in it is incumbent upon all Muslims. After death every soul shall arise to see the reward or retribution (as the case may be) of their deeds.

Ma'ad consists of stages Death (*Maut*), Grave (*Qabr*), Intermediate Stage (*Barzakh*), Resurrection (*Qayamat*) and Paradise (*Jannat*) or hell (*Jahannam*). Ma'ad cannot be perceived by the five senses of man, but can be comprehended by reasoning alone.

What happens after death? The Holy Prophet (s) through the medium of Revelation (*Wahy*) has explained it to us in detail. Man's senses have their own limitations beyond which it is not possible for him to understand. For example a child in the mother's womb cannot perceive the vastness of the outside world. In the same manner, a soul captivated by the influences of matter cannot easily understand the hidden world and its realities.

The knowledge of this unseen world is concealed from man and he can only understand it through the medium of the Holy Prophet (s) and his Vicegerents, the Holy Aimmah (a.s.). Hence to have a better comprehension of the hereafter, we have to rely totally upon them, because they are the inheritors of the knowledge of Allah and His Hidden Wisdom.

### [Is a person's body affected after death?](#)

Many are of the opinion that after death man's body becomes an absolute nothing like a dry wood; hence the question of reckoning in the grave does not arise. Such doubts are the outcome of sheer ignorance and lack of belief in the unseen (*Ghaib*). Speech is the effect of the tongue and movements are impressions of a living body. However, the spirit (*Rooh*) is motionless. Hence it is independent of movements, as a man's tongue or lips do not move during a dream. A person who is awake will bear witness to it. After awakening the person will narrate the discussions he had with people, he will also claim to have traveled far off cities, but his body in reality lay motionless on the bed all throughout the

night.

## Dreams (Ru'ya)

Imam Moosa al-Kazim (a.s.) states that in the former part of creation, man did not dream. Allah sent upon the people His Apostle to guide them towards virtue and warn against evil. The Prophet advised them that if they followed the Right Path as preached by Him, they would be successful and be rewarded in Paradise. And, if they erred and did not avoid sin, they would face tribulation in hell. They asked the Prophet as to how could they rely on something, which they had never seen. They said that they observed that after death a man's body became motionless and turned into dust; how could then he be rewarded or chastised for his actions.

It is after this incident that they started having dreams in which they witnessed Allah's rewards in Paradise and His wrath in Hell. They went to the Prophet and narrated this to him. The Prophet replied that same as in the dreams they were able to mete people, converse with them, and visit far off places, after death too they would still taste chastisement or reward (as the case may be) in Paradise or Hell, even if their bodies would have been reduced to dust.

## Death (Maut)

Scholars differ regarding the explanation of death. Some call it a continuous phenomenon (*Amre Wujoodi* – not the end of life), while others opine that it is terminal one (*Amre Adami* – the end of life). However, generally it is accepted that this is purely a bodily affair.

Regarding death it is said that, "It is a continuous process and the vice versa to life." The Holy Qur'an says.

***"Blessed is He in whose hand is the kingdom (of the heavens and the earth), and He has power over all things, Who created death and life that He may try you, (to prove) which of you is best in deeds." (Surah al Mulk, 67: 1-2)***

The above verse (Ayah) refers to the purpose of the creation of life and death. Non-existence is not the essence of creation. If death had been an ending process, the word "*Khaliq*" (Creation) would not have been used. Death in reality is the divorce of the spirit (*rooh*) from the body, and can be illustrated by many examples. It can be compared to a sailor estranged from his wrecked ship.

The spirit is a light, which illuminates the dark body and its components derive benefit from it. Whereas death is the estranger of this light from the body, leaving it again in darkness. It is not true that the spirit enters the body, because it is free to enter and exit. It shares a limited relation with the body, after which it leaves the body for immortality.

In short, the detachment of the spirit (*Rooh*) from the body is called death (*Maut*). It is incumbent upon

us to believe that death is a phenomenon solely governed by the will and command of Almighty Allah only, and He maintains the relation of the spirit to the body from mother's womb till the end. He is the Creator (*Khaliq*) of all things, and the Giver of life and death. The Holy Qu'ran says:

***“Allah takes the spirits (Rooh) at the time of their death.” (Surah az-Zumar, 39:42)***

Some ignorant people are of the opinion that the Angel of death (*Izraeel*) is an evil demon and an enemy who estranges us from our children and orphans them. But the reality is that he acts in accordance to the command of Allah only and has no personal choice in the matter.

