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Office : Al-Mustafa Islamic Research Society

G-46 Nizamuddin West, New Delhi - 110013, India

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E-mail: almustafa_irs@yahoo.com , **Website:** www.miuindia.in

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Preface

The base of Prophetic teachings and the essence of all religions is monotheism. If monotheism is explained, the rest religious cognitions even the principle of resurrection and the Day of Judgment also becomes clear.

If the monotheism is demonstrated and explained, the ethics will prevail and the ethical life would also be established.

All the problems of human societies regarding the method of worship and the lifestyle turn to this principal **“lacking cognition of God and knowledge of his Excellency and in fact non-acceptance of monotheism in all aspects and conditions”**

It must be acknowledged that many people who are followers of different religions and sects believe in unity of God in creation in some sorts but they have problem in Divine Unity of Lordship and they hold the belief of separate Lords for every existent and this has a root in lacking the true cognition of God, his names and attributes.

They also affirm that there is no creator except God thus Allah, the Glorious says: *وَلَيْن سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ*

If you ask them, ‘Who created the heavens and the earth?’ they will surely say, ‘Allah’ because they were accepting a sort of the unity of God in creation but the main problem is in Divine Unity in Lordship.

The people involved in atheism are very few in numbers therefore the most of Quranic verses are related to Divine unity in Lordship and divinity. Divine Unity of essence or the very essence of God is less considered. Only the verses like: *نَمُوتُ وَنَحْيَا وَمَا يُهْلِكُنَا إِلَّا الدَّهْرُ*

‘There is nothing but the life of this world: we live and we die, and nothing but time destroys us’ such type of verses consider the

disproval of the imagination of atheists otherwise the rest verses deal with demonstration of Divine unity in Lordship.

Apart from this, God considers the essence as inherent and sees no need of discussion about it even though if a few verses talk about the topic of inherent knowledge of God, those are just for awakening and reminding not for reasoning.

أَفِي اللَّهِ شَكٌّ فَاطِرِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ

‘Is there any doubt about Allah, the originator of the heavens and the earth?! Means if you truly contemplate, God is not subject to suspicion. It is not possible to suspect about the origin and the very cause of the existence of human being.

The phrase in Quran “ما قدروا الله حق قدره” **‘They do not regard Allah with the regard due to Him’** point out to the same means if God was regarded and his names and attributes were cleared for everyone, the humans would not gone out of the way of his love and affection totally and all humans would come on the path of monotheism in any way.

Therefore it has been sought to demonstrate the views of few religions about monotheism in this issue but it is right to discuss this topic and its branches in the upcoming issues continuously so this task will be continued by the grace of All-truth, his Excellency.

Hojjatul Islam Dr. Reza Shakeri

Director *IJRT*

Chief Representative of Al-Mustafa International University in India

Editorial

Another Issue of 'International Journal of Religious Thoughts' is with you. This issue deals with a crucial subject of faith for every religion that is resurrection. Basically two questions come into the mind when any discussion starts about a system of belief; the first is regarding the origin and the creator of the universe and the second is about resurrection or life after death. Keeping this in mind, we had focused on the topic of 'Monotheism' in the previous issue and this issue is dealing with another important topic i.e. Resurrection.

With every succeeding Issue, the response that we are getting in the form of letters, mails and contributions from the learned authors has been encouraging for us. It is an indication in itself as regards the popularity of 'Religious Thoughts' that it has achieved. Our main goals in publishing this journal have been to inform the educated class about the common points of religions regarding the beliefs, morality, mysticism, spirituality, peace and security, so that we can reach an ideal, progressive, and stress-free society.

Another point that may be of interest to our worthy readers is that 'Religious Thoughts' has now been allotted ISSN number and we are trying to get the ISI standard for this journal soon. It is a milestone in our journey, which started with the realization of the need to publish a Journal that presents discussions on Inter-Faith and various positive aspects of religion to Indian and Iranian readers.

The publication is a sincere attempt by Al-Mustafa Islamic Research Society to highlight those different paths and processes of thought exist in the world. We believe that initiating the process of dialogue and expression of different views and thoughts always adds to sustenance of mutual understanding. In a world, where difference of opinion offer leads to misunderstanding and conflicts, we wish to use the tools of dialogue and interaction for better understanding and human relations. We intend to and have tried to take a deeper

look at various existing religions and to develop a spirit of togetherness. Study of culture and religion shows that, peace oriented, convergent and scholarly approaches are welcomed by the right thinking people in India and Iran both. While thanking the scholars and experts on the subject, we earnestly hope that they will continue to patronize us in this momentous task through their constructive criticism and suggestions.

Dr. Syed Fayaz Husain

Editor-in-Chief IJRT

Love for death, the significance of life

Dr. Reza Shakeri

Chief Representative

Al- Mustafa International University in India

Abstract

The remembrance of the death makes a human capable to face easily all the problems and hardships of life. A resurrectionist always looks towards death, the most hated phenomena very positively, so he never becomes desperate in the hardest situations of life, whatever it may be. He always thinks that life of this world is transient and fleeting therefore he never fears death and doesn't have any anxiety but he is always satisfied and contented. This approach not only results into laziness and indolence but he strives more and more for this world and hereafter as he knows that he may be called to leave at every moment of life.

This article deals the psychological impacts of remembering and reminding the death and quotes the words of the commander of the faithful, Imam Ali (a.s.) in support at different places. In fact, the love for death is a blessing which can remove the stresses of life and gives a lot of benefits to the human society, which can be proved by field research.

Keywords: Love for death, Resurrectionist, Life after death, Hereafter.

O my child, know that you have been created for the next world, not for this world, for destruction (in this world) not for lasting, and for dying not for living. You are in a place which does not belong to you, a house for making preparations and a passage towards the next world. You are being chased by death from which the runner -

away cannot escape, as it would surely overtake him. So, be on guard against it lest it overtakes you at a time when you are in a sinful state and you are thinking of repenting but it creates obstruction between you and repentance. In such a case you will ruin yourself.

O my child, remember death very much and the place where you have to go suddenly and reach after death, so that when it comes you are already on your guard against it and have prepared yourself for it and it does not come to you all of a sudden and surprise you.

A lover for death considers the life of the world and his life in that for a limited period and believes for him a fixed term of life and knows that the fixed term is in the hands of Allah (SWT).

The love for death as mentioned before, insures a human against hardships and troubles and prepares a human for issues like death and in this perspective not only human doesn't feel any futility and incapability rather conceives the death as a beautiful couplet of the ode of existence and the world of creation and not even doesn't consider the death as destruction and annihilation rather considers the code of survival and the cause to meet with the God, the Absolute Truth. And totally the interaction of the person who contemplates the life after death with the most hated phenomena i.e. death will be very positive and at its best.

A lover for death due to having instrumental view upon world and its essence always thinks about death and believes in it as an undeniable truth.

On the other hand, a believer knows very well that the death will reach to him and when the time of death comes then it is not transitional. The world is the cause of deceit and attachment and one day he has to move from this world and he considers this a universal rule, the issue of detachment from the world and journey towards other world is an inevitable reality and he will get the

rewards of his deeds in hereafter with suffering the hardships and shortcomings.

So the view of the love for death is realistic and although they completely believe in death and necessitate it, also love that and wish for them a better life by remembering and recalling it.

The belief in the short period of life and the time of leaving the world is the cause of tranquil and satisfactory life for human and eliminates many of the concerns of machinery life.

The perfection of a human being and the creatures of the physical world is that they should make them perfect within the known short time and the limited period which is destined for them. They can't go beyond the circle of this time and overtake their fixed terms or postpone it. The materialistic creatures which possess matter can never exit from this universal rule and convert the destruction and annihilation and limitation of the period and the time of their lives into persistence, continuity and eternity. It is said in the Quran at a place:

وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ أَجَلٌ فَإِذَا جَاءَ أَجْلُهُمْ لَا يَسْتَأْخِرُونَ سَاعَةً وَلَا يَسْتَقْدِمُونَ

And for every nation is a [specified] term. So when their time has come, they will not remain behind an hour, nor will they precede [it]. (7:34)

It says at another place:

مَا تَسْبِقُ مِنْ أُمَّةٍ أَجَلَهَا وَمَا يَسْتَأْخِرُونَ

No nation will precede its term, nor will they remain thereafter. (15:5)

Avicenna says in one of his poems:

From the bottom of the black mud up to the top of Saturn

I resolved all the problems of the earth

I exited from the bond of every deceit and trick

Every knot was opened except the knot of the fixed term of life (death)

(This Quatrain is written on the epitaph of the grave of Avicenna)

The death and its remembrance causes that human doesn't fall into the bad deeds and character and possesses a strong will and self-controlling power.

Imam Ali (a.s.) says: Do you not see that your predecessors do not come back and the surviving followers do not remain? Do you not observe that the people of the world pass mornings and evenings in different conditions? Thus, (somewhere) the dead is wept for, someone is being condoled, someone is prostrate in distress, someone is enquiring about the sick, someone is passing his last breath, someone is hankering after the world while death is looking for him, someone is forgetful but he is not forgotten (by death), and on the footsteps of the predecessors walk the survivors.

Beware! At the time of committing evil deeds remember the destroyer of joys, the spoiler of pleasures, and the killer of desires (namely death). Seek assistance of Allah for fulfilment of His obligatory rights, and for (thanking Him) for His countless bounties and obligations.

In the school of the thought of that person who contemplates the life after death, the issue of the belief in the fixed term of life like death causes positive psychological impacts in human being. The belief in death and the destruction of the world and non-escaping from this inevitable reality causes in decreasing the attachments and desires and the stresses of life and related concerns and endows the satisfaction to human.

The master of believers (a.s.) in his days of receiving the stroke says in one of his sermons:

O people! Every one shall meet what he wishes to avoid by running away.¹ Death is the place to which life is driving. To run away from it means to catch it. How many days did I spend in searching for the

secret of this matter, but Allah did not allow save its concealment. Alas! It is a treasured knowledge.

Imam Ali (a.s.) says: May Allah have mercy on you! Provide yourselves for the journey because the call for departure has been announced. Regard your stay in the world as very short, and return (to Allah) with the best provision that is with you, because surely, in front of you lies a valley, difficult to climb, and places of stay full of fear and dangers.

You have to reach there and stay in them. And know that the eyes of death are approaching towards you. It is as though you are (already) in its talons and it has struck itself against you. Difficult affairs and distressing dangers have crushed you into it. You should therefore cut away all the attachments of this world and assist yourselves with the provision of Allah's fear.

He says at another place: By Allah, certainly it is reality not play, truth not falsehood. It is none else than death. Its caller is making himself heard and its drags man is making haste. The majority of the people should not deceive you. You have seen those who lived before you, amassed wealth, feared poverty and felt safe from its (evil) consequences, the longevity of desires and the (apparent) distance from death. How, then, death overtook them, turned them out of their homelands and took them out of their places of safety. They were borne on coffins, people were busy about them one after another, carrying them on their shoulders and supporting them with their hands.

Did you not witness those who engaged in long-reaching desires, built strong buildings, amassed much wealth but their houses turned to graves and their collections turned into ruin. Their property devolved on the successors and their spouses on those who came after them. They cannot (now) add to their good acts nor invoke (Allah's) mercy in respect of evil acts.

As it is clear from his sayings that fear of death returns to the lack of capacity and necessary preparation for death. The love and affection

to the world and attachment to it, is the main cause of the fear of death.

As Imam (a.s.) says about himself in regards of death: By Allah, the son of Abu Talib is more familiar with death than an infant with the breast of its mother.

He says at another place: Surely this world has turned its back and announced its departure while the next world has appeared forward and proclaimed its approach. Today is the day of preparation while tomorrow is the day of race.

... Whoever acts during the days of his hope before approach of his death, his action would benefit him and his death would not harm him... Provide for yourself from this world what would save you tomorrow (on the Day of Judgment).

"O creatures of Allah! Fear Allah and anticipate your death by good actions. Purchase everlasting joy by paying transitory things - pleasures of this world. Get ready for the journey, for you are being driven, and prepare yourselves for death, since it is hovering over you. Be a people who wake up when called, and who know that this world is not their abode, and so have it changed (with the next)"

Humans were always scared from death throughout history and as it has been mentioned that usually people escape from death but in this perspective, death is not only an abhorred phenomena but it's a beautiful and lovely thing.

Shaikh-al-Rais Avicenna in a treatise (The cure from the fear of death) mentions a few points regarding the reality of death and the reason of the fear of death.

...But who is ignorant of death and doesn't know its reality then I explain for him that the death is nothing more than it that the soul of human gives up its tools which was using before just like an artist leaves his tools and the tools he was using, are his organs; which are called altogether a body. As the soul of human is an incorporeal essence and it is not accidental and doesn't accept spoiling and when this essence leaves this body, will be remained as it deserves

and will be cleared from the opacities of the natural world and reaches its complete felicity...

But the reason of fearing a person from death is that he doesn't know that where his return is? ... He actually doesn't fear death but is ignorant about the reality of death.

The phenomena of death was and now is also among insoluble topics of existential world and the History of man testifies it that human was always escaping and scaring from death and considers the death as a most bitter ode of life although in the theory of the person who contemplates the hereafter, the death is the most beautiful ode of the existence and welcoming the death and fondness of that is itself a sign of faith and criteria of human's cognizance and his affections to the Divine Holy Essence.

Imam Ali (a.s.) says in one of his eloquent sayings: By Allah, the son of Abu Talib is more familiar with death than an infant with the breast of its mother.

The death in the approach of resurrectionism is like a bridge to reach the beloved. The Love of God and attachment to him results into interest and love to meet with him. Therefore the love of death is the criteria for the love of human to God and faith upon him. It has been said in Quran:

وَلَا قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ هَادُوا إِن زَعَمْتُمْ أَنَّكُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ لِلَّهِ مِن دُونِ النَّاسِ فَتَمَنَّوْا الْمَوْتَ إِن كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ
يَتَمَنَّوْنَهُ أَبَدًا بِمَا قَدَّمْت أَيْدِيهِمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالظَّالِمِينَ

Say, "O you who are Jews, if you claim that you are allies of Allah, excluding the [other] people, then wish for death, if you should be truthful."

A lover always loves the visit and meeting with his beloved. The fear of death has no meaning and sense for an affectionate lover.

In the approach of the person who contemplates the hereafter, the death means to reach God, who is the real beloved and therefore in this approach the relation of love is maintained with the most

terrible phenomena of the existing world and the fear from it converts into affection.

Imam Ali (a.s.) narrates a conversation between the messenger Abraham and God and tells the same truth that: When the angel of death came to capture his spirit and said: peace be upon you, O Abraham!

Abraham replied: peace be upon you also, O the angel of death!

Have you come to call me towards my God so that I reply willingly or have you brought the news of my death and I'm compelled to drink the syrup of death?

Azrael answered, I have come to carry you to your God by your will so Please response positively your God's call and surrender for death, your God has called you to himself.

Abraham Said: *فهل رايت خليلا يُميئُ خليله؟* "Have you ever seen that a friend gives death to his beloved friend?"

Then God replied: *هل رايت حبيبا يكره لقاء حبيبه؟* "Have you ever seen that a friend flees from the visit of his beloved friend?"

“ان الحبيب يحب لقاء حبيبه” Surely, a friend likes to see his beloved friend.

So in this same approach it has come that a group doesn't have a hope to visit his Lord and they are attached to the world and always attached their hearts to the mean and fleeting issues of the world and deprived from the fruits of resurrectionism.

But a resurrectionist maintains a balance in his attitudes and all matters of life considering this world transient and life for a fixed term.

Death and the belief in resurrection and meeting with God decreases the stresses and minimize the pressures of worldly life and its concerns to the lowest level.

The belief in death causes decrease in worldliness and materialism and always endows a life with tranquility.

In a lucid saying Imam Ali (a.s.) says: Your ultimate goal (reward or punishment) is before you. Behind your back is the hour (of resurrection) which is driving you on. Keep (yourself) light and overtake (the forward ones). Your last ones are being awaited by the first ones (who have preceded).

The majority of neural pressures are due to eternal approach in the world and not believing in death and forgetting it.

A lover for death can easily reduce the effects of the external factors and attractions of the worldly matters to the minimum extent and can ensure his psychological fitness up to the high level.

In other words, the remembrance of death is the purifier of a complete and well equipped abode for human soul and spirit. A lover for death with inclination towards hereafter, easily can adjust his worldly desires and can liberate him from existing stresses.

As Imam Ali (a.s.) says: O creatures of Allah! Fear Allah and anticipate your death by good actions.

The main characteristic of a lover for death is that the fear of death can't make any room in his soul. As it has been pointed out that one of the issues, the western psychology couldn't solve is the issue of the fear of death and the depressions resulted from the news of his own death due to sickness and illness or the news of the death of his dear ones, which generally causes the appearance of depression in human being.

The approach of resurrectionism and the love and affection for death, which is one of the characteristics of righteous believers not only results into their fear and grief rather death and the time of setting off from this world would be the time of their satisfaction and contentment.

In another approach of the love for death, it is mentioned in the poem of Maulavi Rumi.

“The whole day and night, it is my words
That, why I’m heedless of the conditions of my heart
From where I have come and why I have come
Where I have to go at the end, you don’t show my native place
I’m the bird of the kingdom of heaven, half made from the earthly
world
A cage is made for a few days from my body
What a day! When I would fly to beloved
So I could flap the wings and feathers in the desire to reach his
street.
I have not come here myself so that I should go back myself.
Who has brought me here will himself carry me to my native place.
The world of the hereafter has a much more expanded environment,
it’s a magnificent world. There is no concern, no exhaustion, no
sickness of nerves, no worry, no enemy, no challenge there, There is
the world of life, absolute life, absolute beauty, glittering of the light
of the sacred and non-material creatures, holy souls of angels,
messengers, Imams and the friends of Allah are there. It is the
source of magnificence, holiness, absolute brightness and pure
mysticism there.
If a believer is in complete satisfaction and ease although he wishes
for hereafter journey and death, as it has been said in Quran:

والآخرة خير و ابقى

“While the Hereafter is better and more enduring.”

Therefore we see that the death is always cause of fear and anxiety
and somehow the different approaches of psychology surrender
before this difficult problem and don’t have enough capacity to
conquer this problem but in religious approach not only that it is

not a horrible and terrible thing rather it's very sweet and acceptable phenomena.

Moreover, this approach causes the increase of patience in a human before problems and sorrows in such a way that increases the patience of man hundreds of times.

The remembrance of death and the transitory view of the world causes that human resists in front of the popular stresses and always vaccinates himself against common greediness among people.

It is necessary here to mention one objection which is that in the view of some people, remembrance of death causes laziness and indolence and practically a human lacks the wish to perform the normal deeds of life and also lacks the desire to do a progress.

In answer to this question should be said that the belief in death not only causes the laziness and indolence rather due to having a fixed term for the worldly life, a person would have more energy and motive to do good deeds and in fact, he will consider every moment of his life invaluable and unachievable once lost so he could arrange a suitable provision for his other worldly life.

It is necessary to note here that in the religious approach, a human until his last stay in this world is obliged to endeavor and gain wealth and make a better life for his family and the reward which is considered for him due to this endeavor is like the warriors in the way of God.

Therefore all deeds and matters of life in general; gaining wealth, knowledge, emotional matters of family and society in the view of a lover for death have a stable position.

A lover for death is not only more active in the struggles of daily life but in showing his love to the family and society is also more stable and the minor and small mistakes don't make him worried.

Such a person can easily ignore the mistakes and errors of his surrounding people due to transitory view of the world and its

matters and can arrange a life full of contentment and love for himself and others.

The results of all these indicators are easily comprehensible and visible in the shade of the experience of life, especially the indicator of the love for death which may endow a lot of benefits and fruits for human life. A field research can be a good support for this valuable criterion.

Let's learn about Resurrection

Ayatollah Naser Makarem Shirazi

Translated by: Laleh Bakhtiar

Précis By: Syed Ali Ameer

Abstract:

Most of the people fear death because they consider it as their annihilation and destruction and some people fear due to their bad deeds as they know that they will be punished for those misdemeanors in hereafter. Although belief in resurrection gives a meaning to life otherwise it becomes meaningless due to limitations of this world. Faith in resurrection also plays a vital role in the training of a human being as no other factor can control a human being from doing evils such as this faith controls.

In this article, a good example of the trial of the Day of Judgment is given through the conscience inherent in the human being. There is a good explanation of this court vested in all of us by nature and creation. This article also proves the resurrection through the customs of the past tribes that the belief in resurrection is manifested in our primordial nature. Likewise it mentions many examples of the events occurred in this world in support of the idea of resurrection. It also relates this important tenet with the philosophy of creation. Eventually this article proves not only the possibility of resurrection and hereafter in different ways but proves its necessity also. It also proves the physical-spiritual resurrection by intellectual and Quranic proofs at the end.