## **Separation of the Spirit from the body**

It is narrated in the tradition of *Me'raj* that a plank is placed in front of *Izraeel*, on which names of all creatures are written. When Allah wills death of any one of His creatures, the name on the plank disappears, and *Izraeel* does the needful. It is possible that at one time death of more than one creature may be ordained. Just as many candles can be extinguished in a single puff, more than one spirit can be removed together. Surely Allah is the giver of death as stated in the Qur'an,

***“Say (O Prophet) the Angel of death who is given charge of you shall cause you to die. (Surah as-Sajdah, 32:11)***

In another verse it is stated.

***“Those whom the Angels cause to die while they are unjust to them selves.” (Surah an-Nahl, 16:28)***

*Izraeel* and his comrade Angels have been assigned the job of removing the spirits of creatures. When an army follows the commands of their king and conquers cities, it is said that the said army has conquered the said cities, but in reality conquest is a result of the king's military tactics and warfare. Many examples can be given to prove the above, but the fact is that this event is beyond comparison.

As Allah has created this world as a house of causes (*Darul Asbab*), He has also created a cause for death. Disease, murder, accident etc. are some of its causes. These act as reasons for the approach of death, if not there are instances of persons who recover even after a serious illness, while some die in a blink of an eye. These causes also do not have an independent option, unless attested by the command and will of the Almighty.

Spirits of some men are removed with ease while some experience severe difficulty. It is narrated in traditions (*Ahadees*) that during death some people feel as if their body is being cut asunder by scissors, or are being grinded in a mill, while some feel as if they are smelling the fragrance of a rose. It is stated in the Qur'an:

***“Those whom the Angels cause to die in a good state, saying – Peace be on you, enter the garden (of Paradise) for what you did.” (Surah an-Nahl, 16:32)***

It is not necessary that the spirits of all believers (*Mo'mineen*) will be removed easily. Even a believer who has done good deeds in his lifetime can experience difficulty during death. This acts as the punishment for sins he committed for which he is atoned for in this very world. While for a non-believer this difficulty is an extra punishment of Allah followed by the ones to come in the Hereafter.

***“But how will it be when the Angels cause them to die smiting their backs.” (Surah al-Muhammad, 47:27)***

It is also possible that a non-believer may not experience difficulty during death, this acts as reward for the good deeds he has committed which is compensated in this very world, leaving their scrolls of deed of any reward. In reality death is an unfortunate event for a non-believer even though he dies in comfort, while it is a blessing and felicity for a believer even though he experiences difficulty during it.

## **Love of world**

Hatred towards death and love of the world is the outcome of an ignorant person's mind that thinks that the happiness of this world is from his prosperity and good fortune. The world sated with numerous troubles and anxieties is out to end in misery and does not enjoy eternity, perpetuity and sincerity.

A poet has referred to this in the following words – “Do not give your heart to this world, for its example is of an unfaithful bride who has never loved you, even for a night.” The Holy Qur'an says that the love of this world is one of the characteristics of the disbelievers.

***“[the disbelievers] are pleased with this world's life and are content with it.” (Surah –Yunus, 10:71)***

In another verse, it is stated,

***“Are you contended with the life of this world instead of the Hereafter” (Surah al-Bara'at, 9:38).***

For the Jews it is said,

***“Every one of them loves that he should be granted a life of a thousand years.” (Surah a1-Baqarah, 2:96)***

There are many traditions detesting the love of world. The Holy Prophet(s) has said, “Verily the love of this world is the root cause of every evil.”

## Friendship with death

It is of utmost importance that man should hold death dear and consider it an opportunity of meeting with his Almighty, and not hate it and consider it as evil, but should take lessons from it. He should ask forgiveness from Allah for his sins and tame the rebellious self (*nafs*).

When the call of his Lord comes, he should welcome it with open arms accepting it to be a blessing from Allah. He should be contented with the decree (*Qadr*) of Allah. He should rejoice that shortly he would be taken to the presence of Ahlulbait (a.s.) and meet his deceased companions and other believer brothers. He should also not be disheartened by the delay in death but should consider it as an opportunity afforded by Allah to him to repent. This delay would give him a chance to gather provisions useful for his journey to the other world, for the journey is tiresome and full of dangerous valleys and difficult paths.

## Relating to the removal of the Spirit and its hardships (Sakarāt)

***“And the stupor of death will come in truth, that is what you were trying to escape.” (Surah Qaf, 50: 19).***

This stage is full of difficulties & troubles. On one hand a man feels pain, his tongue becomes motionless, his bodily components cease to function, while on the other hand there is weeping and wailing of relatives, grief of their separation, orphaning of children, and the sorrow of leaving behind hard earned wealth and enormous property for others to feast upon – the wealth which was sometimes gathered by usurpation or through illicit means. The dying man remembers his sins and regrets, but alas, the time (to repent) has passed and accounts closed.