Keywords: Resurrection, Hereafter, Day of Judgment, Inner trial, conscience, primordial nature, Scales of Justice, Philosophy of creation.

Introduction

Death has always been imagined to be a great, frightening monster and just thinking about it takes away the sweetness of life. So the question arises here that why do most people fear death? Not only do they fear the word 'death' but they also hate the word 'cemetery' and they try to forget about its basic nature by lighting and brightening the graves and tombs.

The effects of this fear is clearly visible in the various literatures of the world where it is expressed as 'the monster of death', 'the jungle of death', 'the death knoll', etc.

When they want to mention the name of a dead person, so that the person addressed not panic, they use sentences like 'far from here', 'may I be struck dumb', 'there be seven mountains between', and 'may his dust give your life' in an attempt to create a wall between the person who is listening and death. But we have to analyze how this fear developed the human being.

Why is there a group, as opposed to the understanding of the majority of the people, who not only do not fear death but thinking about it makes them smile and welcome an honorable death?

We read in history that whereas one group were looking for the elixir of life, another group lovingly moved towards the fronts of jihad, laughed at the image of death and they were in anticipation of the day when they would join their Beloved and today, also, in the battlefronts of truth against falsehood, we see this very truth whereby they move with their life in their hands, towards martyrdom.

The Basic Reason for this Fear With research and study we reach this point that the basis for this fear is simply one of two things:

1. The Interpretation of Death as annihilation

Human beings always flee from non-existence and from disease because it means the lack of good health; are afraid of darkness

because it means a lack of light. They fear poverty because it means the destruction of wealth.

They even sometimes fear an empty home and an empty wilderness. Why? Because nobody is there!

They even fear a dead person. They are not prepared to spend the night in a room with a dead person whereas when that person was alive, they did not fear him.

Now let us see why human beings fear non-existence and non-being. The reason is clear. Existence is woven into existence. Being is familiar with being. Being is never familiar with non-being. Thus, our alienation with non-being is completely natural.

If we believe and know that death is the end of everything and assume that with death, everything ends, have a right to fear it and even be terribly frightened by the mention of the word. Why? Because death will take everything from us.

But if we believe death to be the beginning of a new and eternal life, we will not have that fear; rather, we congratulate those who, with dignity and nobility, move towards it.

2. Black Files

We all know of a group who do not interpret as being annihilation and non-being and they would deny life after death but in spite of this, they have great fear of death.

Why? Because the file of their deeds is so black that they are afraid of the punishments after death; they have a right to fear death. They are like prisoners who fear the day they will be freed from prison because they know that when they are freed from prison, they will be executed.

He sticks to the prison bars, not that he is afraid freedom, he is afraid of the freedom whose result is punishment of execution. In this way, a person who does evil deeds, fears the freeing of his spirit

from the nest of his body and knows this to be the beginning of his punishment and chastisement for his evil deeds and his oppression.

But those who neither see death to be annihilation nor do they have files of black deeds, why should they fear death?

They are also people who love being alive but to gain more benefits for their new life in a world after death for they welcome the death which comes upon the goal which is well-pleasing to the Nourisher.

Two different points of view

We have said that people are of two kinds, one group of which forms the majority who fear and hate death. But another group welcomes death if it is upon the way of their great goal like martyrdom upon the Way of God, or at least when they sense that their life is near the end, they never allow fear to enter their hearts. The reason is that they have two different points of view.

The first group: they either have absolutely no belief in life after death or if they believe in it, they have not really, as yet, accepted this belief, thus they believe the moment of death to be the moment to bid farewell to all things. Of course, to bid farewell to everything is most difficult; leaving the light and taking steps in the darkness of the absolute is most painful.

Also, being freed from a prison and going towards a trial for a criminal whose crimes are obvious is frightening and fearful.

But the second group believes death to be a new birth, moving beyond the limited and dark environment of this world, taking steps into an extensive world and one which is full of light. Being freed from the narrow prison or cage of the body and flying in infinite space. It is natural that they have no fear of such a death.

Just like Imam Ali, (peace be upon him) he said, "I swear that 'Ali, the son of Abu Talib , looks forward to death with greater desire than a baby looks forward to its mother's breast."

It is not without reason that in the history of Islam, we encounter people like Imam Husayn (a.s.) and his faithful companions who, as the moment for their martyrdom comes, are overjoyed and they hurry towards their meeting with their Beloved.

And it is also for this reason that in the honorable life of Hazrat Ali (peace be upon him), we read that when the sword struck his head, he cried out, "I swear by the God of the Ka'bah that I have been relieved."

It is clear that the meaning of these words is not that a human being not appreciate the blessings of this world and overlook them, and not make use of them to attain great goals, but rather, what is meant is that in life, correct benefits be gained, but at the end, never allow room for fear, knowing that it is upon the way of great and sublime goals.

Belief in the resurrection gives meaning to life

If we take this world into consideration, without concerning ourselves with any other, it will be meaningless and empty.

It is similar to the time of life when a fetus is not in this world, but is in the womb.

A child who is within its mother's womb and who is imprisoned for months in this darkness and narrowness, if it was to have wisdom and intellect, and was to think about its being a fetus, it would be very surprised.

Why am I imprisoned in this dark prison? Why do I have to move in water and blood? What result will the end of my life have? When did I come, why have I come?

But if one is made aware of the fact that this is a Preliminary stage, that their organs are formed here, they gain strength and become prepared for movement in this great world.

After the passing of 9 months, it is freed, it moves into a world in which the sun shines, the moon reflects, green trees and streams of

water flow and multiple benefits are attained; then it takes a deep breath and says, "Now I have understood the philosophy of my existence here."

This is a preliminary stage; this is a place to fly from; this is a class to pass through in order to move towards a great university.

But if the life of a fetus is cut off from life in this world, everything will become dark and meaningless – a frightening prison with purposeless and harmful results.

This is exactly the point in the relation of life in this world with life after death. What is the point in our living more or less 70 years in this world?

For a time, we are immature and inexperienced and by the time that we become mature, our life ends. For a time, we must study and work and by the time that we study and learn, we have reached old age.

Why are we alive? To eat, wear clothes and sleep? And repeating this life day after day.

Is this extensive universe, this expansive world and the storing of all of this knowledge and experience, all of these teachers and instructors, all repeated for eating, drinking and putting on clothes?

It is here that the meaninglessness of this life will be clear to those who do not believe in the next world because they cannot reckon this small issue to be the goal of life and they do not believe in the next world either.

Thus, it can be seen that a group of them try to commit suicide and end this absurd life. But if we believe that this world is a pasture for the life of hereafter or that it is a field which must be planted and then be taken as eternal life, that the world is a university in which we must learn and prepare ourselves for life in an eternal world, and that the world is a bridge which we must cross over, in this case, the world will not appear to be absurd and futile. Rather it will

be the beginning for an eternal life and no matter what efforts we make towards it, are small.

Yes, Faith in the resurrection gives meaning to human life and frees a person from anxiety, worry and absurdity.

Faith in the resurrection is an important factor in training

In addition to this, belief in the existence of a Court of the Day of Judgment is most effective in our daily lives.

Assume that it were to be announced in a country that there will be no punishment for such and such a crime and no records will be kept, that people can, with a clear conscience, live the day as they so desire. They give the day off to the police, the army and security forces. They lock the doors of the courts and until the next day when life will begin as normal, no crimes will be punished.

How do you think that society will spend that day? Belief in the resurrection, faith in the Day of Judgment, is in no way comparable to this world. The details of this Court are as follows:

1. It is a trial, in which explanations are ineffective, nor can relations rule over norms nor can false statements be presented to change the decision.
2. It is a court which does not need the facilities of this world and because of this, it is not extended to take more time; it is studied like lightening and a decision is given immediately.
3. It is a court in which the file or record of people is their own deeds, that is, their deeds will themselves be present and made known by their actions in such a way that there is no way to deny them.
4. The witnesses in that court are his or her hands and feet, eyes and ears, tongue and skin and even the earth and the walls of a house in which there was sin or good deeds were committed will be there, witnesses which are like the effects of nature and cannot be denied.

5. This court is one whose Judge is God Almighty, God Who is Aware of all things, is Needless of all and who is more Knowing than all others.

6. Beyond this, the punishments there are not contractual; it is our acts themselves which take form and will be alongside us and they will punish us or draw us into blessings.

Faith in such a court takes a person to the point that Hazrat 'Ali says, "I swear to God that if I were to spend from night to the morning upon thorns and if my hands and feet were to be chained in the day and I were to be pulled through the streets and the bazaars, I am more willing to have this happen than to present myself to God's Court if I have committed an oppression against one of God's creatures or if I have usurped the rights of another." (Nahj al-Balaghah, Sermon 224)

Can a person with such faith be deceived?

It is faith in this Judgment that makes a human being place his brother's hand near the fire to burn when he has extended it into the public treasury. And when the brother screams in pain, he advises him, "You are screaming from the flame of a toy fire which is in the hands of human beings whereas you take your brother to a fire which is extremely frightening and which is lit by the anger of the Creator?" (Nahj al- Balaghah, Sermon 224)

Can a person with such faith be deceived? Can one buy his conscience with bribery?

Can he, with encouragement of threats, be made to deviate from the way of truth to the way of oppression?

The Holy Qur'an says when the scroll of deeds is shown to sinners, they cry out:

"Ah! Woe to us! What a book is this! It leaves out nothing small or great but takes account thereof!" (18:49)

In this way, powerful waves of the sense of responsibility grows towards the spirit of the human being which controls the human being from deviating, going astray, committing oppression and aggression.

An example of the trial of the Day of Judgment is within you

Since the issue of the afterlife and the great court of the Resurrection would seem strange for someone, who has lived inside the prison in this world, God has established a small court inside each one of us, which is called the court of conscience.

To explain in more detail: A person will be tried in many courts for the crimes he has done the first court is the usual courts in this world with all its shortcomings.

Although the very presence of such courts would lessen the number of crimes, they are based on such feeble foundations that nobody expects them to act in complete accordance with justice.

If wrong laws are enforced in a court, if judges are busy taking bribes and are subject to nepotism and partisan influences, then we could not expect justice to prevail in such a court.

Even if some courts might be presided over by pious judges, there are still those clever criminals who could escape punishment.

The second type of court, which functions better than the first one, is the court of the consequences of our own deeds. Our acts have consequences which affect us sooner or later.

We have seen many governments that were engaged in tyranny and engaged in all forms of injustice, but were soon caught up in the traps they had made for themselves. They collapsed as a result of their wrong actions, caught in the consequences of what they had done earlier.

Such a court has the shortcoming that it is neither public nor universal. Therefore, it could not make us feel that we do not need the court of the resurrection.

The third court, which is more elaborate than the preceding one is the court of the conscience. In the same way that the solar system, with its wonderful system can be observed in the tiny structure of an atom, we could claim that the court of our conscience is a tiny example of the court of the resurrection.

This is because there is a mysterious force inside our inner self which is called "**practical wisdom**" by the philosophers, "**the reproaching soul**" by the Holy Qur'an and "**conscience**" by others.

As soon as man does a good or bad act, this court starts to operate immediately and issues its verdicts in the form of mental punishments or mental rewards.

This court of conscience at times beats the wrongdoer inside with such a force that he or she would prefer death to this life. Such a person would write in his will "if I commit suicide it was because I wanted." This court of conscience at times encourages man for his good work to the extent that he becomes extremely delighted. He then feels at ease in his soul, and he could never find such a source of delight anywhere in the world.

Such a court has its own characteristics:

1. In this court, the judge, the witness, the officer to carry out the court's verdict, and the audience are the same person. It is the force of conscience that acts as a witness, that judges and finally carries out the verdict.
2. Contrary to normal judicial procedures which would sometimes take years to complete, the trial here at this court is momentary; it does not take time. Occasionally some time is needed to remove the obscurities from the eyes of the beholder, however, as soon as the documents are in, the verdict will be issued.
3. The verdict of such a court does not require one to go to a court of appeal; it only has one stage.

4. This court will not only punish; it will also reward those who perform their duties. In such a court, both the good-doers and the wrongdoers are tried and receive rewards or punishment accordingly.

5. The punishment of such a court does not have anything in common with ordinary punishment in the sense that they do not require prisons, whips, or executions. However, at times they are so torturous for a person's soul that no punishment could compare to it.

In sum, such a court does not resemble any worldly court; it rather resembles the court of the Resurrection. The greatness of the court of conscience is so tremendous that the Holy Qur'an swears by it, associating it with the court of the Resurrection:

Nay! I swear by the Day of Resurrection. Nay! I swear by the self-accusing self. Does man think that we shall not gather his bones? Yea! We are able to make complete his very fingertips. (Qur'an 75:1-4)

Naturally, such a court, due to its material nature, does not make us feel that we do not need the court of the Resurrection. This is because:

1. The sphere of human conscience is not all-inclusive; rather, it is based on one's way of thinking.
2. At times, a treacherous man could deceive even his own conscience.

Here, the significance of the fourth court, i.e., the court of the Resurrection will become clear.

Belief in resurrection is manifested in our primordial nature

We most often see that coming to know about God is within the primordality and nature of a human being.

If we search into the awakened and non-awakened consciences of the human being, his faith and desire is a source which is metaphysical, we come upon a metaphysical source which is gained through knowledge, program and goal which created this world.

But this issue is not limited to monotheism and coming to know about God. All of the principles and practices which are basic to religion must be seen within this very primordial nature. Otherwise, the harmony which is necessary to exist between creation and the Divine Law will not be found. (Pay special attention here).

If we take a look at our heart and we discover the depths of the spirit and our soul, we hear these whisperings from the world that life does not end with death, but rather death is a window upon the world of survival.

In order to understand this truth, we must turn to the points below.

1. Love of survival

If the human being has been created for annihilation and non-being, that person should desire non- being, and receive pleasure from death at the end of life whereas we see that this is not the case.

Instead we see that death is in no time or era a pleasure and that many people flee from it with all of their being.

Looking for ways to lengthen one's life, looking for the Fountain of Youth, the Elixir of Life, the Water of Life are all signs of this truth.

This love for survival shows that the human being was created to survive and if we had been born for being and annihilation, this love would have no meaning.

All of the basic loves which are within our being are completed by it and the love for survival is a love which completes or perfects our being.

Note that we discuss the issue of the Resurrection after we have accepted the existence of God, the Wise, and the Knower.

We believe that whatever He created in our bodies is based on a known measure and because of this, the love and desire of a human being for survival must also have an accounting and that can be nothing other than the existence of a world after this one.

2. Resurrection among the tribes of the past

The history of humanity, as it bears witness, in a general sense, in the tribes of the past, from the earliest of times shows clear proof of the clear belief of the human being to life after death.

The traces which have remained from the human beings of the past, even those who existed before written records, in particular, the method of making graves for the dead and how they buried the dead, all bear witness to this truth that they believed in life after death.

This rooted belief which has always existed in humanity, cannot be believed to be a simple idea or only a habit.

Whenever a belief is found in the form of something which has roots, and throughout history, we see it in human society, we should know that it is part of primordial nature because it is only primordial nature which can persevere with the passage of time and social and intellectual changes and remain in its place. Otherwise, customs will be forgotten.

The wearing of a special type of clothes is either a question of habit or a form of custom, which, over time, either changes or is destroyed.

But the love of a mother for her child is instinctive. It is a part of nature and a symbol. Thus, with the passing of time, the flame of love does not decrease in various environments. Whatever efforts are made in this way are reasons why this is part of the primordial nature of a human being.

When scholars say that careful study has shown that the earliest of people had a kind of religious belief because they buried their dead

in a special way and they placed their tools of work beside them, and in their own way and with their particular belief, they showed that they believe in the existence of another world.

We can then see well that they had accepted life after death, even if they were in error. They thought that life there was just like life in this world and that they would need those very same tools.

3. The existence of the inner trial

The existence of the inner trial or court called the Conscience is another reason for the resurrection being primordial.

Just as we have previously said, we all well sense that there is a trial or a court within us which judges what we do.

It has often been seen that individuals, after committing a great crime, like murder and trying to escape from the scales of justice, voluntarily give themselves up. They surrender to the hangman's noose and the reason is the torture which the conscience gives.

A human being, on bearing witness to this trial or court, asks himself or herself, "How can I, who am but a small creature, have such a conscience but the great universe and the world of creation not have a trial or court which it is worthy of?"

The resurrection and the scales of justice

A cursory look at the system of creation will reveal to us that everything is systematic and governed by rules.

In the body of man, this system is so delicate that any imbalance would lead to either sickness or death.

For instance, in the structure of the eyes, heart, and brain this order is readily noticeable. The same order, systematization, and justice prevail over all of creation.

Through justice, the skies and the earth have been erected.

An atom is so tiny that millions of them could be located in the point of a needle. Such an atom must be extremely precise and ordered in its structure to allow it to exist for millions of years.

This happens because of the justice and exact calculations that are employed in the construction of an atom.

Is man such an exceptional being as to be free to do what he pleases? Is he free? Or is there something hidden here?

Free will and freedom in decision-making

One distinctive feature that distinguishes man from all other creatures is that he possesses freedom of action. Why has He created him free and given him the freedom of will to carry out what he wants?

The reason rests in the fact that if he were not free he would never develop. This freedom has ensured man's spiritual and ethical development.

Suppose one is forced at gunpoint to help and assist the needy and carry out those acts which are beneficial to the community. Even though his acts would be naturally useful to everyone no ethical or human perfection or maturity would have taken place.

Whereas, if he had carried out these actions voluntarily and he only did one hundredth of what he could. Thus, the first condition for spiritual and ethical perfection is to have a free will; man should do good things on his own and not through force. This great asset has been given to man just for this purpose.

Of course, this great asset is like a beautiful flower which is accompanied with thorns which represent the misuse of this free will.

Naturally, it would be quite easy for God to punish a man for his unjust deeds, to inflict him with all sorts of miseries, to make him blind, or dumb, or paralyzed altogether.

Under such circumstances, nobody would dare to do wrong things. But this abstention and piety then would be by force and could never be counted as a point of honor for man, for this piety would have been due to his fear of a great punishment.

Thus, man should be free. He should be exposed to God's different trials and not be threatened by immediate punishment so that he could show his true worth.

But there remains one issue to be solved. If each person could be free to do whatever he desires, this could negate God's Justice which governs the world.

That is why we become convinced that there should be a court for mankind in which everyone should be present and be tried to receive punishments if they had wronged others or given rewards if they have been just in their deeds.

Is it possible for Nimrods, Pharaohs, Genghis khans and korahs to commit atrocities carry out all sorts of unjust acts and then go away with no punishment whatsoever?

Could criminals and pious people be equal on God's scale of justice? Regarding this, the Holy Qur'an says:

What! Shall we then make those who submit as the guilty? What has happened to you? How do you judge? (68:35-36)

And also says:

Or should we treat those who believe and do righteous deeds like corrupters in the land? Or should We treat those who fear Allah like the wicked? (38:28)

It is also a fact that the court of conscience exists. It is also a fact that the consequences of one's unjust and devilish acts would inflict him later.

But if we consider the matter carefully, we will find out that no tyrant or sinner receives a punishment in this world proportional to

the degree of his devilish acts. There are some who even escape the consequences of their wrongdoing.

So there should be a universal court in the other world to judge them justly and impartially or else the principle of justice would vanish forever.

Therefore, the acceptance of God and His system of Justice entails the acceptance of the Resurrection and the other world. These two are faces of the same coin.

We have seen the resurrection many times in this world

The verses of the Holy Qur'an clearly show this truth that the idol-worshippers and also the other kuffar, not only at the time of the Holy Prophet (PBUH), but in other ages as well, were surprised or amazed by the issue of resurrection and life after death and they were frightened by it to the point that whoever mentioned it was considered to be insane and they would say to each other:

“The kuffar say (in ridicule), ‘Shall we point out to you a man that will tell you when you are scattered to Pieces in disintegration that you shall (then be raised) in a flew creation?’ (34:7)

Yes. In that age, because of a lack of knowledge and short-sightedness any mention of the belief in a life after death and a world after death was considered to be insanity or an insult to God and the belief that giving life to a dead body was considered to be insanity.

But it is interesting that opposed to this Way of thinking, the Holy Qur'an refers to various reasons of life which both a common average person can understand as well as scholars, each one to their own extent of ability Even though referring to all of the Qur'anic verses in this area requires a separate book, we have tried here to present some of them.

1. Sometimes the Qur'an says to them:

“It is God Who sends forth the winds so that they raise up the clouds and We drive them to a land that is dead and revive the earth therewith after its death; even so (will be) the Resurrection.” (35:9)

We look at the visage of nature in the winter time. Every place smells of death. The trees all lack leaves, fruit and blossoms and the only thing remaining of it is dry branches. Neither do the flowers laugh nor blossoms nor is any movement of life to be seen.