Amirul Mo'mineen (a.s.) has said, “He (the dying person) regrets over his wealth which he gathered bearing hardships, and now he is being separated from it, leaving it to be feasted upon by his inheritors. His hard earned wealth is left for the use of others.” The dying person feels scared, for he is about to enter an unknown and unexplored world, and is all the more frightened when he witnesses the things which are totally new to him. The Holy Qur'an says,

***“Certainly you were heedless of it, but now we have removed from you your veil, so your sight today is sharp.” (Surah Qaf, 50:22)***

He feels the presence of Angels around him and wonders about what is in store for him. It has been narrated in traditions (Ahadees) that at the time of death, the Holy Prophet (s) and the Holy Aimmah (a.s.) come near the head of the dying person, who is able to see them.

It is narrated in third volume of 'Bihar-al-Anwar' that once Imam Ali ar-Ridha (a.s.) went to meet one of his companions (*Sahabi*) who was about to die. He looked towards the Imam (a.s.) and said, “I see the

radiant faces of your Grandfather (the Holy Prophet), your Father (the Commander of the faithful), your Mother (Hazrat Fatema), and the other Imams in your Ancestry. I also see your luminous face along with them.”

It is a fact that dying men have a glimpse of the Aimmah (a.s.), according to his love for and knowledge of them. For a believer (*mo'min*) their sight is a blessing from Allah, and for a hypocrite (*munafiq*) and disbeliever, it is a sign of Allah's wrath. In the Salutation (Ziarat) of Amirul Mo'mineen Ali (a.s.) we utter these words:

السَّلَامُ عَلَى نِعْمَةِ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْأَبْرَارِ وَنِقْمَةِ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْجَبَّارِ.

Peace be upon Allah's grace for the upright and Allah's chastisement on the tyrants.

The dying man is confused, because on one hand Satan (*Shaitaan*) with his companions tries hard to spoil his faith (*Eeman*), and on the other hand the thought of the arrival of the Angel of death makes him all the more puzzled. He wonders as to in what state would he (the Angel of death) come and how would his spirit be removed. The Commander of the faithful Ali (a.s.) says, “And when the signs of death approach, he knows not what will befall him.”

Shaikh Kulaini narrates from Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a.s.) who said that once Hazrat Ali (a.s.) was suffering from the ailment of the eye. The Holy Prophet (s) came to inquire about his health. He saw that Ali (a.s.) was in intense pain and was restless because of it. The Prophet asked him, “Is this anxiety the outcome of the ailment”? Hazrat Ali (a.s.) replied that, “I had never witnessed such a pain before.”

The Holy Prophet, in order to console him, said “O Ali! when the Angel of death comes to take the spirit of the disbeliever, he brings along with him a club of fire, by which he removes his spirit and the flames of hell scream at the dying man.”

The Commander of the believers sat upright and said, “O Prophet! Please explain to me the tradition (*hadees*), for I do not feel the pain anymore. Will the spirit of anyone from among your ummat be removed in the same manner”? The Holy Prophet replied, ‘Yes, three types of persons from among my ummat too will be subjected to this punishment (1) An oppressive (*Zalim*) ruler, (2) Those who unjustly usurp the rights of orphans, and (3) The bearer of false witness.”

Man due to difficulty or ease during death also sees the effects of his good or bad deeds, which he committed. There are also some who turn apostate during death due to some of their bad deeds.

**“Then evil was the end of those who did evil, because they rejected the communications of Allah and used to mock them.” (Surah ar-Rum, 30: 10)**

It has also been narrated that during death (*Sakarāt*) or afterwards, the following persons should not be

near the dying man: a woman in menses (*Haiz*) or irregular period (*Istahaza*), and a polluted (*Junoob*) person, because the Blessed Angels leave and the dying man falls into trouble. Shaikh Sadooq in his book *Ilalush Sharaye'* quotes Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a.s.) as saying, that woman in menses (Haiz) or a polluted person (Junoob) should not remain near the dying person, because the Angels feel disgusted because of it and go away.