The spring season arrives. The weather grows warmer, life-giving drops of rain fall. Suddenly a movement is seen in all of nature: flowers bloom, trees grow leaves, blossoms and flowers appear, the birds find their places upon the branches of trees and it is glorious to see.

If life after death had no meaning, we would not see this scene every year before our eyes. If life after death was something which was absolutely impossible, and words of the insane, we would not be able to sense it every year before our eyes.

What difference is there between the life of the earth after death and the life of human beings after death?

2. Sometimes, the Qur’an also grips their hands and takes them to the beginning of creation and recalls it to them and refers to that Arab Bedouin who picks up a rotten bone and goes to the Prophet of Islam (PBUH) and says, “O Muhammad, who will be able to enliven this rotten bone? Tell me who?”

And he thinks that he has found the final proof for disproving the Resurrection. The Holy Qur’an says:

“Say, ‘He will give them life Who created them for the first time. For He is well-versed in every kind of creation!’” (36:79)

What is the difference between initiating creation and a new creation? And the answer is found in another verse.

“...Even as We produced the first creation shall We Produce a new one...” (21:104)

3. Sometimes the great Creation of God of the heavens and the earth is mentioned:

"Is not He Who created the heavens and the earth able to create the like thereof? Yea, indeed! For He is the Creator Supreme of skill and knowledge. Verily, when He intends a thing, His Command is, 'Be,' and it is... (36:81-82)

Those who doubted this issue were individuals who had short-sightedness and never saw beyond their own environment. Otherwise, they would know that a new creation or a recreation is easier than initiating of creation and the new life given by God with all of His strength is not a difficult issue, and new creation is not a difficult task.

4. Sometimes the Resurrection energies have been mentioned whereby it says:

“The same Who produces for you fire out of the green tree, when behold! You kindle therewith (your own fires).” (36:80)

When we study this wondrous verse of the holy Qur'an with care and we seek aid from today's science, science tells us that only green trees can store the energy of light of the sun and that when we burn a piece of wood and we make a fire, that is the same heat and energy which is similar to the heat of the sun which has been stored in it for years and we thought that that light and heat had died and had been destroyed but we see today that it has found new life.

For God Who has all of this power, who can store tens of years of the energy of light from the sun within a tree and in one moment bring all of it forward, and it receives new life, it is not a difficult task.

At any rate, we see with what logic and clarity the Holy Qur'an explains the issue of the resurrection to those who have doubts about it and they even thought that anyone who believed such a thing was insane. It clearly proves the existence of the resurrection, only a small part of which we have been able to mention here.

The resurrection and the philosophy of creation

Many ask the question, "Why did God create us?" and sometimes they go further than this and ask, "What is the philosophy of Creation of this great universe?"

A gardener plants a tree for its fruit and he plows the earth for seeds and spreads the seeds, why did the Great Gardner of Creation create us?

Was God lacking something that He created us?

There are many words which have been written in response to this question but it can be summarized in a few sentences.

It is a great mistake to compare God's Qualities with our own. As we are limited creature, everything we do is in order to eliminate a need. We study in order to make up for the deficiency we have in learning. We work in order to make up for the economic deficiency we have. We seek after health centers and treatment in order to meet our health requirements.

In relation to God Who is Needless from all points of view, if we do something we must seek Him in other than His Existence. He does not create in order to benefit from His Creation, rather His goal is to be for His creatures.

He is like a sun which is full of radiance and is Infinite without Him having any need, He illuminates so that all may gain advantage from it. This is what His Infinite Essence is and His special blessing where He has taken the hands of His creatures and moves them towards transformation and perfection.

Our creation from non-being was itself an outstanding step of transformation. The sending of the prophets and the descent of a heavenly Book and the formulation of laws and programs are each to be reckoned to be a basis for us.

“This universe is a great university and we are students in this university”. “This world is a readied pasture and we are the farmers of this land”.

“This world is a beneficial, commercial center and we are merchants in this bazaar.” (Nahj al-Balaghah)

How can we, for the creation of humanity, be the purpose of a goal? When we look around ourselves and we look at each and every creature, each one has a goal.

In the wondrous system or factory of our body, there is nothing which is without a goal including our eyelashes and the arches in our feet.

How is it possible that the structure of our body, each particle of it, have a goal but the totality of our being lack one?

We leave aside our own bodies and we look at the great world; we see that every system has a separate goal, the goal of the shining of the sun, the goal of rain falling, the goal of the special characteristics of the air that breathe, but it is possible that the totality of this then, lack a goal?

Now that we have briefly become familiar with the goal of creation, words are about whether or not our life of a relative few days with all of its difficulties, problems and deficiencies can be the goal of creation?

Let us assume that I will live 60 years in this world and every day from morning until night, I struggle to earn a living and at night, exhausted, I return home and the conclusion or result is that throughout my life, several tons of food and water are consumed and with difficulty, I purchase a house and then die and leave this

world. Does this goal have the value to call me to live with all of these difficulties?

In truth, if an architect builds an enormous building in the wilderness and he spends many years completing it and he provides it with all of the necessary facilities and when he is asked, "What is your purpose?" He says, "My goal is that all of my life I build this building for passer-by to spend an hour in it!

Will we not be surprised and will we not say, "Does one hour of rest of a passer-by need all of this effort?"

Because of this, those who do not believe in life after death, think that life in this world is absurd and this perspective is often repeated in the words of the materialists, to whom living in this world is purposeless. Often, among these individuals there are people who commit suicide because they are tired of this life.

That which gives purpose to life and makes it logical is because it is the preliminary for another life and the bearing of the difficulties of this life is preparatory for making use of the way towards an eternal life.

Here we present an interesting example, and that is that if a fetus which is in its mother's womb had sufficient intelligence and if they were to say to it, "There is nothing after this life for you," the fetus would most certainly object to this and would ask, "What purpose is there in my being imprisoned in this environment? To go through all this and then nothing?"

The creator had a purpose in this creation!

But if we are assured that these several months are but a quickly passing phase and the preparatory stage for a relatively long life in this world, a world which in relation to the world of a fetus, is extensive and full of light and in relation to that it has several stages, the fetus will be assured that the period of gestation makes sense and that it has a goal and because of that, it is bearable.

The Holy Qur'an says:

“And you certainly know already the first form of creation. Why then do you not celebrate praises?” (56:62)

In summary, this world cries out with all of its being that there is another world after this world, otherwise it would be useless. Listen to the words of the Holy Qur'an,

“Did you then think that We had created You in jest and that you would not be brought back to Ifs (for account)?” (23:115)

This refers to the fact that if there were no return to God, as mentioned in the Holy Qur'an, through the resurrection, the creation of human beings would be equivalent to being useless.

The conclusion is that the philosophy of creation says that after this world, another world must exist.

The survival of the spirit, a sign of the resurrection

When the philosophers began to express the philosophy of humanity, they mentioned the spirit as being an important element in relation to other elements.

From then on, all philosophies presented a point of view about it to the point where some of the Islamic scholars have presented a thousand reasons for the truth of the presence of the spirit and issues relating to it. Much has been stated in this area but the most important issue which should be noted is that the answer to this question is:

Is the spirit material or not? And in other words, is it independent or not? Or does it have special chemical and physical properties like the brain and nerves?

Some of the materialist philosophers have said that the spirit and spiritual phenomena are both material and non-material and it is like the special cells of the brain and when the human being dies,

the spirit disappears just like a watch which when broken, no longer works.

Alongside these philosophies are the philosophers of the divinely revealed traditions and even some of the materialist philosophers who believe in the originality of the spirit, believe that at the death of the body, the spirit does not die and continues to live.

In order to prove this, that is, the originality, independence and subsistence of the spirit, there are many complicated reasons. Here we will present some of the clearer ones in clear and simple terms.

1. A great world cannot be placed within a small one

Assume that you are seated beside the sea and behind it are extremely high mountains. The roaring waves and the shaking of the water against the shore and with great strength, return to the sea.

We look at this scene for a moment. Then we close our eyes and see this scene in our minds with all of its greatness.

This shows that other than a body and cells of the brain, another jewel exists which can reflect any design no matter how great and at any scale. Clearly, this jewel must be something which is beyond the material world because we find nothing like it in the material world.

2. The external particularity of the spirit

We have many chemical and physical properties in our bodies, the motion of the heart has a physical quality but the effect on food is a chemical substance and examples like this are many in our body.

If the spirit, thought and reflection were all material and had physical and chemical quantities of the brain cells then why among them and our other physical properties is there a great deal of difference?

Our thoughts, ideas and spirit relate and correct us to the external world and make us aware of that which passes outside but the

chemical particularities of the stomach and the physical motion of our eyes and tongue and heart never has such a state.

3. Experienced proof of the originality and independence of the spirit

Fortunately, today scholars by various scientific and experimental means have proven the originality and independence of the spirit and permanently answered those who deny the truth of the independence of the spirit and all people who believe it to be material.

Hypnotism is among the clear reasons for this which the experiments have proven this.

We see dreams and scenes appear in our dreams which sometimes speak of the future and sometimes they clarify something which had been ambiguous in such a way that it cannot be called chance or accident which is a further proof for the independence of the spirit.

These examples show that the spirit is not material and that it is not the result of special physical or chemical properties of the human brain but rather it is a metaphysical truth which does not end when the body dies but, instead, prepares itself for the Day of Resurrection and the Hereafter.

The physical-spiritual resurrection

Among the important questions which relates to the discussion of the Resurrection is, "Is the Resurrection only spiritual?" or does the body of an individual also appear in another world? And the human being takes on the very form that he or she had in this world but in a higher and more elevated level? Continuing life in a new form?

Some of the ancient philosophers only believed in the spiritual Resurrection. They believed the body to be a composite, which is only with the human being in this world, and after death, becomes

needless of that, and it is released and hurries towards the world of the spirit.

But in the view of the great Ulama of Islam, and many of the philosophers, is that Resurrection in both aspects, that is, spiritual and physical, takes place is correct that this body becomes dust and this dust spreads itself over the earth and will be lost but God is powerful enough to gather up all of these particles and at the Resurrection gather them together and put the clothes of a new life upon them. They interpret this as being a physical Resurrection because the return of the spirit is assured and as they are only referring to the return of the body, they have called it this.

At any rate, all of the verses of the Qur'an about the Resurrection - and these verses are many and varied - stress the physical Resurrection.

Qur'anic proof of the physical resurrection

We have previously seen how a Bedouin came to the prophet with a rotten bone and asked the Prophet who would be able to enliven it. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) answered as God had answered, "That very person who on the first day created them, that same person who brought the heavens and the earth into being, and Who sends out flames from the inner part of a tree. "This can be found at the end of Surah Yasin.

The Holy Qur'an, in another verse, says that you will leave your tombs at the time of the Resurrection. (Ref. to Surah Yasin, 36: 51 and Surah Al-Qamar, 54: 7)

And we know that the grave is the place of bodies which have become dust, not the place of the spirits. Essentially all of the surprise of those who deny the Resurrection is in this that:

Once we have become dust, how is it possible that all of this dust, which has dispersed throughout the world, be gathered together and once again receive life (Surah as-Sajdah, 32:10)

And the Holy Qur'an answers them that:

God Who created the first time has the power to do this (Surah al-'Ankabut, 29: 19)

The Bedouin had said, "Who will enliven this rotten gone?"

All of these interpretations of the Qur'an and the verses show that the Prophet of Islam (PBUH) speaks everywhere about the physical Resurrection. The Holy Qur'an gives examples of this very physical Resurrection which takes place in world of plants and other kinds which we see. It explains it for them and brings the first creation as a witness.

Thus it is not possible that a person be a Muslim and not have the slightest knowledge of the Qur'an and the physical Resurrection and deny it because to deny the physical Resurrection from the perspective of the Qur'an, is to deny the principle of Resurrection.

Intellectual proof

Beyond this, the intellect says that the spirit and body are two truths which are not separate from each other.

At the time of independence, the connection with each other finds nourishment with each other and they find completion and clearly require each other for the continuation of the eternal life.

Even though in the time of the intermediate world (the period between this world and the Resurrection), they are separate from each other, this is not always acceptable, just as the spirit without the body is not complete, the body without the spirit is not complete. The spirit gives the commands and is the factor for movement and without the command, and tools, there would be no command to follow or tools.

But because the spirit is at a higher level at the time of the Resurrection, its body must also be transformed and this will be. That is, the body of the human being at the time of the Resurrection will be empty of all imperfections of this world and deficiencies.

At any rate, the body and the spirit are born together and are transformed together. The Resurrection cannot have a physical or a spiritual quality.

In other words, the finding of the spirit and the body and the relation between the two of them with each other is another clear reason why the Resurrection must take place in both forms.

On the other hand, the law of justice says that the Resurrection must take place in both forms because if a human being is a sinner and the sins were committed with this body and spirit and if he or she did good deeds, it was with this body and spirit. Thus for the punishment or reward, both must be present for if only the body is present or only the spirit, justice will not be implemented.

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Reincarnation (Tanāsukh) According to Islam: Comparative, Historical and Contemporary Analyses*

Mehmet Bulğen**

Précis by: Syed Ali Ameer

Abstract:

This study compares between belief in the Hereafter in Islam and belief in reincarnation in Indian religions in terms of their respective views of about God and the universe. In this context, I am going to discuss various claims of groups or organizations defending the idea of reincarnation. Among these claims, one may include the following: reincarnation is scientifically verified, belief in reincarnation solves the problem of evil, and reincarnation is supported by sacred books including the Qur'an. My overall purpose is to show that the religion and thought systems reveal their doctrines of immortality within the integral framework of their ontology, epistemology and universe models. In this regard, I will

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** Associate Professor, Marmara University, Faculty of Theology, Department of Kalām, Istanbul, TURKEY

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conclude by noting that the belief in reincarnation is not only compatible with the Islam's belief in hereafter but also Islamic teachings concerning God, the universe, and man.

Keywords:

Kalām, Islam, Indian Religions, Tanāsukh, Reincarnation, Hereafter, Immortality, Salvation

Introduction:

The term '*tanāsukh*', derived from the Arabic word '*naskh*', which literally means, "replacing something with another thing by repudiating it" and "transferring it from a place to another", can be defined as the rebirth of a living being in a different body after its death to complete the evolution of its soul.¹ In Western languages e.g., French and English, the idea of rebirth in a different body is commonly referred to with the term 'reincarnation', 'metempsychosis' and even 'transmigration'.²

Before discussing *tanāsukh* or reincarnation, it is important to determine the scope of our current study. There's an admitted difficulty involved in studies about death and the beyond. Even though death is an observable fact, it is directly out of the scope of human experience in the sense that a human being lives life only once and when s/he experiences death, s/he cannot have the opportunity to describe what it was like. In that sense, death is the termination of every experience. So rationally or empirically

1 . Ibn Manẓūr, "naskh", *Lisān al-'Arab* (Cairo: Dar al-Ma'arif, n.d.), 4407; Tahānawī, *Kashshāf Istilāḥāt al-Funūn* (Lebanon: Maktabatu Lubnan, 1996), 2: 511-512; al-Sayyid al-Sharīf Jurjānī, *Kitāb al-Ta'rifāt* (Beirut: Maktaba Lebanon, 1985), 72; Edward William Lane, *An Arabic English Lexicon* (Beirut: Librairie Du Liban, 1968), 8: 2788-2789.

2 . Ali İhsan Yitik, "Tenāsüh=Tanāsukh", *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslām Ansiklopedisi* (Ankara: TDV Publications 2011), 40:

441-443.

proving whether human immortality will be achieved via bodily resurrection or reincarnation of the soul seems as impossible as proving that such a thing will never happen from a materialistic point of view.³

In the Islamic tradition, issues involving the afterlife are known as *ākhirah* (hereafter) or *maād* (the returning); theologically, they are dealt with as a part of *fides ex auditu* topics (*sam'iyyat*).⁴ Such issues are about death and the beyond are called "*sam'iyyat*" to emphasize that knowledge of them is principally based on "reliable reports" (*al-khabar al-ṣādiq*) acquired solely through hearing, rather than intellect or experience.⁵ That is to say, while rational knowledge gained by reasoning and inference is commonly used in issues about divinity, such as God's existence and His attributes, issues about the afterlife are mostly explained by proofs coming from revelation (the *Qur'ān*) and reports from the Holy Prophet Muhammad (*ḥadith*). Because it is based on proofs coming from transmitted reports discussions about the afterlife had a special place in the *kalām* books of the classical period.⁶ Along with godhood and prophethood, Islamic theologians (*muta-kallimūn*) regarded belief in the afterlife as one of the three important principles of religion (*al-uṣūl al-thalāthah*) and strove to understand *Qur'ānic* verses and *hadiths* about the issue in order to form a properly Islamic account of the afterlife. Islamic theologians sought to make belief in the afterlife coherent and

³ . Faruk Karaca, *Ölüm Psikolojisi=Psychology of Death* (Istanbul: Beyan Publications, 2000), 29; Hayati Hökekleli, "Ölüm ve Ölüm Ötesi Psikolojisi=Psychology of Death and After Death", *UÜİFD* 3/3 (1991): 152.

⁴ . Bekir Topaloğlu, *Kelām Araştırmaları Üzerine Düşünceler= Thoughts on the Kalām Researches* (Istanbul: İFAV, 2004), 38; Özervarlı, *Kelāmda Yenilik Arayışları*, 116.

⁵ . Mehmet Bulğen, *Reenkarnasyonla İlişkilendirilen Ayetlerin Değerlendirilmesi=Evaluation of the Qur'ānic Verses Linked to the Reincarnation* (Master's thesis, Marmara University, 2005), 10.

⁶ . M. Sait Özervarlı, *Kelāmda Yenilik Arayışları=Searching for Innovation in Kalām* (Istanbul: TDV Publications, 1998), 116.

consistent with this belief in the oneness of God principle (*tawhīd*), as well as *Qurānic* notions such as isthmus (*barzakh*), judgment day, bodily resurrection, gathering of humans (*hashr*), reckoning, intercession, heaven and hell.⁷

As regards the doctrine of *tanāsukh*, Islamic theologians rejected it in all its aspects on grounds of it being incompatible with the essentials of the Islamic religion, especially the *Qurān*, *sunnah* and *ijmā'* (consensus).

It will be beneficial to make a general comparison between, on the one hand, religions that adopted belief in the afterlife, and, on the other, Indian religions in which reincarnation is a common feature. The comparison will be made in terms of ideas involving God, the universe, and human knowledge since these latter determine the content of the former.⁸

The comparison that we are going to make will hopefully contribute to an understanding of what mainly causes the difference between the accounts of immortality and salvation in these two religious systems.

1. The Comparison between Reincarnation Belief of Indian Religions and Here- after Belief of Islam in Terms of God, the Universe, and Human Concepts

The desire for immortality or the maintenance of one's existence after death is one of the essential qualities of human beings.⁹

⁷ . For al-Ghazālī's criticism of philosophers who deny the bodily resurrection that will take place in the hereafter, see his *Tahāfut al-falāsifa*, 20th chapter, edited by Sulaymān Dunya (Cairo: Dar al-Maārif, n.d.), 282 ff.

⁸ . Many chapters (*sūrah*) in the *Qur'an* collocate the verses describing the universe, the creation of man and the administration of the universe, and verses depicting the life of the Hereafter. See *Sūrah al-Mulk* (67), *al-Insan* (76), *al-Mursalāt* (77), *an-Naba* (78), *an-Nāzi'at* (79), *at-Tāriq* (86), *al-A'lā* (87). See Bekir Topaloğlu, "Āhiret", *Türkiye Di-yanet Vakfı İslām Ansiklopedisi* (Ankara: TDV Publications 1998), 1: 544.

⁹ . John Hick, *Death and Eternal Life* (Great Britain: Macmillan, 1994), 55.

No evidence that is opposed to immortality has dissuaded the human hope for eternal life, and so humans have accordingly sought out solutions for the predicament of disappearance in religious and philosophical terms.¹⁰

¹⁰ . For different immortality solutions and their criticisms, see C. J. Ducasse, *A Critical Examination of The Belief In A Life After Death* (USA: Charles C. Thomas Publisher, 1961), 28 ff.; Antony Flew, "Immortality", *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Paul Edwards (USA: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1972), 4:139-150; Karaca, *Ölüm Psikolojisi=Psychology of Death*, 17; John Leslie, *Immortality Defended* (Singapore: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 56 ff.; H. Mellone, "Immortality" *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, edited by James Hasting (Edinburgh: T T Clark Ltd, 1980), VII: 172-179.

While many different solutions to this problem have been proposed throughout the history of thought,¹¹ the two main ones have been either a belief in a resurrection in an afterlife, and reincarnation in this world. The former is supported by monotheistic religions, such as Judaism, Christianity and Islam, and is dependent on the idea of a personal God; the latter is supported by Indian subcontinent religions, such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism, and is dependent on the idea of the spirit's immortality.¹²

Contrary to popular belief, the belief of *tanāsukh* does not seem to go back to a long way in the history of human thought. While the oldest writings that imply soul's resurrection in different bodies until it reaches perfection are holy Indian texts like the Upanishads (800-400 BC), there is no such belief in texts that predate these like the Vedas (1300-800 BC).¹³

¹¹ . Harold Coward, *Life after Death in World Religions* (New York: Orbis Books, 1997), 2-9.

¹² . The belief reincarnation was also embraced by some philosophers such as Pythagoras (570-500 BC), Plato (428-348 BC), Plotinus (205-270 A.D.), and some gnostic movements such as Spiritualism, Neo-spiritualism, and Theosophy. See Bruce Long, "Reincarnation", *Encyclopedia of Religion*, edited by Lindsay Jones (USA: Thomson & Gale, 2005), XI: 7676-7681; N.W. Thomas, "Transmigration", *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, edited by James Hasting (Edinburgh: T T. Clark Ltd, 1980), XII: 424; Stuart C. Brown, *Philosophy of Religion: An Introduction with Readings* (London: Routledge, 2001), 5-52; Turan Koç, *Ölümsüzlük Düşüncesi= The Notion of Immortality* (Istanbul: İz Publication, 2005), 135; Libby Ahluwalia, *Understanding Philosophy of Religion* (United Kingdom: Folens Limited, 2008), 235; Metin Yasa, *Felsefi ve Deneysel Dayanaklarla Ölüm Sonrası Yaşam= The Life After Death with Philosophical and Experimental Basis* (Ankara: Ankara Okulu Publications, 2001), 23; Mehmet Aydın, *Din Felsefesi=Philosophy of Religion* (İzmir: İİFVY, 2001), 252, 264; Ninian Smart, "Reincarnation", *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Paul Edwards (USA: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1972), VII: 122-124.

¹³ . R. Garbe, "Transmigration (Indian)", *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, edited by James Hasting (Edinburgh: TT Clark Ltd, 1980) XII, 434; Wendy Doniger, *Karma and Rebirth in Classical Indian Traditions* (California: University of California Press, 1980), 3.

Reincarnation as a view of the afterlife seems to have originated after 500 BC in Ancient Greece and Ancient Egypt.¹⁴ In earlier texts, like the *Book of the Dead*, an Egyptian book written around 3000 BC, the condition of soul in material world are described instead of the idea about reincarnation in a different body in this world.¹⁵

While the belief of transmigration of soul was present in various societies from Ancient Greece to Ancient Egypt, it did not have a single determinant form in those contexts.¹⁶

There are many separate beliefs in societies due to their structures, and beliefs that cannot include communities along with a support of a strong thought system do not have a determinant position in culture. There are six requirements that should all be met together for transmigration to have a distinct place as in the Indian subcontinent:

1. The understanding of a non-personal, absolute God;
2. Monism, in which God and the universe is accepted as one;
3. An epistemology that views the physical universe as imaginary or as a deception;

¹⁴ . Linda Trinkaus Zagzebski, *Philosophy of Religion: An Historical Introduction* (USA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2007), 172; Long, "Reincarnation", 7677.

¹⁵ . Mark Albrecht, *Reincarnation: A Christian Critique of a New Age Doctrine* (Illinois: Inter Varsity Press, 1982), 8-9, 26-35; Sir Charles Eliot, *Hinduism and Buddhism*, New York: Barnes & Noble Inc., 1971), 1: IV; Axel Michaels, *Hinduism, Past and Present*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004, p. 156; Ernest Valea, "Reincarnation: Its Meaning and Consequences", access: 6 February 2011, <http://www.comparativereligion.com/reincarnation.html>; W. M. Flinders Petrie, "Transmigration (Egyptian)", *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, edited by James Hasting (Edinburgh: T T Clark Ltd, 1980), XII: 431-432.

¹⁶ . Although the belief in reincarnation were defended by some philosophers such as Pythagoras (570-500 BC) and Plato (428-348 BC) in ancient Greece, it could not turn into mass belief in this society. Reincarnation was not a dominant belief in Egypt either. See R. Garbe, "Transmigration (Greek and Roman)", *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, edited by James Hasting (Edinburgh: T T Clark Ltd, 1980), 12: 431-432; W. M. Flinders Petrie, "Transmigration (Egyptian)", XII: 431.

4. A dualist anthropology that views human beings as composed of a mortal body and an immortal soul;
5. A *karma* (moral law) that works independent of God and determines the soul's cycles of births and rebirths;
6. A caste system that is based on social stratification.¹⁷

The first contrast between Indian religions and divine religions is in their basic understanding of God. In Indian cosmology, God is not a personal being that exists beyond the universe. The universe as a whole is seen as God's embodied form or manifestation; He presents His existence in everything and in the whole universe.¹⁸

Now because in such a view of God is not an agent that voluntarily interferes in the universe, being an absolute being and without personality, this leads naturally to an account of the afterlife in terms of an immortal spirit or soul. And so claims such as the soul is an immaterial substance that and it can maintain its life by itself after the death of physical body are accepted as postulates.¹⁹

As for theistic religions, one of which is Islam, immortality is viewed in light of a personal divinity. According to this approach, it is not anything about the soul's essence that will make the human being immortal; rather, it is the promise of God, who has wisdom, will and capability, for recreation that will guarantee it.²⁰ A person who believes in Allah as the creator of the universe will also believe that He can recreate it as He wills.²¹ For this reason, methods for

¹⁷ . Joseph Prabhu, "Upanishadic Philosophy", Encyclopedia of India, edited by Stanley Wolpert (USA: Thomson Gale 2006), 198-200.

¹⁸ . Paul A. Harrison, Elements of Pantheism (USA: Llumina Press, 2004), 13; A.S. Geden, "Pantheism (Hindu)", Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, edited by James Hasting (Edinburgh: T T Clark Ltd, 1980), 18: 617-620.

¹⁹ . Koç, Ölümsüzlük Düşüncesi= the Notion of Immortality, 46.

²⁰ . Al-Anbiyâ 21/104.

²¹ . Yâsîn 36/77-81; Kâf 50/15; also see İlyas Çelebi, İslam İnancında Gayp Problemi= The Problem of Invisibility (Ghayb) in Islamic Belief (Istanbul: İFAV, 1996), preface.

proving the immortality with reference to soul's essence were not greatly favored among religious communities in Islam.²²

In Islamic theology, as can be seen in their discussions of issues falling under '*sam'iyā'*', the theologians spent little time basing their belief in immortality on rational arguments but more on the idea of God's fulfilling a promise, contained in scripture, of bringing about the resurrection of human beings.²³

The different approaches of these two religious systems to immortality that derive from their concepts of God can also be seen in their salvation theories.

In Indian religions, salvation is determined by one's *karma*, the universal causal law that works independent of God.²⁴ It is human's own efforts dependent on this law that will bring salvation, not his/her faith in God.²⁵ Neither the idea of sacrifice, which is performed to save people, nor the chute, which follows the redemption, has a place in Hinduism. A human only saves or loses himself. ²⁶ In Islam, salvation is only possible by gaining Allah's consent or favor,²⁷ and Allah's favor can be gained by believing in

²² . Ömer Nasûhi Bilmen, Muvazzah İlm-i Kelâm=Annotated Science of Kalâm (Istanbul: Fatih-Enes Kitabevi 2000), 412.

²³ . The attempt to explain the concept of "immortality" in the Islamic world with the concepts of philosophy has become widespread in the post-Ghazālī period (d. 505/1111). For this discussion, see: Bulğen, Reenkarnasyonla İlişkilendirilen Ayetlerin Değerlendirilmesi= Evaluation of the Qur'ānic Verses Linked to the Reincarnation, 96-98.

²⁴ . Michael Witzel, "Hinduism (Dharma)", Encyclopedia of India, edited by Stanley Wolpert (USA: Thomson Gale, 2006), II: 190.

²⁵ . Ahluwalia, Understanding Philosophy of Religion, 253.

²⁶ . Mehmet Taplamacıoğlu, Karşılaştırmalı Dinler Tarihi= Comparative History of Religions (Ankara: Güneş Matbaacılık 1966), 145, 146.

²⁷ . Al-Fajr 89/28; Āl-i 'Imrān 3/15, 162; at-Tawbah 9/72; al-Bayyina 98/8.

Him and performing good deeds.²⁸ Without God's help, guidance, and especially without faith in Him, salvation is impossible.²⁹

In Indian religions, on one hand, soul gets purified with rebirths; on the other hand, it rises by broadening its knowledge and experience. This rise of individual soul (*Atma*) continues until the soul escapes from the cycle of rebirths (*Samsara*) by attaining salvation (*Nirvana*) which is supposed to be a state of union with ultimate reality or *Brahma*.³⁰ And hence it seems that while Indian spiritual thought accepts the post-eternality of individual souls, it does not accept their pre-eternality.³¹ In the religion of Islam, salvation is understood as *liqa' Allah* i.e., meeting or congregation with Allah. But this state, which will take place in the afterlife, does not mean an ontological union with God or the disappearance of one's personality in His essence. It is not possible for beliefs which threaten a person's individual existence in terms of some future union or extinction in the divine, a union between creature and Creator, to be consistent with Islam's monotheistic account of God its understanding of the relation of human beings to that God.

In the Indian religious tradition, 'the self is an entity that has qualities, such as memory, identity and consciousness.³² These qualities, though they maintain its personal identity during its temporal existence, are not permanent in that with the death of the body, they all cease to be. What remains and is transferred to

²⁸ . Al-Rad 13/22-24; al-Kahf 18/28; Tāhā 20/130; al-Rūm 38/38.

²⁹ . Al-Māida 5/5; al-A'rāf 7/147; al-Kahf 18/103-105.

³⁰ . Chad Meister, *Introducing Philosophy of Religion* (London: Routledge, 2009), 25; T. Patrick Burke, *The Major Religions: An Introduction with Text* (United Kingdom: Wiley-Blackwell, 2004), 24.

³¹ . Frank Jevons, *Comparative Religion* (New York: Kessinger Publishing, 2004), 76.

³² . Charles Taliaferro, *Contemporary Philosophy of Religion* (United Kingdom: Wiley-Blackwell, 2003), 181.

afterlife is *Atma*, the individual soul, which is loaded with karmic destiny.³³

In the Islamic tradition, on the other hand, there's the promise of resurrection, an event in which a person's ultimate accountability will be determined. This is because Islam sees a human being's life experience for which s/he is responsible as an integral part of him/her. Therefore, when a person is resurrected in afterlife, s/he will be conscious of his/her identity and the things s/he did on Earth as an individual.³⁴

In Indian cosmology, human does not have a special place in the universe; s/he is somewhere in the middle in the category of existence. This is because of the belief that soul is essential and body is instrumental. All living beings are said to have the same soul, which is why the soul in the human body can reincarnate as a form of animal or plant later. From this point of view, all beings are relatives because they have the same life.³⁵ According to the religion of Islam, the human being is not an ordinary being, but s/he is the noblest of creation (*ashraf al-makhlūqāt*). Everything on Earth is put into the service and disposal of human beings as they are the representatives (*khalifa*) of God. Even the angels are ordained to prostrate before them.³⁶ All of these characteristics are due to a special duty and responsibility that is given to human beings by Allah.³⁷

³³ . Warren Matthews, *World Religions* (USA: Cengage Learning, 2008), 74.

³⁴ . Aydın, *Din Felsefesi=Philosophy of Religion*, 261; Hökeleki, "Ölüm ve Ölüm Ötesi Psikolojisi=Psychology of Death and After Death", 164; Koç, *Ölümsüzlük Düşüncesi=The Notion of Immortality*, 135; Yasa, *Felsefî ve Deneysel Dayanaklarla Ölüm Sonrası Yaşam=The Life After Death with Philosophical and Experimental Basis*, 12

³⁵ . Kürşat Demirci, "Tanāsukh", *İslâm'da İnanç İbadet ve Günlük Yaşayış Ansiklopedisi* (Istanbul: İFAV, 1997), 4: 333.

³⁶ . Al-Baqara 2/29-34; at-Tin 95/4.

³⁷ . Hūd 11/7; al-Mulk 67/2; al-İnsân 76/2.

In Indian cosmology, accepting God and the universe as one (monism/pantheism) and thus regarding the physical universe's existence as an unfortunate event, a lower form of life, and seeking salvation by reuniting with the Absolute, have caused people to have a pessimistic perspective with regard to physical world. Thus, the life that is lived with the external senses is seen as a source of evil and an unwanted condition, which separates humans from the union with the 'Absolute'.³⁸ The religion of Islam, however, is optimistic about material life, insofar as in the *Qur'ān*, it draws a picture of the physical universe, which is in harmony and filled with beauties that show the perfection of its Creator.³⁹ Human beings are expected to maintain the harmony in nature, improving the Earth and making use of earth's rightful blessings.⁴⁰ Therefore, gnostic approaches, such as cutting oneself off from the world and worldly things, inaction, refusing the reality of physical universe and discrediting or degrading what is material are not compatible with the religion of Islam. The *Qur'ān* does not accept a dualist human theory according to which the soul is a human being's true reality and the physical body as unimportant, is a kind of temporary prison, and reports that Satan was dismissed from Allah's presence because he disdained the fact that the human was made of clay.⁴¹ According to the *Qur'ān*, it is humans themselves, who are born, live, die, and will be judged by being resurrected and then will go to heaven or hell, in a harmony of soul and body.⁴² Therefore, the

³⁸ . Ismail Raji al-Faruqi, *al-Tawhīd: Its Implications for Thought and Life* (Virginia: International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1992), 31 ff.

³⁹ . Qāf 50/6-11.

⁴⁰ . Hūd 11/61; al-Baqara 2/168,172; al-Ankabūt 29/17; al-Jum'a 62/10.

⁴¹ . Al-A'rāf 7/12; Sād 38/76, The Qur'an also maintains that the creation of man from the earth as the evidence of God's existence and power (ar-Rūm 30/20).

⁴² . al-Baqara 2/72,233,286; an-Nisā 4/1, 29,83; al-Māide 5/32; al-An'am 6/151,152; al-A'rāf 7/43; al-Isrā 17/33; al-Kahf

18/74; Taha 20/40; al-Qasas 28/18; at-Talāk 65/7; ash-Shams 91/7-8, Āl Imrān 3/163; at-Tawbah 9/128; ar-Rūm

30/21, al-Anbiyā 21/35, Luqmān 31/28, al-Fajr 39/27-30.

dualist human understanding that sees human's soul as his immortal essence and body as his unimportant mortal vehicle or prison is not consistent with the Qur'anic view of human beings, which sees them as body-soul unities and responsible in a holistic way.⁴³

⁴³ . Fazlur Rahman, *Major Themes of the Qur'an: Second Edition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 17; W. Montgomery Watt, *Islam and Christianity Today: A Contribution to Dialogue* (New York: Routledge 2008), 125-130; M. Saim Yeprem, "Ruh=Soul", *Ansiklopedik İslâm Lügati* (Istanbul: Tercüman Gazetesi Publications, 1983), II: 579; Mehmet Paçacı, *Kutsal Kitaplarda Ölüm Ötesi=After Death in the Divine Books* (Ankara: Ankara Okulu Publications, 2001), 85; Mehmet Dalkılıç, *İslâm Mezheplerinde Ruh=The Soul in Islamic Sects* (Istanbul: İz Yayıncılık, 2004), 24; Aydın, *Din Felsefesi=Philosophy of Religion*, 241, 261; Erkan Yar, *Ruh-Beden İlişkisi Açısından İnsanın Bütünlüğü Sorunu= The Problem of Integrity vis-à-vis Soul-Body Relation* (Ankara: Ankara Okulu Publications, 2000), 42.

In Indian cosmology, the belief that views God and nature as one and the physical universe as ultimately illusory, a mirror that inaccurately reflects God, leads either to the sanctification of nature, on the one hand, or to the denial of the visible physical world altogether, on the other.⁴⁴ Thus, a mysterious, incomprehensible, and frightening understanding of nature, which has divine qualities and does not have reality at the same time, naturally emerges. Also, the thought that the visible universe consists of only imagination and illusion affected epistemology negatively, and language, written revelation and tradition are regarded insufficient and relative and thus as obstacles to a human being's grasp of ultimate reality. The combination of ideas like that of an illusory world, and irrational epistemology, and the belief in 'rebirth of a dead person's soul in a different body in the world' - all of which may seem contrary to the common sense of a Muslim or Western audience -, come to have the status of unquestionable doctrines.

As for the religion of Islam, the separation of creator (Allah) and His creatures (*makhlūqāt*) along definite lines, and the placement of the whole universe under the all-embracing control of a just God, who does not act arbitrarily, and the acceptance of the genuine reality of the physical universe, prevents nature from being understood in mythological terms and purges it of the random domination of gods. And this in turn becomes one of the most important factors in the development of natural science; for⁴⁵ it is not possible for science to work with an understanding of nature that is dominated by

⁴⁴ . Holmes Rolston, *Science and Religion: A Critical Survey* (USA: Templeton Foundation Press, 2006), 259 ff.; R. Luis, *Hinduism* (New York: George Braziller, 1962), 40-41; Geoff Teece, *Hinduism Religion in Focus* (USA: Black Rabbit Books, 2005), 10; also see: George Mason Williams, *Handbook of Hindu Mythology* (USA: ABC-CLIO Inc., 2003), 16.

⁴⁵ . Isma'il Faruqi, "Islam and the Theory of Nature", *Islamic Quarterly* 26/1 (1984): 16-24.

superstitions and magical features, a nature that is sacred, incomprehensible, lacking any order or law.⁴⁶

Finally, in Indian cosmology, not only human beings and other living beings, but also the whole universe itself is subject to reincarnation. Accordingly, when a universe's life is over, the universe disentangles and then gets reborn (*kalpa*).⁴⁷ The universe's being good or bad in its former existence determines its state in its new life too. Thus, in Indian cosmology history consists of successive, cyclical periods, and these periods continue forever.⁴⁸ As for the religion of Islam, history is not cyclical, but is rather linear in nature, with a beginning and end. The universe is not eternal; it is created by Allah out of nothing. Only Allah is eternal and everlasting.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ . Jeffrey Brodd - Gregory L. Sobolewski, *World Religions: A Voyage of Discovery* (Canada: Saint Mary's Press 2009), 290.

⁴⁷ . Mircea Eliade, *the Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion* (USA: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1987), 108.

⁴⁸ . Ralph Mark Rosen, *Time and Temporality in the Ancient World* (Philadelphia: Penn Museum of Archaeology, 2004), 92 ff.

⁴⁹ . Al-Qasas 28/88; al-Ḥadīd 57/3; al-Furqān 25/2.

The Table that compares the Religion of Islam and Indian Subcontinent Religions	
The Religion of Islam	Religions in Indian Subcontinent
The universe is everything other than God. Being consists of God and the universe (dualism).	The universe is everything that exists. God and the universe are separate only in mind; in fact, they are one and the same (monism / pantheism).
The universe is profane.	Because the universe is God's manifestation, it is essentially sacred. For this reason, it is possible for the beings in the universe to be sanctified. This results in Polytheism.
The universe comes into existence after not having existed, by God's willing to create it.	God is absolute and His voluntary intervention in the universe is not possible. Existence is eternal and everlasting.
The universe is under the management of a just and magisterial God, who is omniscient and omnipotent.	The universe is under the control of a cause-effect law (<i>karma</i>), which is constant and impersonal.
No being can change the laws of nature except God.	It is possible for semi-gods, guru (priests), and avatars to influence the laws of nature.
History is linear in nature.	History is cyclic because the whole universe including gods is subject to <i>karma</i> and <i>tanāsukh</i> . When a universe's life is over, it disentangles and a new universe is born. The

	<p>universe's being good or bad in its former existence affects its condition in its new life on the basis of god Vishnu's different avatars in different and consecutive periods.</p>
<p>Material's reality is constant. Physical universe has a genuine reality.</p>	<p>Physical universe is not real; it consists of imagination and illusion.</p>
<p>Comprehending the universe is possible. Nature is open to human understanding by experimental and observational research.</p>	<p>Comprehending or understanding the universe is impossible because it is God's manifestation. Essentially, it is sacred, great, superior, magical, mysterious and Unfathomable.</p>
<p>Language, tradition, and revelation are the essential reference sources in reaching the truth.</p>	<p>Language, tradition, and written revelation are obstacles in knowing truth. Someone reaches the truth under the guidance of gurus and avatars with meditation (like the authors of all holy Vedas and Upanishads).</p>
<p>The universe is essentially good, and life in it is a blessing. Humans ought to be grateful to God because He brought them to existence in it.</p>	<p>Physical universe is an unwanted condition, a decrease in the level from Absolute reality. Because it separates human from absolute reality, the life that is lived with senses is a tragedy. It is necessary for people to free themselves from samsara (death-birth cycle).</p>

<p>A Newborn is innocent. Human will reap in the afterlife what they sow in this worldly life.</p>	<p>Every newborn comes to the world with a karmic destiny to be fulfilled depending upon their former lives. The law of karma is the link between a person's past and the future. Human happiness and pain in the earthly life are the result of his former life (since a human being will pass throughout five stages of life and rebirth like avatars).</p>
<p>Resurrection of human beings after death in the afterlife is possible by God's recreation.</p>	<p>After the death of the body, soul reincarnates in this world in a different body in accordance with its karma. There is no need for the intervention of God or gods' in this.</p>
<p>When resurrected in afterlife, a person's identity in terms of his memory and consciousness will be preserved exactly the same. A human being will remember the actions s/he performed during the earthly life.</p>	<p>Personal identity markers from a former life, like memory and consciousness, are completely erased in rebirth. It is not possible to remember former lives.</p>
<p>A human being is an inseparable whole with his soul and body.</p>	<p>Soul and body dualism is essential. What really matters is the soul, and physical body is a worthless prison.</p>
<p>Human is the noblest of all creatures (ashraf al-makhluqat).</p>	<p>A human being does not have a privileged place in the universe.</p>
<p>Human's salvation depends</p>	<p>It is human's own effort that</p>

on the faith in Allah and His grace. If Allah wishes, He can forgive a person's sins.

brings salvation to him dependent on the karmic law, not God. Forgiveness, mercy, intercession or pity are irrelevant for in this matter.