In the book 'Darus Salaam', the great scholar Sayyed Murtaza Najafi quotes: Once an extreme epidemic broke in Iraq and Arabia. I was seated in the courtyard of the Shrine of the Commander of the faithful Ali (a.s.) with a distinguished Scholar (Aalim) Sayyed Muhammad Baqir Qazwini. He was distributing work among us for serving the people affected, when we saw a youth who was standing in the last rank and was struggling to come near the Sayyed, but could not do so because of immense crowd.

Suddenly the young man started wailing aloud, the Sayyed looked at him and told me to inquire the matter from him. I went to him and asked him the reason for weeping. He replied, "I desire that if I die in the epidemic, the Sayyed should recite the Prayer (Namaze Mayyit) over my dead body individually and not as combined with others as he does (due to many deaths in the epidemic). I returned to the Sayyed and narrated the matter to him. He promised to fulfill his desire.

Next day we saw an infant child who came crying to us. When we inquired of him he answered that he was the son of the youth who had come to us yesterday with a desire. He told us that he had become a victim of the epidemic and was about to die, and he was desirous of meeting the Sayyed. Some of us accompanied Sayyed Muhammad Baqir to meet the dying man.

On the way we met a pious man who was coming out of his house. When he saw us he saluted us, and asked us, as to where we were going. We answered that we were going to visit a believer who was in his last moments. With permission he accompanied us in order to share the reward (*sawab*). When we came to the house, Sayyed Muhammad Baqir entered the room first, then one after the other we entered there in. The dying man was pleased and signaled us to sit.

As soon as the pious man who had met us on the way entered, the dying man's color changed. His face turned pale and in rage signaled him to go away. He became restless as if some trouble had befallen him. We were all the more surprised when we learnt that the dying man did not even know him, whom we could assume to be his enemy. The man excused himself and went out but returned back after sometime.

This time when he entered, the dying person was pleased and welcomed him. After sometime we took permission to leave. On the way we asked the pious man the reason for the sudden change in the attitude of the dying man. He replied that he was in the state of pollution (*Junoob*), and was leaving his house with the intention of performing ceremonial bath (*Ghusle janabat*) in the public bath. He met us on the way, and not wanting to miss the opportunity of performing this noble task accompanied us. He said that when he first entered the house and saw the dying man's restlessness, he understood and left.

To make himself sure he returned back after having performed the ceremonial bath (*Ghusle Janabat*). He concluded that the dying man had come to know about his impurity because the blessed Angels had left him and he felt immense pain. (*Khazeenatul Jawaaher*)

## Those deeds whose performance eases death

Shaikh Sadooq quotes from Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a.s.) that he said, "If a person wishes that his last moments should be easy, he should maintain cordial relations with his kith and kin, and be kind to his parents. Whoever does so, death will be eased, and he will never fall prey to misfortunes in his lifetime."

It is narrated that once the Holy Prophet (s) went to see a youth who was in his last moments of life. He told him to recite *Kalamae Tawheed* (There is no God but Allah), but the youth could not utter it because his tongue had turned speechless. The Prophet repeated his order but with no avail. He repeated it twice but the youth could not answer.

The Prophet turned towards a woman who was sat near the youth's head and asked her if she was his mother. She replied in affirmative. He then asked her if she was unhappy with her son. She answered that she was certainly unhappy, but would forgive him if the Prophet commanded her to do so. The Prophet told her to forgive him. As soon as she forgave, the youth's speech returned and he recited the '*Kalema*'. The Prophet asked him as to what he saw. He answered that he saw an ugly looking man who had held him by the neck, and was trying to strangle him. The Prophet told him to recite the following:

O He Who accepts the little (deed) and overlooks the much (wrong)

يَا مَنْ يَقْبَلُ الْيَسِيرَ وَيَعْفُو عَنِ الْكَثِيرِ

Accept my little (deed) and overlook my much (wrong)

اقْبَلْ مِنِّي الْيَسِيرَ وَاعْفُ عَنِّي الْكَثِيرَ

You are certainly the All-merciful, the All-forgiving

إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الرَّحِيمُ الْغَفُورُ

When he did so, the Prophet asked him as to what he saw now. He answered that he saw that a handsome man had come to his rescue while the ugly man had turned back. The Prophet ordered him to recite the above du'a again and after having done so asked him what he saw. He replied that the ugly man had left, and the handsome youth was there by his side comforting him. He uttered these words and breathed his last.

The above narration should be understood well, and lesson should be learnt that parent's displeasure becomes the reason for anguish in death. Even after being a companion (*sahabi*) of the Prophet, and the Prophet being present besides him, the youth could not recite the '*kalema*' and was in agony till his mother forgave him.

Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a.s.) says, "For a person who gives clothes to his brother believer during the summer or in winter, it is incumbent upon Allah to present the dress of Paradise to him, make his end easy, and save him from the narrowness of the grave." The Holy Prophet (s) has said, "A person who offers to eat something sweet to his brother believer, the pangs of death will be easy on him."

## Those A'mal which prove beneficial during death and eases its tribulations

Reciting Surah al-Yaseen, Surah as-Saffat and the following supplication (du'a) eases the tribulation during death:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْكَرِيمُ الْكَرِيمُ

There is no god save Allah, the All-forgiving, the All-generous.

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ

There is no god save Allah, the Most High, the All-great.

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ رَبِّ السَّمَوَاتِ السَّبْعِ وَرَبِّ الْأَرْضِينَ السَّبْعِ

All glory be to Allah, Lord of the seven heavens and Lord of the seven layers of earth,

وَمَا فِيهِنَّ وَمَا بَيْنَهُنَّ وَمَا تَحْتَهُنَّ

and whatever is in, between, and beneath them,

وَرَبِّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ

and Lord of the Great Throne.

وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

All praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

Shaikh Sadooq narrates from Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a.s.) that he said, "For the person who fasts on the last day of the month of Rajab, Allah will save him from the after effects of death." Fasting on the 24th of Rajab carries great reward (*sawab*). One of its merits is that when the Angel of death comes to remove his spirit (*rooh*), he comes in the form of a handsome youth carrying a bowl of the pure drink (*Sharabe Tahoora*) and offers him to drink. The dying person does so and dies in peace.

The Holy Prophet (s) says that if a person recites four units (Rak'at) of Namaz on the night of 7th Rajab in a manner that in each unit (Rak'at) after Surah al-Hamd recites thrice Surah at-Tawheed, once Surah al-Falaq, and once Surah an-Naas. After finishing the Namaz, sends Salawat on Us:

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِ مُحَمَّدٍ

O Allah; (please) bless Muhammad and his Household

and recites ten times Tasbeehate Arba.

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ

All glory be to Allah;

وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ

all praise be to Allah;

وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

there is no god save Allah;

وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ

and Allah is the Greatest

Almighty Allah will offer him shelter under the Throne (Arsh), and give him reward of a person fasting in

the month of Ramazan. Till the time he finishes the prayers, the Angels pray for his forgiveness. Allah will ease the pangs of death on him, and save him from the squeeze in the grave (Fishare Qabr). He will not die until he sees his place in Paradise, and will be safe from the hardships of Resurrection (Qay'amat)

Shaikh Kafami quotes from the Holy Prophet (s), that he said that a person who recites the following supplication (Du'a) 10 times daily, Allah will forgive four thousand major sins (*Gunahane Kabeera*) of his, offer him refuge from calamities at the time of death, the squeeze in the grave (*Fishare Qabr*) and Qayamat. Allah will also save him from Satan (*Shaitaan*) and his army and, will pay off his dues and save him from troubles and anxieties.

أَعَدَدْتُ لِكُلِّ هَوْلٍ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

I am preparing “There is no god save Allah” to face any horror;

وَلِكُلِّ هَمٍّ وَغَمٍّ مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ

and “Only that which Allah wills shall come to pass” to face any grief and angst;

وَلِكُلِّ نِعْمَةٍ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ

and “All praise be to Allah” to face all graces;

وَلِكُلِّ رَخَاءٍ الشُّكْرُ لِلَّهِ

and “All thanks be to Allah” to face all items of luxury;

وَلِكُلِّ أَعْجُوبَةٍ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ

and “All glory be to Allah” to face any astonishing matter;

وَلِكُلِّ ذَنْبٍ أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ

and “I pray Allah’s forgiveness” to face any sin;

وَلِكُلِّ مُصِيبَةٍ إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

and “We are Allah’s and to Him shall we return” to face any misfortune;

وَلِكُلِّ ضَيْقٍ حَسْبِيَ اللَّهُ

and “Allah is sufficient unto me” to face any distress;

وَلِكُلِّ قَضَاءٍ وَقَدَرٍ تَوَكَّلْتُ عَلَى اللَّهِ

and “In Allah do I trust” to face any unexpected matter;

وَلِكُلِّ عَدُوٍّ إِعْتَصَمْتُ بِاللَّهِ

and “In Allah do I take shelter” to face any enemy;

وَلِكُلِّ طَاعَةٍ وَمَعْصِيَةٍ لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ

and “There is neither might nor power except with Allah, the Most High, the All-great” to face any act of obedience or disobedience.