After the above general comparison of the two religions, the question we must ask at this point is whether the belief of *tanāsukh* is consistent with the religion of Islam or not. Even though it is claimed that the transmigration of the soul can exist in divine religions with a syncretic approach, this does not seem quite possible considering the ontological, cosmological and epistemological differences that we have mentioned above. For the doctrine of *tanāsukh* is not just a simple belief about rebirth in this world, it also entails a certain ontology, cosmology, and epistemology which in turn require of view human being's in the world that seems incompatible with core doctrines of a monotheistic religion.

Hence, it seems that the approval of this doctrine in the religion of Islam is impossible without damaging core Islamic principles such as the belief in the oneness of God (*tawhīd*), the understanding of the universe, human's position and role in the universe, belief in afterlife, etc.

Further, the consequences of these essential principles, such as the doctrine of salvation, individual responsibility, the individualization of crime, presumption of innocence, pardon, mercy, forgiveness, and many more essentials, will also need to be rethought.

The approval is also not possible given the exclusivist claims of monotheistic religions; for such claims obstruct syncretism of any

kind.⁵⁰ Accordingly, there will be only one right religion to bring salvation to humanity,⁵¹ and all salvation theories of other religions, and those religions themselves, will be void.⁵² For example, the comments of Abū Rayḥān Bīrūnī (973-1048 AD) on the belief of *tanāsukh* in Indian religions are such as to support this claim:

“Just as *shahada* [declaration of faith], the holy trinity and Saturday are important to Islam, Christianity and Judaism, respectively, *tanāsukh* is important to Hindus.

For this reason, a Hindu who does not believe in *tanāsukh* is unimaginable. Anyway, Hindus do not accept someone as one of them, who does not think in this way.”⁵³

As is seen, if a principle of belief gives a religion its distinguishing feature and especially if it is an essential principle for salvation and a core part of the religion, then belief in it by members of other religions will more or less amount to ‘conversion’.⁵⁴ But conversion is a difficult matter; as Vinet (1797-1847) stated, “It is easier to build Rome in one day than converting someone to religion.”⁵⁵ Therefore, it is meaningless to expect from members of divine religions to

⁵⁰ . Kürşat Demirci, *Yahudilik ve Dinî Çoğulculuk= Judaism and Religious Pluralism* (Istanbul: Ayışığı Kitapları, 2000), 13.

⁵¹ . Āl-i ‘Imrān 3/85.

⁵² . Mahmut Aydın, “Paradigmanın Yeni Adı: Dinsel Çoğulculuk= New Title of Paradigm: Religious Pluralism”, *Hristiyan, Yahudi ve Müslüman Perspektifinden Dinsel Çoğulculuk ve Mutlaklık İddiaları*, der. Mahmut Aydın (Ankara: Ankara Okulu Publications2005), 26.

⁵³ . Abū Rayḥān Bīrūnī, *Tahqīq mā li’l-Hind*, edited by A. Safā (Beirut: Ālam al-kutub 1983), 39; about the fact that Hinduism's approach to the other is now an exclusionist, see Ali İhsan Yitik, “Hinduizm’in Diğer Dinlere Bakışı= Approach of Hinduism to Other Religions”, *Dinler Tarihi Araştırmaları - I* (Ankara: Dinler Tarihi Derneği, 1998), 145.

⁵⁴ . Baki Adam, *Yahudilik ve Hristiyanlık Açısından Diğer Dinler=Other Religions from the Perspective of Christianity and Judaism* (Istanbul: Pınar Publications, 2002), 9.

⁵⁵ . Alexander Vinet, *Outlines of Theology*, 84; quoted from James Strachan, “Conversion” *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, edited by James Hasting (Edinburgh: T T Clark Ltd, 1980), VII: 109.

adopt the 'salvation with transmigration' doctrine, which has become distinctive feature of Indian religions.

Is Reincarnation a Scientific Fact?

The most common argument which is used to support the transmigration belief is that reincarnation is a scientific fact and a universal law. They cite 'past-life recall', which appears in children spontaneously and in adults under hypnosis, as evidence for their claims.

In this context, it is said that a person, an object, a place and events in relation to past-life are recognized and remembered in detail. However, reincarnation is not the only way to explain events like these. There are also alternative psychological and psychosocial explanations of these events. For example, in the University of Iceland, Er-lendur Haraldson, one of the professors from the Department of Psychology, confirmed that factors such as social isolation, taking attention, being under influence, multiple personality tendencies, a dream of a life full of wealth, parental problems and memory disorders, may lead to past-life recalls in a clinical study.⁵⁶

Besides, research has revealed that claims like these are systematically seen in cultures and communities in which the belief of reincarnation is common.⁵⁷ This situation suggests the possibility of cultural conditioning because when we look at the content of these claims, we see that while most of the people make past-life claim as important characters, they are ordinary people now.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ . Erlendur Haraldsson, "Psychological Comparison between Ordinary Children and Those who Claim Previous life memories", *Journal of Scientific Exploration* 11 (1997), 323-335.

⁵⁷ . Ian Stevenson, *Where Reincarnation and Biology Intersect* (USA: Greenwood, 1997), 1 ff.

⁵⁸ . Gérard Encausse Papus, *Reenkarnasyon*, trans. Halûk Özden (Istanbul: RMY, 1999), 117.

Therefore, it is quite likely that the people, who listen to stories like these in their culture and community and observe peoples' intense interest in them, come to eventually believe that they could have also experienced such things, and when the charm of the personality that they want to be is added to this, the person conditions himself psychologically with the help of his imagination.

Another explanatory factor is the subject of hypnosis. The subject, who has the tendency for obeying the suggestions of a hypnotizer, engages in fantasy recalls that he might later come to actually believe he really experienced. However, rather than being a reminder, these recalls are psychosocial constructions, in which the thought "to pretend to be someone else" is at play. Particularly the person's believing in reincarnation, wishes and desires, tendency for hypnosis, guidance of the hypnotizer, life experience, the level of education, the popular novels and stories that are read and the TV shows, movies and documentaries that are watched, all affect this process of construction.⁵⁹ In fact, the change in historical information with later findings revealed the incorrectness of very detailed information that is given under hypnosis.

For example, the subjects would always describe themselves wearing a horned helmet consistent with the official historical depictions in their past-life memories about the Vikings. However, the subsequent historical findings revealed that Viking sailors had not worn horned helmets, but they had worn a tight cap in the shape of funnel.⁶⁰

Moreover, clinical studies showed that hypnosis may result in pseudo-memory. Thus, the person, who is under the hypnosis, accepts the false information along with the hypnotizer's

⁵⁹ . Nicholas P. Spanos, "Multiple Identities and False Memories: A Socio-cognitive Perspective", *American Psychological Association* (Washington: 2001), 131.

⁶⁰ . Ian Wilson, *Reincarnation? The Claims Investigated* (London: Penguin, 1982), 8.

orientations, and then can pass on this information as it is real.⁶¹ In addition, due to concern of performing the suggestions and satisfying the hypnotizer, the person can fill the gaps that he cannot remember with imagination.⁶²

Ian Stevenson, who researched over 2500 past-life claims more than over 40 years says that even if all these cases were brought together, it would not mean that reincarnation is proven scientifically, and he says that reincarnation is fundamentally a belief.⁶³

Stevenson also states that the children, who tell memories like these, experience spiritual crises and dissociative identity disorder, refuse their parents and experience family tragedies where ex-husbands, wives and children fight with each other, things get messy and very problematic.⁶⁴ For this reason, identity changes, their causes in psychology and the processes of diagnosis and treatment are shown as the symptoms of 'dissociative disorder' disease.

In a study, it was shown that a significant percentage of the patients that have dissociative disorder (22.9 %) experience reincarnation.⁶⁵

In modern psychiatry, while reincarnation is regarded as a disorder to be treated, spiritualist trends represent reincarnation as a universal and scientific fact. Furthermore, the claims of incidents such as "birthmarks", "deja vu", "child prodigy", "telepathy" and "near death experiences" prove reincarnation scientifically do not reflect the reality.

Relevant fields of studies also make similar explanations for all these incidents.⁶⁶

⁶¹ . Kevin M. McConkey, "Hypnosis and Pseudomemory", *Truth in Memory*, edited by Steven J. Lynn - Kevin M. McConkey (New York: Guilford Press, 1998), 227.

⁶² . J. Dywan-K. Bowers, "The Use of Hypnosis to Enhance Recall, *Science* 222-4620 (Oct 14 1983):184-5.

⁶³ . Ian Stevenson, "Interview", *Omni Magazine* 10/4 (1998): 76

⁶⁴ . Ian Stevenson, "Interview", 76.

⁶⁵ . Hamdi Tutkun, "Reenkarnasyon", *Aksiyon Dergisi* (Şubat 1997): 155.

On the other hand, the continuity of human consciousness and preservation of personal identity are accepted as a basic postulate in the perspective of both classic and modern philosophical and psychological approaches. Accordingly, for the claims of reincarnation or immortality to be valid, human needs to remember his former life, which is asserted as being the consequence of his current life, with his self-consciousness. Impersonal immortality, in which a person is not conscious of his former self, is the same as mortality,⁶⁷ because human becomes a human being and gains identity and individualism with his memories, experiences, goals, wishes and consciousness.

From this point of view, the historical life experience that he lived is one of his integral parts without which he wouldn't truly count as himself Here's an analogy: it's as if a newborn is like an empty board, and every human paints his own authentic self on this board from his birth and continues this process for his entire life. Death marks the completion of this process. What reincarnation claims is that people make pictures always on the same board by gathering many historical identities living in one soul.

Accordingly, the previous picture drawn on the board is erased, and a new picture is drawn from scratch after every rebirth. For example, according to reincarnation there will be no more a historical Napoléon portrait because there is someone else's picture on that board (soul). The existing picture will be erased too, and it will be replaced with someone else's picture. However, divine

⁶⁶ . It has been found that coordination disturbances between eyes during vision (one of the eyes transmits signals to the brain later than the other) may lead to the strange feeling that you have already experienced what is happening now (deja vu). It has been determined that some drugs used during pregnancy cause similar birthmarks. The appearance of similar birthmarks among close relatives also suggests genetic effects. See Paul Edwards, *Reincarnation: A Critical Examination* (New York: Prometheus Books, 1996), 48 ff.

⁶⁷ . Koç, *Ölümsüzlük Düşüncesi = the Notion of Immortality*, 117.

religions promise to save every historical portrait as how they are drawn.

Reincarnationists, on the other hand, almost do a historical identity slaughter by erasing an authentic portrait-person that consists of memories, experiences, goals, sins and good deeds.

The thought of reincarnation again contradicts with basic paradigms of today's psychology too because modern psychology regards every living person as an independent individual, and invites human to be at peace with himself in this context. Accordingly, someone should reveal himself and confirm his position in the universe instead of pretending to be someone else. However, the claim of reincarnation means a person's renouncing being himself and sharing his soul and individualism with someone else, and this situation means this person's loss of self-respect. It is not possible for today's science of psychology to accept such an approach.

Another subject is the inheritance by human beings of various features from members in their family tree. For today's genetic science says that human has spiritual-physical features that are inherited from genes. For example, the comparison of twins that share the same genes and brothers that are not twins with different genes reveals that many forms of behavior are seriously affected by genetic inheritance.⁶⁸ However, according to the belief of reincarnation, it is unclear that how a soul that migrates into another body after death chooses a body that is compatible with its character and how to explain the inheritance in this case.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ . Ian G. Barbour, *When Science Meets Religion* (USA: Harpercollins, 2000), viii.

⁶⁹ . Yusuf Şevki Yavuz, "İslâmî Açıdan Tanâsukh Hakkında Bir Değerlendirme = An Evaluation about Tanâsukh in Islamic Perspective", *İslâm'da İnanç İbadet ve Günlük Yaşayış Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul: İFAV, 1997), IV: 330.

On the other hand, the studies on human nature revealed that damages and chemical instabilities in specific parts of brain affect specific mental/spiritual abilities dramatically.⁷⁰

Therefore, science makes the soul-body dualism, which is the basic postulate of Reincarnationists, controversial by revealing the strong dependence of mental and spiritual lives on biological processes. Modern science tends to consider human as a whole with his soul and body rather than separating him into two as soul and body.

Again according to the belief of reincarnation, the eternal souls keep reincarnating until they reach the perfection or the level of absolute soul. The soul that reaches the perfection exists the system by not having a need for *tanāsukh* anymore.

On the other hand, because the souls are regarded as eternal and constant, an entry of a new soul to the system will not be possible. Accordingly, if the process of rebirth is an everlasting process, the souls should have finished their improvements until now and thus should have ended their rebirth processes. This cannot be refuted by saying that there is infinite number of souls because an infinite number of soul requires an infinite amount of matter.

Consequently, the argument that reincarnation is a scientifically proven universal fact is completely a mistake; in fact, this belief contradicts with today's science's basic paradigms about the universe and human beings.

Do Reincarnation and Law of Karma Solve the Problem of Evil?

Another argument which is made to justify reincarnation is that the moral law (karma), which reincarnation depends on, explains the differentiations in society, and thus it solves the problem of evil (theodicy). For this reason, if someone is wailing in the grip of an illness in misery while someone else lives a happy life in prosperity,

⁷⁰ . Barbour, When Science Meets Religion, viii.

the reason of such inequality should be searched in the past lives of the people aforementioned.

However, this claim is also contradictory because the doctrine of karma cannot explain how the differentiations appeared in the first place in the society or their origins. As is claimed, if every being's fate is destined according their previous existence, then how and according to what is the first form of being determined? Also, were the beings, which are in different status and forms now, in an equal state at the beginning? If it is assumed that they were not equal at the beginning, then an inequality for which they are not responsible, and the consequences of this, must be accepted in advance. But if they were equal at the beginning, it becomes necessary to say that their inequality started at one in their previous lives, which raises the question 'how is it disrupted?'

Therefore, it is impossible to answer questions like these with an understanding that accepts the universe and the karma, which directs the universe's mechanism, as eternal.⁷¹

While the law of karma cannot explain how the differentiations between beings started, it will also pose other bigger ethical problems. For example, when B, who lives today, is regarded as manifestation of A, who lived in the past, punishing B because of A's mistake will be a big cruelty for B simply because B is not identical to A. Also, if person B suffers agony and does not know because of which sin he committed in his past he suffers, this will not be beneficial to individual's spiritual progress, and this situation will lead to a worse "karma" for the person C in the future. Thus, evil in the universe will constantly advance. On the other hand, it is also controversial issue that karmic law, which functions with an obligatory and cruel cause- effect relation, makes humane emotions,

⁷¹ . René Guénon, *The Spiritist Fallacy* (New York: Sophia Perennis, 2004), 199-200; Ali İhsan Yitik, *Hint Kökenli Dinlerde Karma İnancının Tenasüh İnancıyla İlişkisi= Relationship between the Belief of Karma in Indian-rooted Religions and the Belief of Reincarnation* (Istanbul: RMY, 1996), 201.

such as regret, forgiveness, mercy, pity and compassion, meaningless.

Does the Qur'ān mention Reincarnation?

Another claim is that divine religions and holy books, particularly the *Qur'ān*, confirm reincarnation. According to them, the religion of Islam had presented reincarnation along with many other doctrines 14 centuries ago. But, they further claim, this doctrine was distorted or denied by some commentators due to ignorance and prejudice.⁷² Accordingly, Reincarnationists make exegesis of all verses about resurrection (*ba's*) in the *Qur'ān* as "resurrection in the world after death".⁷³ However, when they do this, they do not feel an obligation for being dependent on the methods of understanding, such as the occasions of revelation (*asbāb al-nuzūl*), the verse before and after a verse (*siyāq* and *sibāq*), and other verses related to topic and the integrity of the *Qur'ān*.

For example, Reincarnationists say that the statement "day of resurrection (*ba's*)"⁷⁴ in the *Qur'ān* means the resurrection in this world. However, the words in the *Qur'ān* are not simply isolated and separate from each other. Combined with each other by various methods, they form an integral whole.⁷⁵ Accordingly, the word "ba's" is a word that is used in the context of afterlife in the *Qur'ān*, and all words in this system are connected with each other by the

⁷² . Sinan Onbulak, *Ruhi Olaylar ve Ölümünden Sonrası= Psychic Phenomena and After Death* (Istanbul: Dilek Yayınevi 1975), 321.

⁷³ . Kудay - Akay, *Spiritualizm Ruh Ansiklopedisi = Encyclopaedia of Spiritualism and Soul*, 328; Onbulak, *Ruhi Olaylar ve Ölüm- den Sonrası=Psychic Phenomena and After Death*, 321; Sadi Çaycı, *Ruhçuluğa Göre Kur'ān Öğretisi= The Qur'ānic Doctrine to the Spiritualism* (Istanbul: RMY, 1995), 94-101; Cem Çobanlı, *Reenkarnasyon* (Istanbul: Dharma Publications, 2001), 29.

⁷⁴ . Hijr 15/36; Maryam 19/15, 33; al-Rūm 30/56.

⁷⁵ . Toshihiko Izutsu, *God and Man in the Qur'ān* (Kuala Lumpur: Islamic Book Trust, 2002), 27.

word “day (yawm)”: “the day of resurrection”,⁷⁶ “doomsday”,⁷⁷ “a day that will certainly come”,⁷⁸ “the day of returning to Allah”,⁷⁹ “the day of calling”,⁸⁰ “the day of emergence [from the graves]”,⁸¹ “the day of gathering”,⁸² “the day of convergence”,⁸³ “the day of reckoning”,⁸⁴ “the day of regret”,⁸⁵ “the day of promise” (*wa’d* and *wāid*),⁸⁶ “the day of separation”,⁸⁷ “the day of religion”,⁸⁸ “the day of eternity”⁸⁹ can be given as examples for these.

That being the case, even if the word “resurrection/*ba’s*”, which is related to the context of afterlife via the word “day”, exists alone, it gains a depth of meaning that is strong enough to point out all other word’s content meaning as it is a part of the system it belongs. Therefore, it is impossible to consider the statement “resurrection day” in the afterlife belief independent of the meanings of words used in conjunction with the word “day” such as “doomsday”, “resurrection”, “reckoning” and “regret”.

Moreover, the ascribed meanings of the words that are mentioned in the *Qurān* must be consistent with the *Qurān*’s integrity too, not just with the system they belong. For example, Reincarnationists claim that the statement “*al-Ba’s ba’d al-mawt*” (resurrection after death)”, which is mentioned in *Āmantu* (Pillars of Islam), means

⁷⁶ . Al-Qaf 50/56.

⁷⁷ . Al-Qiyāmah 75/1.

⁷⁸ . Hūd 11/103.

⁷⁹ . Al-Baqara 2/281; al-Nūr 24/64.

⁸⁰ . Al-Mu’min 40/32.

⁸¹ . Al-Qāf 50/42.

⁸² . Al-Şhūrā 42/7; Tagābun 64/9; Hūd 11/103; al-Māida 5/109.

⁸³ . Al-Mu’min 40/15; al-Tawbah 9/77.

⁸⁴ . Sād 38/49-57.

⁸⁵ . Maryam 19/39.

⁸⁶ . Al-Qāf 50/20; Saba’ 34/30; al-Burūj 85/2.

⁸⁷ . Sāffāt 37/21; ad-Duhān 44/40; al-Mursalat 77/13, 14, 38; al-Naba 78/17.

⁸⁸ . Al-Fātiha 1/4.

⁸⁹ . Al-Kahf 50/34.

“being present to this world after death”.⁹⁰ However, it will not take much time to realize that an interpretation like this contradicts with other notions of the *Qurān* because if we understand *ba’s*, that is to say resurrection, as “rebirth in this world”, then in which way should we understand “the resurrection” in Demon’s statement “My Lord! Then grant me delay until the day they are resurrected”?⁹¹ Will the Satan start chasing humans at their first resurrections and then stop following them at their subsequent resurrections? On the other hand, when we understand “*al-Ba’s ba’d al-mawt*” as “resurrection in afterlife after death”, better sense is made of the various verses which mention the word and their relation to each other..

In addition to this, some Reincarnationists have claimed that the statement “you killed two times, and you resurrected two times” in the 11th verse of the chapter of *Mu’min* refers to reincarnation. However, this claim of Reincarnationists is also baseless because cognate and implicit statements in the *Qurān* should be understood in the explanatory integrity of the *Qurān* and hadith. The close case that is formed in a verse of the *Qurān* because of eloquence can be explained in another verse or hadiths in details. In the same way, Glossators also explain the statement “two times killing and two times resurrecting” with some other verses in the *Qurān* (*al-Baqara* 2/28, *Maryam* 19/9 and *al-Jāsiya* 45/24-26). Accordingly, “first death” is people’s conditions of not having a life before resurrecting in the world; “second death” is their dying in this world. In the same way, the meaning of resurrection for two times is the resurrection in this world and the resurrection that will happen in afterlife.⁹²

⁹⁰ . Kuday – Akay, *Spiritualizm Ruh Ansiklopedisi=Encyclopedia of Spiritualism and Soul*, 236-239; Onbulak, *Ruhi Olaylar ve Ölümünden Sonrası=Psychic Phenomena and After Death*, 321.

⁹¹ . *Al-Hijr* 15/36.

⁹² . Tabarī, *Tafsīr al-Tabarī* (Riyadh: 2003), 1: 443-450, 20: 290-292; Zamakhsharī, *Al-Kashshāf* (Riyadh: Maktaba al- Ubaykan 1998), 3: 418.

The statement “Is there a way out?” that is mentioned in the verses (az-Zumar 39/58-59; al-Mu’minûn 23/99-100, 107-108; al-Munāfiqûn 63/10-11) only refers to peoples who wish to be resurrected; what they mean is that even though people will request Allah to ‘return to the world’ and be given ‘one more chance’, they will be refused strictly. For it is stated that the dead person cannot return to this world.

The *Qurān* explains the reason of not being returned to world with the following verse “If they were turned, of course they would have turned back to what was forbidden for them again”⁹³ because this return will necessitate not remembering the former life due to another Qurānic principle i.e., “the belief of unseen (*ghayb*)”.

A return that will happen in this way, on the other hand, will lead to “repetition (*takarrur*)”. To explain with a simple example, a child, whose hand gets burned when he touches a hot stove, will not touch it again. If we assume that this child forgot the experience he had, the child will keep touching the heating stove. However, if we say, “one can remember his/her former life”, then the principle of “the belief of un- seen” will be disrupted because Allah created humans to test them.⁹⁴ The way of becoming successful in this exam is: faith and good deeds “even though they do not see” as is mentioned in many verses.⁹⁵ Thus, when human sees beings that actually should not be seen by him, then his test is over.⁹⁶

In this case, it will not be wrong at all to put forward an idea like this:

A) If returning to world after death will be mentioned, it is obligatory to completely forget the former life due to “the belief of unseen”.

⁹³ . Al-An’am 6/28.

⁹⁴ . Hūd 11/7; al-Mulk 67/2.

⁹⁵ . Al-Anbiyā 21/49; Fāṭr 35/18; al-Mulk 67/12.

⁹⁶ . Al-An’am 6/8.

B) As human beings forget the experiences that they had in their former lives, they make the same mistakes that they did in their former lives.

C) Conclusion: It is unnecessary to return to the world after death because this leads to repetition.

Reincarnation also contradicts with the “recall” and “regret” notions of the *Qurān*. Because, according to reincarnation, a human who is suffering in his present life, s/he is expected to not aware which deeds in his former life cause this due to “karma”. However, the *Qurān* states that humans will absolutely remember the reasons of the punishment that they will suffer when they are resurrected, and they will feel a deep regret for the things they have done.⁹⁷

On the other hand, the *Qurān* rejects the belief that what exists today is a different

Manifestation of the past and also the belief in “karmic bonds”, which claims that the distresses and hardships that are suffered now are because of bad deeds in past lives.

In many verses of the *Qurān*, people who lived in the past, live in the present and will live in the future, separated from each other strictly in terms of personal and lawful responsibilities, and it is revealed that mankind will be gathered as a whole in the presence of Allah in order to be judged.⁹⁸

Reincarnation is explaining that only one life is not enough for the rise of the spirit and for human to be tested and living a long life is advantageous for human.⁹⁹ However, a way of thought like this is not consistent with the *Qurān* because the *Qurān* states that living a

⁹⁷ . Al-Infītār 82/4,5; al-Mujādala 7/58; Nāzi'āt 79/35; Yūnus 10/54; Maryam 19/39, al-Zumar 54/58; Shu'arā 26/102.

⁹⁸ . al-Baqara 2/134, 141; al-Wāqiah 56/47-50; Yāsīn 36/30-32; al-Baqara 2/286.

⁹⁹ . Öztürk. Kur'ân'daki İslâm=Islam in the Qur'ân, p. 153.

long life will increase the agony instead of saving the human from that pain.¹⁰⁰

There is no statement that implies *tanāsukh* in the literature of *hadith*.¹⁰¹ The Holy prophet Mohammad (PBUH) revealed that the book of deeds will be closed when a person dies.¹⁰²

In another report, it is stated that Allah resolved that a dead man cannot return to the world.¹⁰³

Finally, we will try to support our argument that reincarnation does not simply involve believing in returning to the world, but it entails an inaccurate i.e., non-Qur'anic view of God, the world, and the place of human beings in relation to God and the world. And hence accepting this belief will harm basic essentials of Islam, particularly the belief in divine oneness.

Conclusion

A human being, which is the only being that is aware of death in the world of livings, has kept the hope of an eternal life alive ever since Hz. Adam.¹⁰⁴ The feeling of death and disappearance that is the basis of all fears has always been the first reason in human behavior, and humanity has sought out the ways of escaping from death with religious and philosophic solutions. No evidence that is an opposition to immortality could prevent a human being from hoping for 'eternity'; thus, the religions that promise an immortal life for humans have proved to be more advantageous over the thought systems that do not have such beliefs in every period of history.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁰ . al-Baqara 2/94-96; Āl-i Imrān 3/178.

¹⁰¹ . İbn Hazm, Kitāb al-Faşl, 166.

¹⁰² . Muslim, "Wasiyyah", 14.

¹⁰³ . Ibn Māje, "Muqaddima", 13; "Jihād", 16.

¹⁰⁴ . Al-A'rāf 7/20; Tāhā 20/120.

¹⁰⁵ . Ernsts Von Aster, İlk Çağ ve Orta Çağ Felsefe Tarihi= History of Antiquity and Mediaeval Philosophy (Istanbul: İm Publications, 2000), 301.

Systematizing the belief that “life somehow goes on after death”, which is seen since the beginning of humanity, is one of the most important functions of religion. Religions have not only legitimated the emotion of eternity that human beings deeply harbored, but they have also made it a religious and ethical obligation. However, while religions ground their “immortality” and “salvation” doctrines, they have performed it within the scope of a system that is in parallel with God, universe and human concepts.

In this concept, the thought and religion systems that adopt an “absolute” God understanding, whose relation to universe is impossible, have reached the immortality by the “absolute soul” theory with their own logic. According to them, soul is already eternal by its essence, and it does not need God for immortality. Divine religions, one of which is Islam, on the other hand, have favored a “God centered (theocentric)” approach about immortality. For them, just as how the “the beginning (*al-Mabda*)” was actualized by God, “the return (*al-Ma'ād*)” will also be actualized by His wisdom, will and power.

A similar difference is present in religions’ “salvation” theories as well. According to divine religions, without Allah’s help and mercy, and particularly “faith”, the actualization of salvation is impossible. According to religion and thought systems that adopted the Absolute God understanding, what brings salvation to human is his own efforts depending on the universal moral law (*karma*), not the faith in God.

It is obvious that the belief of “rebirth in this world” (*tanāsukh*/reincarnation), which is one of the solutions for human’s desire of eternity, in our opinion, is not consistent with Islam’s “resurrection in afterlife” (*akhirah*) doctrine.

However, we think that the most important thing to do for solving this modern belief problem is getting to the crux of the problem and emphasizing that these two beliefs are based on different conceptions of God, the universe and human concepts and relations.

It is not possible for the religion of Islam's one God, who is at the center of everything, to allow humanity's salvation, which is an important essence of religion, in fact, the existence of it, to be explained in terms of concepts such as "immortal soul" and "universal law", which puts God on the back burner.

Basically, such an understanding will make God an unimportant figure in an individual's life. If "soul" provides human's immortality and a "moral law" (*karma*) that is independent of God provides his salvation, then what is the reason for believing in God?

In fact, this situation explains why there is no omnipotence personal God concept cannot be formed in the religion and thought systems that have *tanāsukh* and reincarnation as core components. Or on the contrary, if the religion of Islam is a God centered religion and the belief in Allah matters that much in personal and social life, it is mostly because of accepting God as the absolute authority, as being the owner of the day of punishment and reward in terms of immortality and salvation. That is why the *Qurān* constantly mentions Allah and the belief in the afterlife in almost inseparably. These two doctrines stand or fall together; a damage that occurs in one of them will lead to damages to the other one.

The *Qurān* represents the oneness of God concept (*tawhīd*), and in this context, describes the universe as "Everything except God". The *Qurān* draws attention to universe's being subsequent and finite with its all elements in order to reveal that the universe is not God (If skies, stars, planets and the Earth, that is to say the universe as a whole, are formed subsequently and it is certain that one day their order will be disrupted and disappeared, then how can something that is created and mortal be God?).

While the *Qurān* places the human being in a distinguished position in the universe, it also considers him as a part of the universe too; therefore, it accepts him in the same ontological status with the

universe. This situation necessitates human's being "subsequent" and "finite" as a whole as well.

Therefore, it is impossible for the *Qurān* to accept a human nature with an absolute and immortal soul that has the same essence with the Creator. According to the *Qurān*, it is human "himself", a soul-body unity, who is born, alive and dead, and will be resurrected in afterlife and questioned, and eventually, s/he will be placed in heaven or hell.

Although death is an observable fact, it is out of human's scope of experience because it happens once for human, and the human, who experiences this phenomenon, cannot find the second opportunity to describe it. On the contrary, it is possible to reveal the *Qurān's* point of view about immortality and salvation for human being. This, however, can only be achieved by understanding the verses under the guidance of the right methods and techniques, because understanding and interpretation are not mechanisms that are free from personal attitude, expectation and prejudice.

In this context, some people's claim that "Reincarnation is cited in the *Qurān* too" becomes an obvious example of how a result that is not consistent with the *Qurān's* integrity and Islam's basic principles can be obtained when verses are discussed with ideological, partial, and fragmented approaches.

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The Concept of Resurrection and Hereafter in Hinduism

By: **Dr. Mohammad Ahmad Naeemi**
Asst. Professor, Dept. of Islamic Studies
Jamia Hamdard (Hamdard University), New Delhi

Translated By: Syed Ali Ameer

Abstract

The belief in resurrection and hereafter is an inseparable part of the principles of every religion. Hinduism believes in transmigration and reincarnation as a belief of resurrection. The concept of resurrection in Hinduism is deeply and basically connected with '*awagaman*' (the cycle of birth and death) and salvation (Moksha or Mukti). It is very difficult to understand this belief without understanding of these concepts. Therefore in this article, the belief of reincarnation and the philosophy of salvation (Moksha/Mukti) with its three ways is analyzed in brief. Despite the belief in transmigration or '*awagaman*' Hindus also hold the view of Heaven and Hell. So the concepts of Heaven and Hell in Hinduism are also discussed in the article. It is noteworthy here that all these concepts are precisely described in the article with the references of Vedas, Purana (religious texts), sacred books of Hindus (Scriptures) and Dharmasastra. The problems of the belief in transmigration or reincarnation also have been set forth for discussion in the article and eventually this belief is condemned and disproved scientifically.

Keywords: Hinduism, Transmigration, Reincarnation, Salvation (Moksha or Mukti), *awagaman* (the cycle of death and rebirth), Yuga, Karma, Heaven (Swarg), Hell (Narak).

Introduction

Every religion has a concept of resurrection or hereafter. No religion can be considered perfect without having a concept of resurrection or hereafter because it relates to the end and future. If there was no concept of resurrection it would be limited into past. The Islamic concept of resurrection or hereafter is linked with Qiyamah and the Hindu concept of resurrection is depended upon the idea of Yugas (world ages).

According to Hindu concept of resurrection or hereafter, the universe origins by the creation of Brahma, nurturing and bringing up is completed by Vishnu with repeated incarnation through guidance and education and then the universe ends by Shiva with destruction and annihilation and then a new creation by Brahma, nurturing and providing sustenance by Vishnu for a certain period and destruction by Shiva and then a new creation takes place by Brahma.

It is necessary here to clarify that nurturing and management takes places in every world or Yuga and age through the various Avatars of Vishnu, so no Avatar is first or last because there were many Avatars before every Avatar in various Yugas and ages and there shall be another Avatar after one, in the next Yugas. Therefore any Avatar can be only first or last in the sense that he is the first or the last Avatar of any specific Yuga. And this infinite cycle is running everlastingly. Thus there is neither any last creation nor world i.e. the time of nurturing and management as per Hindu tenet and also there is no last resurrection because the cycle of creation, sustenance and destruction is everlasting. Thus there is neither any first creation nor any world; before that there was no world and there is no resurrection before that there was no doomsday.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁶ . Syed Irtiza Husain, *Mazahib 'Alám Aur Zuhur Muauad* (World Religion and The Promised Manifestation) Publisher: Mir'át Publications - 2004, New Delhi, P. 36.

The single day of Brahma is considered as a criteria for measuring the universe or the age of creation. The single day of Brahma endures for one thousand 'Mahayuga' means four hundred thirty two millions years then the night of the destruction of universe starts which is called 'Pralaya'. The cycle of the resurrection of the world is from the beginning. Thus it is not decided certainly that the universe was originated on such time because the time defined for the origin will be suspected itself as the time before that also may be considered and then this question arises that we cannot conceive the origin of universe from zero or from nothing so the cycle of universe is considered eternal. There were many worlds before the existing world or universe and also many resurrections held before, which means the existing universe has been originated after different universes and resurrections because the cycle of universe and resurrection is eternal. That is why it is totally useless to define the time of eternal universe.¹⁰⁷

In Short, Indian Philosophy has considered overall, the time as endless and perpetual passing in the different parts or stages. On the ending of one cycle of time, the world declines and all souls are merged into inactive existence and the universe emerges and adopts a new body again after a gap or taking a rest.¹⁰⁸

Yuga is divided into four ages in Hinduism 1) Satya Yuga 2) Treta Yuga 3) Dvapara Yuga 4) Kali Yuga. Now the Kali Yuga is going on, which is the shortest among these four Yugas, which is of 432,000 years and it was started on 13th February 3102 B.C. Dvapara Yuga is the double of Kali Yuga which age is 864,000 human years. Treta is triple of Kali Yuga, which duration is 1,296,000 years and Satya Yuga is fourth time of Kali Yuga which is of 1,728,000 years and

¹⁰⁷ . Dr. Satish Chandra Upadhyay, Dr. Dharendra Mohan Datta, Bharti darshan Pustak Bhandar, Patna, Hindi edition, P. 15.

¹⁰⁸ . Louis Moore, The encyclopedia of world religions, Urdu Translation: Yasir Jawadi, New Delhi, P. 178.

Maha Yuga is made of these four yugas which age is 4,320,000 human years.¹⁰⁹

One day or one night of Brahma is consists of one thousand Maha yugas which is equal to 432,000,000 years means the period of two thousand Maha Yugas which is called 'Kalpa' is equal to one day and one night of Brahma that is 868,600,000 years, as it is mentioned in Bhagavad Gita Chapter 18, Shloka (hymn) 17.

The concept of resurrection in Hinduism is deeply and basically connected with '*awagaman*' (the cycle of birth and death) and salvation from it (Moksha or Mukti) rather the belief of resurrection and hereafter is exclusively based upon these affairs and it is very difficult to understand this issue without understanding of these concepts. Therefore it is necessary to analyze first the belief of reincarnation and the philosophy of salvation (Mukti) in brief.

Transmigration or the cycle of birth and death

The followers of every religion of the world have a special slogan which distinguishes that religion from other religions and nations. For example the slogan of Muslims is the testimonial word of Muslims, Trinity among Christians and sanctification of the day of Sabbath i.e. Saturday among Jews. Just like that the theory of transmigration is the slogan of Hinduism. It is also known as '*awagaman*'.

Transmigration, reincarnation or '*awagaman*' is such a tenet of Hinduism, which is commonly accepted by all Hindus. Which means the human takes rebirth in another form after death. The base of this tenet is that they believe in countless souls and God cannot create a new soul because the soul is also eternal according to them. Therefore every soul is trapped in the cycle of birth and death due to his sin and every soul takes rebirth in 184,000 forms in return of every sin. That means the existence of animals, plants,

¹⁰⁹ . Vaman Shivram Apte, Sanskrit- Hindi Dictionary, Delhi, Motilal Banarasidass Publishing House, 1997.

inanimate objects, the conflict in the world, human diseases and falling into hardship all is due to the past sins means rebirth takes place as a retribution of bad deeds.¹¹⁰

It is known after study of Vedas about the belief of transmigration and reincarnation that such belief was not found in the period of old Vedas. They believed in beginning that human soul enters another body leaving previous one after death then it leaves that body and adopts a new body as its' abode and the same process goes on perpetually. Rather they believe that the people who commit sins, Grand Lord Varuna sends him to a horrible place of hell in the lowermost part of the earth and the people who do good deeds and spend their life in piety, Varuna grants him a place in a best heaven where they live with tranquility and pleasure.

But this belief seized to continue after Vedas age or after coming Aryas to India. They found the old Indian nation Dravidian believing in transmigration and reincarnation so they also attested that. Thus this belief firmed into them that a new worldly and earthly life starts after death in which human bears the result of the deeds of his past life and this process will continue forever. If a person has done good deeds in his past life, he will possess good form in the next life and if he would have committed sins then he will take birth in a bad or worse form and he can be also in the form of any animal, bird, tree or flower etc. that means he might become a high class Brahman and as well as a dog, pig or donkey etc.¹¹¹

Thus Viyog Hari writes in his book "Hindu Dharma":

"Our sages and Acharyas have told that every living creature takes birth according to its deeds and reaps the same. The fruit of the deeds of past life is reaped in this life and the fruit of this life is reaped in the next birth. The doubt is removed and the good deeds are encouraged by this system. Such encouragement that a person

¹¹⁰ . Manusmriti, Chapter, 12, Shloka, 16,25, 26

¹¹¹ . Manusmriti, Chapter 12, Ishloka 53-64.

would be free from this bondage in the next birth or reap the good fruits of his deeds. It is not necessary that a human will take rebirth in human form rather the birth can take place in any of the vagina from a large number of vaginas. It is depend on his deeds.”¹¹²

The question arises that when this belief was not found in Vedic age then how this belief came into existence afterwards? And which factors were working behind this belief?

The answer is that a few objections were disturbing their minds, they found the satisfactory answer of those doubts in the belief of transmigration and reincarnation. They were observing that a person is living a luxurious life and the other is living a very hard life with a lot of sufferings and with poverty and the third one is facing another type of hardship. They were unable to justify this. That is why they solved and treated their mental doubts adopting this belief.

Thus Viyog Hari says:

“Sometimes it is said that we do good deeds but we reap bad fruits and have to suffer different type of hardships or vice versa is also seen means some people reap good fruits while doing bad. This is a clear contradiction. But this doesn’t affect the principle of deed. Our sages have told that every living creature will take birth according to his deeds and reaps the same fruit.”¹¹³

In short, the belief in transmigration and reincarnation is the crucial part of Hinduism. Although Hindu Sages and Acharyas have developed this belief for the solution of their doubts but many problems have been occurred by this belief such as:

- This belief has created ‘fatalism’ in Hinduism because when it is confirmed that human fate is decided according to his

¹¹² . Viyog Hari, Hinduism, New Delhi, Sasta Sahtiya Mandal, 2001, P. 55-56.

¹¹³ . Viyog Hari, Hinduism, New Delhi, Sasta Sahtiya Mandal, 2001, P. 55.

deeds of past life and that is unchangeable then how can he play the role of a brave, patient, good and pious person?