The recitation of the following du’a seventy times carries great reward. The least of which is that he will be given glad tidings that he will enter Paradise:

يَا أَسْمَعَ السَّمِيعِينَ

O most Hearing of all those who can hear.

يَا أَبْصَرَ النَّاطِرِينَ

O best Seer of all those who can see.

يَا أَسْرَعَ الْحَاسِبِينَ

O swiftest in taking account.

يَا أَحْكَمَ الْحَاكِمِينَ

O Justest of all those who judge.

Shaikh Kulaini relates from Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a.s.) that he said that the one who recites Surah az-Zilzal in the Supererogatory Prayers (Nafela), Allah will save him from earthquake, lightening and the calamities of the land and sky. And during death He will send this Surah in the form of a handsome youth who will sit besides him and request the Angel of death (*Malekul Maut*) to remove his spirit with ease.

## Turning away from the Right Path at death

It means that a person could turn away from the Right Path (*Sirat al-Mustaqeem*) during death. At the time of death Satan (*Shaitaan*) comes to the dying man and tries his best to deceive him and puts him in doubt, so as to turn him away from faith (*Eeman*). Fakhru Muhaqqeqeen says that, 'A person who wishes to remain safe from the mischief of shaitaan at the time of death should preserve five proofs regarding the fundamental principals of faith (Usoole Deen) in his mind, and present it to Allah's custody, so that during death these may come as a handy against shaitaan's deceit. Then he should recite the following supplication (du'a):

اللَّهُمَّ يَا أَرْحَمَ الرَّاحِمِينَ

O Allah; the most Merciful of all those who show mercy;

إِنِّي أودَعْتُكَ يَقِينِي هَذَا وَثَبَاتَ دِينِي

I am depositing with You this faith of mine and my firmness on this belief;

وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ مُسْتَوْدِعٍ

And You are the ever-best of all those who keep deposits.

وَقَدْ أَمَرْتَنَا بِحِفْظِ الْوَدَائِعِ

And You have commanded us to keep safe deposits that are put with us;

فَرُدَّهُ عَلَيَّ وَقْتِ حُضُورِ مَوْتِي

So, (please) keep for me this deposit to give it back to me at the time of my death.

Fakhrul Muhaqqequeen also says that those who wish to remain safe from shaitaan's mischief of abandoning faith during death, should recite *Dua'e Adeelah* with a pure mind and heart. (*Du'ae Adeelah* is found in all the renowned books of du'as, and also in the first volume of Mafateehul Jinaan by the same author).

Shaikh Toosi relates from Muhammad b. Sulayman Daylami that I asked Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a.s.) that, "Some of your faithful followers (*Shi'ahs*) say that faith (*Eeman*) is of two types: (1) permanent and firmly established, and (2) One which has been given to us as a trust, and also can be ruined. Please give me a du'a through which my faith may also become permanent and firmly established." Imam (a.s.) told him to recite the following du'a after every obligatory prayer (Wajib Namaz):

رَضِيْتُ بِاللَّهِ رَبًّا

I have submitted to Allah being my Lord;

وَبِمُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ نَبِيًّا

and to Muhammad—may Allah send blessings upon him and his Household—being [my] Prophet;

وَبِالْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا

and to Islam being my religion;

وَبِالْقُرْآنِ كِتَابًا

and to the Qur'an being my book;

وَبِالْكَعْبَةِ قِبْلَةً

and to the Ka`bah being my direction;

وَبِعَلِيِّ وَلِيِّ وَإِمَامًا

and to Ali being my guardian and leader;

وَبِالْحَسَنِ وَالْحُسَيْنِ

and to al-Hasan and al-Husayn

وَعَلِيَّ بْنِ الْحُسَيْنِ وَمُحَمَّدِ بْنِ عَلِيٍّ

and Ali ibn al-Husayn and Muhammad ibn Ali

وَجَعْفَرِ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَمُوسَى بْنِ جَعْفَرٍ

and Jafar ibn Muhammad and Musa ibn Jafar

وَعَلِيَّ بْنِ مُوسَى وَمُحَمَّدِ بْنِ عَلِيٍّ

and Ali ibn Musa and Muhammad ibn Ali

وَعَلِيَّ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَالْحَسَنِ بْنِ عَلِيٍّ

and Ali ibn Muhammad and al-Hasan ibn Ali

وَالْحُجَّةِ بْنِ الْحَسَنِ

and the Argument [of Allah], son of al-Hasan,

صَلَوَاتُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِمْ أَئِمَّةً

Allah's blessings be upon them, being my leaders.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي رَضَيْتُ بِهِمْ أَئِمَّةً

O Allah: I submit to them as my leaders;

فَارْضِنِي لَهُمْ

so, make me accepted in their sight.

إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

Verily, You have power over all things.

## Those acts which prove beneficial at death

The best deed is to perform Prayers (*Namaz*) on time. It is related that there is no person in the east or the west on whom the sight of the Angel of death (*Malekul Maut*) does not fall at least five times during the time of Prayers. Whenever the time of death of that person comes, the Angel of death (*Malekul Maut*) recognizes him and helps him to recite Kalema and shuns away Satan (*Shaitaan*) from him.

It is narrated that once Imam Jafar as-Sadiq (a.s.) wrote to a person: “Do you wish that you may face death while on the Right path? And do you wish that your spirit (*Rooh*) may be removed from your body while you be performing good deeds? Then hold Allah’s orders dear to yourself and obey them, and do not waste the bounties offered by Him by being disobedient to Him, and do not take undue advantage of His Mercy, nor become arrogant. Honor those who follow Us and respect those who love Us.”

The recitation of Dua-e-Tamjeed (Du’a No. 11) of ‘*Saheefae Kamelah*’ is beneficial, so as to die while on the Right path and to be saved from turning away from it.

To recite the following supplication (dua) in the Namaz of Sundays in the month of Zilqad:

رَبَّنَا لَا تُزِغْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا

Our Lord! make not our hearts deviate after You have guided us aright,

وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً

And grant us mercy from You;

إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ

surely, You are the most liberal Giver.

The other beneficial acts are: To always recite Tasbeehe Fatema (a.s.) (34 times Allaho Akbar, 33 times Alhamdo Lillah, and 33 times Sub-hanallah), to wear ring of Carnelian (*Aqeeq*, specially of red color), it is better if the following is engraved on it:

مُحَمَّدٌ نَبِيُّ اللَّهِ وَعَلِيٌّ وَلِيُّ اللَّهِ

Muhammad is the prophet of Allah and Ali is the friend of Allah.

To recite Surah al-Mo'menoon every Friday, to recite the following supplication (du'a) seven times after morning (*Subh*) and evening (*Maghrib*) Prayers:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah; the All-beneficent, the All-merciful.

وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ

There is no might and no strength save with Allah, the All-high the All-great.

To recite 8 units (Rak'at) Namaz on the night of 22nd Rajab, in each unit (*Rak'at*) after Surah al-Hamd recites 7 times Surah at-Tawheed. After ending Namaz, recite 10 times 'Salawat', and 10 times 'Istighfar':

أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَأَتُوبُ إِلَيْهِ

I seek the forgiveness of Allah, my Lord, and I repent before Him.

Sayyed ibne Tawoos quotes the Holy Prophet(s) as saying, that if a person recites 4 units (Rak'ats) Namaz in the month of Sha'ban, such that in each unit (*Rak'at*) after Sura-al-Hamd recites 50 times Surah at-Tawheed, then during death his spirit will be removed with ease, and his grave will become spacious, and on the day of Qayamat when he comes out of his grave, his face will be shining bright like a full moon and Kalmae Shahadat will be on his lips.

The following incidents will prove helpful for further explanation:

### Incident 1

Fuzail bin Ayaz who was one of the great Sufi Saints, says that he had a pious and virtuous student. The student once fell ill, and when his death approached, Fuzail came to visit him and started reciting Surah al-Yaseen. The student requested Fuzail to stop reciting it. Fuzail then requested him to recite the Kalema, but he refused to do so and said that he was sick of it (Allah's refuge).

Fuzail was shocked and felt sad at the attitude of his pious student; he returned home and did not come

out for some days. One night he dreamt that the angels of wrath were dragging the same student to the fire of hell. Fuzail stopped them and inquired of his student as to why was he being treated in that manner, when he was always a pious and devout student of his. He asked him about what was the reason behind his painful end. The student replied that he had three bad habits in him:

1. Slander, (Woe be on every slanderer & defamer) Surah al-Humazah, 104:1
2. Jealousy, (Verily jealousy destroys faith (Eeman) in the same manner as fire destroys wood – Usoole Kafi), and
3. Creating mischief, (creating mischief is graver than murder) – (Surah al-Baqarah, 2: 217).

The student also told Fuzail that he once committed an act, which also proved harmful for his hereafter. He said that once he had a disease, and the doctor had prescribed him to drink wine for its cure. The doctor told him that if he did not do so he would never be cured. He did as the doctor said. Because of this and the other 3 bad habits his end was this painful, and he died in the state of shame.