- The sympathy is discouraged by this belief because when we will see a person suffering a hardship then necessarily will think that he has surely committed sins in his past life for those he is being punished now and then we will not think to help him.
- A person becomes dauntless in committing the sins by this belief because he knows the last result will be that I will be made an animal in the next life and this is better for me as animals don't have any thought and distress.
- This belief necessitates that God punishes without informing about the sin and that will prove that God is unjust (God forbid).
- This belief will also tempt this doubt in the heart probably God himself want that we should take birth in bad vagina by doing bad deeds so that the numbers of useful animals will not be less.

Beside aforementioned problems, this belief becomes void as per science also. As Science has proved that billions of years ago only inanimate objects, plants and animals were inhabited in the world before human origin. Which clearly shows that animals and plants are not result of human deeds because it is necessary and inevitable that plants and animals must be present before human generation. If human being was born before these things then he would not be able to survive and when there was no human then it was no deed. So the animals and plants are not the result of human deeds.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁴ . Professor Ghulam Rasool, *The comparative study of world religions*, Ilm wa Irfan Publishers, Lahore, 2006, P. 209

Moksha or Mukti (Salvation)

The basic issue of the tenet of resurrection or hereafter in Hinduism is to be released from the endless cycle of awagaman or transmigration. Means a person should be released from the repeating birth cycle in a new form. All sects of Hinduism have a consensus upon it.

According to the various religious scriptures and Scholars; there are three ways of reaching this goal.

1. Through action
2. Through knowledge
3. Through asceticism or Devotion

All Hindu sects accept the importance and advantage of these three ways and they oblige their followers to follow these ways. The way of action (karama marga) was emphasized in ancient times then the way of acquiring knowledge (Janana marga) gained high status and at the end, the ways of asceticism or Devotion (Bhakti Marga) was promoted and given importance ,even it prevailed the two precedent ways.

What is the meaning of these three ways in Hinduism? We will mention this separately in brief.

The way of action (Karma Marga)

The way of action is also called 'the way of sacrifice'. The concept of sacrifice or 'Bali' was popular in Hinduism from ancient times. This is the way of proximity to Deities. First of all, Vedas told about the way of action and it was explained, elaborated and composed in Brahman, Kalpa Sutra and Memansa and then Mahabharata and old scriptures provided them general popularity and acceptance.

In Short, This is the way by which a person nears to deities. The study of Vedas shows that the service to humanity and sacrifice are the ways of action. There are a lot of concepts about sacrifice in Hinduism. In contrast, there is no other way of action which can make possible the pleasure of deities and salvation or Mukti. The

philosophy behind the background of this action is that when God becomes weak by the act of creation then deities remove that weakness through sacrifice.

The sacrifice is the way by which deities become kind upon human with their pleasure and bless them with the bounties of this world and hereafter. As much as the sacrifice will be performed with sincerity, the deities will be gratified more with pleasure. That means the sacrifice is the only action which brings the blessings of world and hereafter.

The sacrifices are of different types: 1) obligatory and fixed 2) obligatory and unfixed 3) optional and apart from these, there are also homely sacrifices which are called 'Grahya' and belong to persons. The sacrifices given in the Vedic period were only consist of fruits, milk and breads but the sacrifice of animals was ended and the followers of 'Smriti' (Hindus sacred literature based on human memory) only sacrificed that, in which blood was not shed.

The society was divided into four classes for recognition of action and the separate actions were decided for every caste and race. Briefly, it was decided on the basis of social class and caste system and their actions and responsibilities that the salvation of Brahman is in gaining knowledge, Kshatriya's salvation is in showing valor, Vaishya's salvation is in hard labor and excessive production of grains and shudra's salvation is in serving higher casts. That is the way of action means a person should give sacrifices on the name of deities being indifferent to results. The four casts have to perform their duties with dedication. Thus they will achieve salvation in hereafter.¹¹⁵

Apart from this, there are three types of worships in Hinduism 1) physical worship like fast, the prayer of morning, afternoon and evening, chanting and religious war etc. financial worships like

¹¹⁵ . Professor Ghulam Rasool, *The comparative study of world religions*, Ilm wa Irfan Publishers, Lahore, 2006, P. 180-182, Dr. Tarchanda, *The influence of Islam on Hindu culture*, Azad Kitab Ghar, Delhi,1966,P. 26.

charity, alms, sacrifice and Yagy (immolation or oblation) etc. 3) Physical and financial worship like pilgrimage etc.

All abovementioned worships and deeds are considered in the area of 'the way of action'. And all these actions are performed with the intention and aim that the repentance of sins, glad tidings of heaven and freedom from the recurring cycle of death and life are given on the performance of these actions according to Hindu scriptures. Thus it is said about the importance of *Yagy* and *Havan* in Manusmriti (chapter 11, Shloka 239-341) that those who commit impure deeds and indecent actions, become pure through worship and asceticism and thoughts, words or sins committed by body all are burnt by '*tap*' i.e. worship and ascetic deeds. It is mentioned in Manusmriti regarding '*Vrata*' (fast) and '*Upvas*' that after being ritually pure and controlling the heart and senses, to keep 12 days fast is called '*Paraak Vrata*' which destroys all sins.

The Grand religious scholar Acharya Deval said introducing the system of fasts that no doubt a person get rids of sins by *Vrata*, *Upvas*, principles and afflicting the body.¹¹⁶

It is mentioned about the blessing of charity and alms in Rig-Veda (10-7, 10-8) that generous people become immortal, they are neither ruined nor become victim of fear and sadness. The charity provides to food providers the blessing and comforts of this world and heaven. It is written in Manusmriti that a person should be provided with love, in case he asks for something because a needy person may come to a generous someday, who can bring salvation from all sins for him. It is written in Manusmriti (4-235) that the philanthropist who gives charity with honor to beggar and beggar or needy person accepts that charity with honor, both of them go to heaven and in contrary the giver and taker with humility both go to hell.

¹¹⁶ . History of Dharmasastra, Vol. 4, P. 20

Introducing various great religious places of pilgrimage it is said in Gautama Dharmasutra (19-14) that all mountains, all rivers, holy lakes, places of pilgrimage, the dwellings of Rishis, cow-pens, and temples of the gods (are) places (which destroy sin).

It is mentioned in Mahabharata van parva (33, 34-82) that any man or woman who takes ritual bath once in the Holy Pushkar, he becomes free from sins committed from birth. It is told in Vishnu Purana ¹¹⁷ (2-82-120,121) mentioning the magnificence of Ganga that whenever someone hears its name, whenever someone aspires to visit that, when it is looked or touched or when its water is taken or when someone dives in it or when its name is uttered (or it is praised) then Ganga purifies living creatures day by day. When inhabitants of thousands of miles far from Ganga utter its name then their sins of three births are destroyed.

It is written in Matsya Purana (45-106) that reaching to Ganga is easier than all other places. Only Gangadwar Prayag and where it is merged into sea; it is hard to reach, the people who take ritual bath here go to heaven and the people who die here they do not get a new birth. In the same Matsya Purana (16,17-182) it is mentioned about Kashi that by staying in Kashi not only Human becomes free from the great sin of Brahman's murder rather he is also saved from endless cycle of birth and death and doesn't take birth again. After thousands births of Yog Sadhna, the yog is achieved but the high level of salvation is achieved by death in Kashi. Sinner, wicked and non-religious person also becomes free from sins and he enters Avimukta.¹¹⁸

Explaining the significance of Mathura, it is said in Varaha Purana (8 & 11-152) that Vishnu says there is no place on this earth, in this sky or in the lower world, which is beloved to me like Mathura. Mathura is my famous place and rescuer. There is no magnificent place like that in my eyes. There are important ponds in Pushkar.

¹¹⁷ . religious texts

¹¹⁸ . History of Dharmasastra, Vol. 3, P. 1345

Manifesting its blessing it is mentioned in Mahabharata that any man or woman once takes ritual bath in Holy Pushkar he is liberated from the sins committed from birth. It is said mentioning the magnificence of Gaya that those who take ritual bath on the place where two rivers white or black merges, go to heaven. The brave people who sacrifice their body there (die by drowning) they get salvation¹¹⁹ and the famous research scholar of Hinduism, Dr. Pandurang Vaman Kane wrote about Prayag referring Matsya Purana and Kurma Purana that by visiting Prayag, uttering its name or by wiping its soil, human becomes free from all sins. This is the holy place of Prajapati and who take ritual bath here they abide to heaven and who die here don't take new birth.¹²⁰

The way of Knowledge (Janana Marga)

When Vedas and Brahmans too much emphasized on the way of action and the thoughts of 'awagaman and action' emerged then Hindu researchers and thinkers felt that the salvation cannot be achieved only by adopting the way of action. As well as Brahmans got highest position and much importance in society due to sacrifice. The human society was divided and disturbed.

Considering this situation, Hindi researchers and thinkers emphasized on the necessity of the adoption of the way of knowledge and austerity. They fixed Upanishads as a source of knowledge and set the standard that human shouldn't be trapped into the way of action due to unawareness and ignorance rather he should gain knowledge and cognizance.

The base of this idea was that the cause of human's sufferings and misfortunes is ignorance and the ignorance can be removed by the light of knowledge. The knowledge means human is not separate from the first soul rather he is a part of it. the relation of human and soul is like the relation of river and sea, as river is annihilated into

¹¹⁹ . Ibid. P. 1236

¹²⁰ . Dr. Pandurang Vaman Kane, History of Dharmasastra, vol.3, Uttar Pradesh Hindi Sansthan, Lucknow, 2003, P. 1327.

sea after passing towards its destination, the human entity also merges into Brahman soul (The supreme soul) so the knowledge of Pantheism is the 'certain knowledge' and the way of salvation.

The basic concept of the way of knowledge which is prevailed today also in India is the unity and connection of the soul (Atman) with Brahma (The supreme soul). Brahma is one and unique, peerless, independent and eternal, he is unchangeable that's why cannot be divided into different parts.¹²¹ Hindu Dharm Shastra have defined 100 years standard age to obtain knowledge and cognizance and divided it into four levels or stages; which is called Varna Ashram. Which we have already discussed in the last pages. So the way of knowledge means a human should absorb his soul into the supreme soul and follow and fulfill the duties and principles of the four levels of life, only in such condition he can attain the real salvation.

The way of Devotion (Bhakti marga)

Bhakti means to ascribe himself to a personal deity means to devote a single deity with the feeling of affection, to have a personal faith on a personal deity and believe in him, to have an affection towards him like a love for a human being and to endow everything in his service and to get salvation by this way not by deeds, sacrifice or knowledge. The love which is centered to an entity worthy of worship after gaining knowledge about the attributes of master.¹²²

The way of devotion (Bhakti marga) is related to feelings and its base is manifested in the emotional aspect of human awareness as the roots of the way of knowledge are in the faculty of mind and the roots of the way of action are found in the part of will power.

The source and reference of Bhakti is the Vedas. In the beginning, less attention was paid to the way of devotion but later, the way of

¹²¹ . Professor Mohammad Ikram Rana, *International religions*, Aareeb Publications, New Delhi, 2012, P. 41.

¹²² . Dr. Tarchanda, *The influence of Islam on Hindu culture*, Azad Kitab Ghar, Delhi, 1966, P. 48

devotion got the significant precedence over the aforementioned two ways or methods and this way became famous and popular. The reason is that seeking knowledge is not possible for every person so Yogis and Hermits take advantage of it.

The idea and nature of the way of devotion is monotheism, which base is Bhagavad Gita in which Krishna Maharaja teaches that:

God can be attained only by full devotion. (Gita, Chapter 8, Shloka, 22)

Devotees live and take place in the existence of God. (Gita, Chapter 9, Shloka, 29)

God can be seen and recognized only by devotion and can be gathered in one place with him. (Gita, Chapter 11, Shloka, 54)

Devotion means to ascribe all deeds only to him. (Gita, Chapter 8, Shloka, 22)

Devotion is the only way of achieving mystic sight and to attain monistic condition, devotee is the beloved of God. (Gita, Chapter 12, Shloka, 14)

It is clear from all of these Shlokas that according to the way of devotion it is necessary to be a personal God and the complete affection and devotion should be expressed for him, to survive in his reliance and merge himself into his essence. After passing this stage, a human would get salvation.

In short, the significant goal of a human is to reach the salvation and freedom, according to Hinduism. This is clearly mentioned in Gita along with other religious scriptures. For Example:

The one who immersing in practice and devotion pertaining to God, meditates chanting the word 'Om' and leaves his body then that person certainly achieves the lofty status means goes to the spiritual world. (Gita, Chapter 8, Shloka, 13)

O Arjun! The person who always remembers me; the high and truth, immersing in my remembrance then I'm easy to attain for that

worshipper means I'm attained to him easily. (Gita, Chapter 8, Shloka, 14)

The worshippers, hermits and Yogis who have attained me, never come to this temporary world which is afflicted with pains and sorrows because they have achieved the high success. (Gita, Chapter 8, Shloka, 11)

In this world from the high means heaven up to the low means hell is the place of all pains and sorrows, where the cycle of birth and death is going on but who attains the status of Lord myself, then he never retakes a birth. (Gita, Chapter 8, Shloka, 16)

Those who study Vedas and drinks potion of gods¹²³ seeking the attainment of the heaven, hiddenly worship me, go to the holy place of the heaven of Indra, freeing from all sins, where they enjoy the god's blessings like deities. (Gita, Chapter 9, Shloka, 20)

Thus that worshipper when enjoys the luxuriousness of the magnificent and extensive heavenly feeling and the rewards of their good deeds become weak then they come back to this fleeting world. Thus, those who seek the sensory luxuriousness abiding by the principles of three Vedas they only get the cycle of birth and death means they reach to the recurring awagaman. (Gita, Chapter 9, Shloka, 21)

The concept of Heaven (Swarg) and Hell (Narak) in Hinduism

Despite the belief in transmigration or awagaman Hindus also hold the view of Heaven and Hell. They believe that there are three worlds (1) The Supreme world (2) Intermediate world and (3) the lowest or the inferior world. The Supreme world is called 'Safar loka' means Heaven and intermediate world is this world where we are now surviving and the lowest world is called 'Naga loka' means the place of the gathering for snakes (Hell) and it is also called 'Naga loka', Narak or Pataal. It is mentioned in Vishnu Purana that Hell is not only one in number rather its number is eighty eight thousand

¹²³ . Som Ras-allusion to wine made in ancient times.

and one of these hells are specified to punish to perpetrator of every sin or crime.¹²⁴

We will consider separately the teachings, rules and affairs regarding 'Swarg' and 'Narak' discussed in old scriptures of Hinduism with the title of 'Swarg' and 'Narak' so that the stand of old Hinduism become very clear regarding this issue.

Swarg

According to Hindu Scholars and thinkers Swarg (Heaven) is that place of luxuriousness or grace which is free from pains and misfortunes. Which is not endowed with pain, comes into existence for aspirant and that is called by the name of Swarg. Where is located the Swarg? It is said regarding that it is located above earth and Narak is located below it. Swarg is also considered thousands of Yojana¹²⁵ above earth in old astrological scriptures and it is mentioned about its extent that Swarg is forty eight thousands Yojana (1 Yojana is equal to eight miles) in height, 16 Yojana in depth and three times is in length and width.¹²⁶

Swarg is more explicitly and illustratively discussed in Hindu scriptures than Narak. There are three Swarg mentioned in a few Mantras of Vedas. For Example it is said in Rig Veda (9-113-9, 9-14-8,8-5-8,6-35-1) A kind, generous or worshipper goes to Heaven, meats with deities, Mitra and Varuna makes him eternal. It is mentioned in Rig Veda (9-113-10, 11) that the life of Swarg is full of happiness and lights and all the wishes of its people are fulfilled. It is requested in Rig Veda (9-113-8) that Make me immortal in that realm where dwells the King, Vivasvan's Son, Where is the secret shrine of heaven, where are those waters young and fresh. The

¹²⁴ . Peer Muhammad Karam Shah Azhari, Ziya-al-Nabi, Ziya-al-Quran publications Lahore, 1420 A.H., Vol.1, P. 190

¹²⁵ . A **yojana** (Sanskrit: योजन) is a measure of distance that was used in ancient India. A **Yojana** is about 12-15 km. (i.e. 60 kosh = 1 **yojana** and 1 kosh is 200 m)
Source: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yojana>

¹²⁶ . History of Dharmasastra, Vol. 3, P. 1105

person who does not perform Yagy, does not worship, who follows the orders of other than Lord Indra, he is thrown below Swarg. It is described in Rig Veda (10-14-8) that good people meet their Yagy, charity and alms after death and join their ancestors and possess bright bodies.

It is explained in Rig Veda (3, 1-154-10) that the people who devote or organize such Yagy in which the charity or alms reaches to the thousands of cows they leave for heavenly abode.

It is mentioned in Rig Veda (10-107-8) that generous people become immortal, they neither perish nor afflicted by sorrow and pain. The charity provides to food providers the luxuries of this life and heaven. It is written in Manusmriti (4-235) that the generous who gives a beggar with honor and the beggar or rightful person accepts that alms with dignity then both go to heaven and in contrary, the donor giving with humility and taker (with humility) both go to hell.

It is noted in Matsya Purana (45-106) that the people who take ritual bath here go to Heaven and the people who die here don't take rebirth. It is said describing the magnificence of Gaya that the people who take a ritual bath at the point where white or black two rivers join each other, they go to heaven, the brave people who sacrifice their body (die by drowning) they get salvation¹²⁷ and it is in Rig Veda (7-135-10) that Som ras (potion of Gods), Ghee and Honey flow for heavenly people. Yamaduta resides in Swarg and the sound of flute and songs always come there.

Apart from Rig Veda, the detailed informations about Swarg are provided by Atharva Veda and other religious scriptures and it is mentioned frequently. It is said in Atharva Veda (2-34-3 and 3-29-3) that generous and the charity doer goes to Swarg where the weak people don't have to pay tax to the strong ones. There are many women for the heavenly people, they get edible fruits and

¹²⁷ . *ibid*, P. 1236

vegetables, there are ponds of Ghee there and the rivers of milk and honey are found there, the wine flows like water. There are beautiful pools of water all around adorned with lotus flowers for inhabitants there. The good people feel enthusiasm, joy, cheer and happiness in Swarg and their bodies are safe from diseases.

It is mentioned in Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa (6, 5-2, 5-1) that those who perform Yagy they are transformed into shimmering stars in the sky. It is mentioned in Bhagavad Gita (2-37), Raghuvansham (15-7) that the martyrs of war go to heaven and enjoy the company of beautiful women. Kathopanishad (1-12) consists of that Yamaduta himself has said that there is neither any danger or fear nor agedness in Swarg. Its inhabitants don't become restless by hunger and thirst or pain and sorrow and they move in the environment of full joy and happiness.

It is clear from abovementioned references that righteous people and martyrs achieve heaven and such people have a right upon the best edible things e.g. Ghee, Honey etc. and the luxuriousness of heaven. And it seems from Kaushitaki Upanishad (1-4) that the fortunate inhabitants of heaven get the beautiful fairies, necklaces, best apparels, fragrant perfumes, the herbs making eyes beautiful, golden lotuses free from mud and ponds adorned with other flowers, the beautiful people reside on its sides and the beautiful fairies welcome them and put on their bodies the fragrant and shining things and they wear precious jewels and gems.¹²⁸

Narak

Maharshi Gautama holds the view that Narak is that special place where a human constantly suffers and feels the pains. And he has a firm view about the tenet of resurrection that some generations and the people of Ashrams due to their belief and certainty regarding their duties and deeds get the reward or punishment after this apparent life and as a result of all deeds, get rebirth adopting

¹²⁸ . History of Dharmasastra, Vol. 3, P. 1103

physical body in special country, race, family, form and face, age, education, character and moral, money and wealth, ease and comfort and according to the advancement of intellect and consciousness. And the people who do against the religious laws they take rebirth in various physical forms and perish. (Gautama 7-13, 21-4-6). Same thing is said in Apastamba Dharmasutra that if a person performs deed only for fulfilment of his sensory enjoyment and carnal desires then he deserves for Narak and when a person acts against religion then his destiny and final destination is Narak and the luxuriousness of Swarg is achieved as a result of sincere deeds. (Apastamba Dharmasutra, 8-1-3, 12-12-4)

There is no clear and explicit evidences about Narak or Hell in Rig Veda but it is indicated in few Mantras for example it is in Rig Veda that O, Indra and Soma, after killing wicked and vicious people throw them into separate darkness. Someone who tries to harm me in day or night throw them below three earths after depriving him from body and descendants. The people who don't obey the order of Soma, and Soma hate them and look them with wrong sight, throw them into pit. (Rig Veda, 2-29-6, 3-5-5, 104-3, 7,104-11) it seems from these Mantras of Vedas that the sages of Rig Veda believe that there is any pit or Cave beneath the earth where sinners are thrown by deities.