For further explanation of the above narrative, I state below an incident quoted by Shaikh Kulaini, who quotes Abu Baseer as saying that, Once I was seated in the presence of Imam Jafar as-Sadiq (a.s.), when Umme Khalid binte Ma'badiyyah came and told the Imam (a.s.) that since she knew the prohibition of its use, she had come to the Imam (a.s.) to take advice regarding it. Imam Sadiq (a.s.) asked her, "What stopped you from using it"? She said that being one of His devout followers, she wished to be saved from shame, and on the day of Qayamat if she be questioned about it she could reply that its use (or prohibition) was ordered to her by the Imam (a.s.) himself.

The Imam (a.s.) turned towards me and said, "O Abu Muhammad! (referred to Abu Baseer), do you pay heed to what this woman says"? Then Imam Sadiq (a.s.) answered: By Allah I never give you permission to consume even a drop of it, for if you do so, you shall have to regret when your spirit reaches here." and Imam (a.s.) pointed towards his neck and repeated the sentence thrice, and took the woman's assurance that she had understood it well.

## Incident 2

Shaikh Bahai states in his book '*Kashkol*' that there was a person who had spent his entire life in pleasures and luxuries of this world. When he was about to die, the people gathered around him and requested him to recite the '*Kalema*'. But instead of the '*Kalema*' the dying man said: Where is that woman who in a state of exhaustion came to me and asked me the way to the public bath (named *Manjab*).

He said so because one day a virtuous and beautiful woman had come out of her house to have bath in a famous bathhouse named '*Manjab*'. She forgot her way and was exhausted searching for it. She saw this man standing near a door and asked him the way to it. He pointed towards his house and said that

the same was the bathhouse named 'Manjab'. As soon as the woman entered, the man locked the door and intended to have illicit physical relation with her. The virtuous woman sensed that there was no escape from his lustful fold, and hence pretended to be interested in him. She said that she was a state of uncleanness and was proceeding for a bath. She told the man to go and get some scent for her so that she may perfume and adorn herself for him, and also to get something to eat as she was exhausted.

The man was deceived by her words and went to the market to buy things. As soon as he stepped outside, the woman thanked Allah for preserving her chastity and ran away. When the man returned, he understood his mistake and regretted. Now when his end neared, he remembered this indecent act and instead of reciting the '*Kalema*' said the above words.

The incident is to be reflected upon that when the person was about to die, the sin (even though he had not committed it, but had intended) stopped him from reciting the '*Kalema*'. Shaikh Kulaini quotes Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a.s.) as saying that, "One who does not pay even one Qeerat of Zakat due on him (Qeerat is equal to 21 dinars), will die the death of a Jew or a Christian." The same tradition (hadees) is also said about the person who intentionally does not perform Hajj even after being capable of doing so.

## From Death till Grave

After the spirit (*Rooh*) is separated from the body, it lingers on the top for sometime. There after the Spirit of the believer is taken to the Heavens, while that of a non-believer below. When a believer's bier is being carried, he calls out: "Hasten me to my eternal destination," while non-believer calls out: "Do not make haste to bury me in my grave, making way for my chastisement." During bath of the believer's dead body, the Angels ask him if he desires to return to the world back to his kith and kin, to which he replies that he does not intend to go back to the world of miseries and misfortune.

The Spirit of the dead remains present and witnesses the bath given to his body. It is also narrated that when the bath is being performed, the dead person feels as if he is being thrown from height, and the rough hands of the person performing the bath seems to be smiting him. Hence it is necessary that bath should be performed with gentle hands.

The Spirit hears the voices of the people who have come to attend his funeral. Hence it should be borne in mind that one should avoid talking during funeral. A woman in menses or nifaas (blood discharge after childbirth), and a person in the state of pollution should avoid coming near the dead body, because it becomes the reason for the displeasure of the blessed Angels, who turn away in disgust. Such acts should be performed for the dead person which become the reason for Allah's blessings, viz. remembrance of Allah and Ahlulbait, (a.s.), recitation of Qur'an etc.

It is also narrated that after the dead body is buried, the spirit returns and maintains relation with the body. When it sees that the people are returning back, knows that from now on it is destined to live

alone. It becomes restless, and says: “Alas! Those children of mine whom I brought up with love and care have abandoned me, and now my only companions are my deeds (A’amal) which I performed while alive.” The first glad tidings which a believer receives is in the grave: “Oh you who believe! Allah has forgiven your sins and the sins of those who attended your funeral.”

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