In contrast to Rig Veda, Narak is clearly mentioned in Atharva Veda and other Hindu Scriptures. According to Atharva Veda (3-14-2) the magicians and Satans live under the earth. It is said in Atharva Veda (3-19-5) that someone who spits before a Brahman or someone rubs him disgusting item, he always cuts the hair by teeth in the river of blood. Shish path Brahman (4-1-6-11) points out that the pain and chastisement of Narak e.g. the people cut the body organs of others due to crimes. Nirukta (11-1) has mentioned the Mantras of a few Vedas about Nark for example: if women misbehave with their husbands they might go to hell. And it is called son Putra according to Nirukta (11-2) because he saves his father (Pita) from the Put Narak.

Likewise Gautama (7-13) has said that the truthful person gets Swarg (heaven) and liar gets the Narak (Hell). It is mentioned in Yājñavalkya Smṛti and Manusmriti that the people who do not pay atonement for the big sins they come back to this world after suffering from different types of Hell punishments or chastisements and they are reincarnated into the worst class of animals, creepers or reptiles, grasses and plants. (Manusmriti, Chapter, 12, Shloka, 54, Yājñavalkya Smṛti, Chapter 3, Shloka, 206)

It is mentioned in Vishnu Dharma Sutra that the sinners who neither pay atonement nor punished by King, go to hell and they take birth from animals, birds or snakes' privy parts and in case of taking birth from human vagina they are endowed with faulty creation. (Vishnu Dharma Sutra, 2-73-4, 5)

It is said on another place in the same source that after suffering from hell's pains and taking birth from the wombs of animals, birds and snakes, when sinners take birth from human vagina, they are seen attached with the signs of sins. (Vishnu Dharma Sutra, 1-45)

It is proved by abovementioned references that in case of not paying the atonement or not receiving the punishment by King, a sinner have to go to hell. Due to abiding of the bad deeds, a human have to take birth from mean vaginas and if he takes birth from Human vagina then he is endowed with defects and he is paralyzed.¹²⁹

If we talk about the types of Narak and its quantity then different statements are found in Hindu religious books. Seven types of Narak are mentioned in Vedanta Sutra (3-1-15). Manusmriti (4-88, 90) Yājñavalkya Smṛti (3-222-224) and Vishnu Dharma Sutra (4-3-2-22) mention twenty one Narak. Brahm Viyurta, Prati Khand, Adhyaay 29 and 33 has mentioned 86 Narak pits, Narad Purana (poorvardh 15-1,20) has pointed out different Narak and chastisements, Padam Purana (Utr, Adhyaay 227) has told 140

¹²⁹ . Dr. Pandurang Vaman Kane, History of Dharmasastra, Vol.3, Uttar Pradesh Hindi Sansthan, Lucknow, 2003, P. 1096-1097

Narak and Bhavishya Purana (Braham parv, 192-11,27) has mentioned 28 Narak. Apart from this, Narak and chastisements are mentioned also in Vishnu Purana, Iskand Purana, Markandey Purana and Mahabharata. Four Narak are mentioned in some religious scriptures like visarpi, Avisarpi, Vishadi and Avishadi, which are located in south east, North West, south west and north east respectively.¹³⁰

The question arises that where the Narak is located according to Hinduism? In this regard, it is mentioned in Puranas at many places that Narak is located beneath the earth. It is described in Bhagavata Purana (5-26-3,4) that Narak is located beneath earth above the water in the south of three worlds. It is not fastened with anything but hanged and there lived the groups of the demised ancestors named Agnishvatta. Likewise it is clearly mentioned in Agni Purana that twenty eight classes of Narak are located beneath the earth even under the seventh worlds below earth, which is called Pataal.¹³¹

How long a sinner will stay in Narak according to Hindu religious texts? Vishnu Dharm Sutra (46-23-29) has reported a principle in this regard that if the perpetrators of major sins and crimes do not pay atonement then they wander one Kalpa (eight hundred sixty four million human years), one manvantara (three hundred six million, seven hundred twenty thousand years) four Yugas (eight million, two hundred eighty thousand years) and one thousand years, one by one respectively and other sinners last for more years.¹³²

In short, it is a detailed discussion in Hindu religious texts regarding Narak. Especially in Vishnu Dharma Sutra (43-32 to 45) Narak is described with detail such as the perpetrator of the one of nine sins when reaches to the way of Yamdut after death, he has to

¹³⁰ . History of Dharmasastra, Vol.3, P. 1097, 1101-1102

¹³¹ . Ibid, P. 1104.

¹³² . Ibid, P. 1105

suffer dangerous chastisements. These sinners are pulled here and there by the servants of the deity of death, they are stared by terrible eyes and thrown into Narak. They are eaten there by Dogs, Crows, scary birds, stork birds and the fire mongers snakes and Scorpios, they are burnt by fire, transfixed by thorns, cut off into two parts by saws, tortured by hunger and thirst. They are suffered by scary tigers and fainted due to bad smell of blood and pus on every step. Those who covet the edible things of others are beaten by the servants of the deity of death, whose faces are like scary animal e.g. dangerous birds and stork birds. They are boiled in oil at some places and they are crushed with the pieces of iron or beaten in the mortar of iron at some places. They have to eat vomited things or blood or urine or feces or ill-smelling pus or meat like kernel. They have to stay in terrible darkness at some places and they are eaten by such type of insects, the fire is constantly coming out from their mouth. They are chastised by cool atmosphere and they have to walk on dirty things at some places. They start eating each other sometimes and thus they become very scary and dangerous. Sometimes they are beaten up due to their past bad deeds or hanged with the trees etc. or transfixed by arrows or divided into pieces. They are moved on thorns at some places and intertwined with the snakes' hoods and they are beaten in blood etc. and tugged on knees. Their backs, heads and necks are broken. They are looking very terrible. Their throats are torn in such a way that they look like caves and they are unable to bear pain or suffering. Sinners are tortured in such a way and they suffer terrible pains and sorrows by taking rebirth in the forms of the different animals in the next.¹³³

Kindly notice that the stand or the main principle of old Hindu religious texts about going to Swarg or Narak is that the comforts or luxuries of Swarg or the chastisement or pain of Narak will be ended. The Sinners will take rebirth in the forms of animal or tree or human endowed with diseases or defects or paralyzed body. Thus the comfort or luxury of Swarg has a limit and human comes back

¹³³ . History of Dharmasastra, Vol.3, P. 1104.

from there and adopts human body. This principle proceeded and said that the relief from the recurring cycle of birth and death cannot be attained only through good deeds.¹³⁴

¹³⁴ . Ibid, P. 1103.

The Holy Quran and the Concept of M'aad

Asad Raza

Abstract:

The death is inevitable and its certainty is not denied by any human being. Unlike the unbeliever in the Creator for whom the death is just a random end as life was just a coincidental beginning with no purpose, for a believer the death is not a sudden end of life but a part of journey towards His Creator. It's the continuation of the purpose in creation and life into the realm of non-material existence where one has to stand for his/her accounting of deeds and will be accordingly rewarded or punished. The holy Quran has laid great emphasis over the fact that Maad or Resurrection is certain to happen and has presented many arguments and proofs about its inevitability. This article discusses in brief the different sets of verses found in holy Quran related to the different dimensions of arguments on Maad. The article presents a brief overview of the Quranic arguments in favour of resurrection and life in Hereafter."

Keywords: Maad, Hereafter, resurrection, Quran, life after death

In this wide and varied world there are people having as different and divergent views as the uniqueness embedded in their creation. There are people who believe in a Wise Creator and there are those who totally deny existence of any kind of non-material power. Likewise there are people who find harmony, balance, and wisdom in the system of creation of living organisms or of inanimate objects and they believe in Tawheed or in the One Unique Omnipotent Eternal God, and there are others who believe in the multitude of divine essence and have polytheistic beliefs. Human beings are not unanimous upon anything and are particularly in disagreement with regard to the matters of truth but despite this difference on everything they all are unanimous on the inevitability and certainty of death. They have no difference of opinions with regard to the fact that we all have to die one day and this life has to come to an end.

This unanimity of beliefs with regard to death underscores the great significance this undeniable event has in our life.

For an atheist death is just a random cessation and discontinuance of everything as the life, for him, was just a coincidental creation. For him there is no reason for life and hence no purpose in death. Both of these events are just coincidental happenings without any definite goals and therefore he does not concern himself with the beliefs about the continuity of life after death. But for a believer the death is a gateway into the world. For him the death is not an abrupt discontinuance of life but the door which opens on the other side of the continuous existence. For a believer the death is a means of realisation of the rewards or fruits for the toil and struggle done in this world. For him life is not a coincidence or result of an accidental happening but a definite creation with a certain purpose, and similarly the death is not a random end of life into the darkness of grave but a passage into the realms of soul beyond the limitations of material existence.

The belief in the eternity of life after death and reward or punishment on the basis of one's actions in the present life forms the crux of the belief in the Ma'ad or Hereafter. After the faith in Tawheed or monotheism the concept of Ma'ad is the most significant one in Holy Quran. All prophets of God have laid emphasis on this belief, and the belief in the resurrection is a necessity to remain in the ambit of Islam. The denial of Hereafter or Akhirah is considered as the denial of faith. The principle of the continuity of life after death is a fundamental thought in the Islamic conception of the world and cosmos.

Why must we have a day of retribution? Why is there requirement of a day of reckoning- when the good ones should be separated from the evil ones? Why can't we just assume that there is nothing after death? Why belief in resurrection and final reckoning is among the basic tenets of Islam? Why it is essential to have a hope of accounting when dead will be revived in their graves and made to gather for a day of profit or loss?

The answer to each of the above questions can be quite lengthy and voluminous as these questions form the essential part of moral fabric of society. In short, if there is no recompense or retribution for the actions, there is no great motivation or incentive to do the acts of goodness or to refrain from the blameworthy or evils acts. The system of retribution and rewards gives meaning to the struggle of the pious or warns about the malefactions of the criminals. Without a day of reckoning or accounting the striving of the good doers will stay unrewarded and the transcendence of those excelling in crimes will stay unpunished.

The desire to seek reward for the good work is innate in the human nature. A religion without the very strong belief in the Final Day of reckoning and retribution is just a voluntary code of moral values which have no real force behind them. The holy Quran repeatedly reminds the believers and non-believers alike about the day of rewards and punishment.

The concept of Maad is not exclusive to Islam but all faiths which enjoin righteous behaviour and forbid indecent and immoral acts have a concept of resurrection because they profess the rewards for good deeds and consequential punishment for evil deeds, and without the belief in resurrection this system of rewards and punishment cannot deliver the justice.

The great noted scholar of Islam Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Tabatabai popularly known as 'Allama Tabatabai' delineates the essential need of Maad or the day of Resurrection and reckoning in the following words:

“Undoubtedly, goodness and badness, benevolence and malevolence are from the viewpoint of the results and rewards which these two qualities possess. Likewise, there is no doubt that not even a single day exists in this world when the rewards and retribution of good and bad deeds of benefactors and malefactors do not reach them; for we clearly observe that many benefactors spend their lives in extreme bitterness and misery, whereas many

malefactors who are fully involved in committing crimes and misdemeanours, with their wicked behaviour and disgraceful character, spend their lives with happiness and prosperity.

For this reason, if in the future and in a world other than this world, no day had been fixed when good and bad deeds would be judged and appropriate recompense would be given, such an attention and care (that benevolence is good and essential and malevolence is bad and to be avoided) would not have been placed in the nature of man.

It should not be imagined that the reward of benevolence, which the man considers good is this that it establishes order in the society and people gain prosperity in their lives and that consequently the benevolent person himself receives a portion of the benefits of his benevolence. In the like manner, it should also not be imagined that a malevolent person, with his indecent conduct and behaviour, disrupts the order of the society and thus he himself finally gets entangled with its unpleasant effects.

Although this kind of thinking is to some extent applicable to disorganized and inefficient individuals; it does not apply to those people who have reached the peak of power and whose happiness and success are not at all influenced by the order and disorder of the society, on the contrary when disturbance and corruption prevail in the society and when the living conditions of the people become gloomy, these individuals get happier and more successful, thus there remains no reason for the nature of such people to consider benevolence as good and malevolence as bad.

In like manner, although these people are prosperous in their short lives, it should not be imagined that their names will be disgraceful and will bear the dislike of the public forever because of their wicked acts.

This is because the manifestation of their disgraceful names and the unpleasant judgment of the posterity about them occur at a time

when these people have passed away and have no impact on their lives full of happiness, pleasure, and enjoyment.

On this account, there will be no reason for man to consider benevolence as good and to acquire it or to consider malevolence as bad and to refrain from it and tend towards the above-mentioned belief. Had there not been the Ma'ad, it would be a superstitious belief." [1]

The life of disbelievers, who are materialists and deny resurrection, tends to end in despair and hopelessness, as with the passage of time they lose the vitality and vigorousness of life but find darkness and nothingness in the death. The thought of death coupled with the denying of resurrection makes them miserable.

Ayatollah Ibrahim Amini depicts the hopelessness in the lives of deniers in the following eloquent words:

"But what is the life of the deniers of resurrection like? It is very short and death means the end of life and decline into the valley of non-existence. For them, life in this world is regrettably full of sorrow and grief; it is futile and aimless and without logical justification. During calamities, the denier of resurrection is discouraged by difficulties of life that befall everyone intentionally or unintentionally and he is not comfortable in them. And any sort of pleading is also not effective. Sometimes, in order to comfort his inward pains, he resorts to alcoholic drinks and other drugs, so that he may for some time forget himself and his painful thoughts. But temporary intoxication is also of no use.

Sometimes he is so much affected by the severity of discomfort and feelings of discouragements that he commits suicide. When a denier of resurrection witnesses injustice of oppressors on himself or others, and their successful escape from legal punishments, he becomes despondent and is convinced that there is no justice in this world and no sort of reward and punishment. Denial of resurrection necessitates that practicing good morals, doing good to others, defending the rights of the deprived, sacrifice and martyrdom in

defence of truth etc. should not have rational justification and practical cover.

The most difficult period of the life of a denier in resurrection is when he is down with an incurable disease or extreme old age when he knows that death is imminent; at that time he despairs of life and can only imagine himself falling into a deep oblivion of nothingness. Alas! How terrifying is the imagination of annihilation into nothingness and inexistence! How difficult and unbearable is life without faith in resurrection! The cause of most oppressions, battles, and violation of rights, killings and murders, crimes, cruelties, corruptions is denial in resurrection. If all the people of the world become deniers in resurrection, accounting, rewards and punishments; what a terrible world it would be!"[2]

Given the tremendous and indispensable significance of the belief in Maad in maintaining the relevance of moral code and seeking of just administration of the affairs, the holy Quran repeatedly reminds the people about the inevitable Day of Judgment or Yaum al-Qiyamah which is certain to take place. There are following five groups of verses of holy Quran with regard to the question of resurrection:

1. The verses which nullify the arguments of the infidels about denials of the resurrection. These verses emphasise on the fact that the denial of the resurrection has no validity and the resurrection cannot be denied or refuted.
2. The verses of holy Quran which present the incidents or phenomena which are similar to resurrection as the proof of resurrection. These verses present the resurrection as a universal principle by pointing out the resembling phenomena.
3. The verses which address the misgivings or confusions of the disbelievers with regard to resurrection. These verses annihilate the ambiguities uttered by infidels with regard to resurrection.
4. The verses which declare the resurrection as divine promise or covenant which will not be failed to be fulfilled.

5. The verses which present the intellectual and logical basis for the need of resurrection.

We will discuss each of the above group of verses with Quranic references in the following sections.

Verses which Nullify the Arguments against Resurrection

The assertion of the infidels against the resurrection is baseless and hypothetical:

“And they say: There is nothing but our life in this world; we live and die and nothing destroys us but time, and they have no knowledge of that; they only conjecture.” (45:24).

Infidels make hypothetical claims and do conjectures without any real evidence. Infidels assume that once a person dies and transforms into rotten bones will never be resurrected but Allah (SWT) is capable of doing this without any iota of doubt:

“Does not man see that We have created him from the small seed? Then lo! He is an open disputant. And he strikes out a likeness for Us and forgets his own creation. Says he: Who will give life to the bones when they are rotten? Say: He will give life to them Who brought them into existence at first, and He is cognizant of all creation“(36:77-79)

As infidels do not have any admissible argument against the resurrection, so they resort to illogical claims of magic and sorcery. This shows the hollowness of their arguments which have been mentioned in the following verse:

“And He it is Who created the heavens and the earth in six periods-- and His dominion (extends) on the water-- that He might manifest to you, which of you is best in action, and if you say, surely you shall be raised up after death, those who disbelieve would certainly say: This is nothing but clear magic.” (11:07)

The holy Quran as being the book of guidance for all mankind makes mention of the arguments of rejecters against the resurrection

and also answers their arguments so that the deniers might follow the right path. This is again because of the utmost mercy of the Merciful Lord that He addresses the doubts of His servants so that they can find the guidance.

Verses which present phenomena resembling Resurrection

The holy Quran mentions different phenomena occurring in the creation of Allah which resembles the resurrection. These occurrences continually indicate towards the life after death but infidels continue to make a denial of them.

The life cycle of plants and vegetation is clear indication towards the resurrection. Every year during a dry season when plants die and greenery is significantly reduced and it looks like that plants will not get fresh lease of life, then spring comes and there is greenery everywhere and the earth is again brimmed with life:

“Look then at the signs of Allah's mercy, how He gives life to the earth after its death, most surely He will raise the dead to life; and He has power over all things.” (30:50)

“He brings forth the living from the dead and brings forth the dead from the living, and gives life to the earth after its death, and thus shall you be brought forth.” (30:19)

“It is Allah Who sends forth the Winds, so that they raise up the Clouds, and We drive them to a land that is dead, and revive the earth therewith after its death: even so (will be) the Resurrection!” (35:09)

The verses quoted above are among the group of verses which make mentioning of how the earth comes back to life after death. This phenomena is similar to resurrection. This is how the dead also will be resurrected. This is clear indication that coming back to life after apparent death is not impossible.

Another interesting phenomena mentioned in the holy Quran is that of sleep of the people of cave. This phenomena is mentioned in the

Surah al-Kahf in which some believing men slept for about three hundred years and were brought back to life again by Almighty Allah making them a sign of resurrection:

“And thus did We make (men) to get knowledge of them that they might know that Allah's promise is true and that as for the hour there is no doubt about it” (18:21)

The sleep of these men belie the apparent factors of life. They did not eat or drink for three hundred years. Yet their bodies did not decay. They were brought back to life by the will of Allah (SWT). Therefore Allah can bring back to life the dead also on the day when all humans will be resurrected from their sleeping places.

There are incidents mentioned in the holy Quran in which the dead human beings or animals have come back to life. These incidents clearly make gesture towards the reality of resurrection and evidently prove that as beings can come back to life after death in this world, similarly the dead will be brought back to life on the Day of Judgment.

The holy Quran mentions the story of Uzair in which he was made to lie dead for hundred years and was then brought back to life so that he could understand the fact that how Allah (SWT) would bring back to life the dead human beings :

“Or (take) the similitude of one who passed by a hamlet, all in ruins to its roofs. He said: "Oh! How shall Allah bring it (ever) to life, after (this) its death?" but Allah caused him to die for a hundred years, then raised him up (again). He said: "How long didst thou tarry (thus)?" He said: (Perhaps) a day or part of a day." He said: "Nay, thou hast tarried thus a hundred years; but look at thy food and thy drink; they show no signs of age; and look at thy donkey: And that We may make of thee a sign unto the people, Look further at the bones, how We bring them together and clothe them with flesh." When this was shown clearly to him, he said: "I know that Allah hath power over all things."“(02:259)

The glorious Quran indicates the coming back to life of some of the animals as well. There is mentioning of an incident regarding Prophet Abraham (AS) that when he was curious about how Allah would bring the dead to life. Allah asked him to cut the birds into pieces and then scatter them into parts at mountains and then call them. The birds came back alive flying:

“When Abraham said: "Show me, Lord, how You will raise the dead, " He replied: "Have you no faith?" He said "Yes, but just to reassure my heart." Allah said, "Take four birds, draw them to you, and cut their bodies to pieces. Scatter them over the mountain-tops, then call them back. They will come swiftly to you. Know that Allah is Mighty, Wise." (02:260)

The purposes of these verses and other similar ones is to make the belief regarding resurrection certain in the hearts of people so that they may refrain from transgression and submit before the will and command of Allah (SWT).

Verses which address the misgivings or confusions of the disbelievers with regard to Resurrection

The disbelievers have doubts about the return of the dead because they assume that once the person is dead his body decays and gets rotten and it cannot be revived or restored to life. The glorious Quran answers to this doubt in the following words:

“And they say: "What! When we lie, hidden and lost, in the earth, shall we indeed be in a Creation renewed? Nay, they deny the Meeting with their Lord. Say: The angel of death who is given charge of you shall cause you to die, then to your Lord you shall be brought back.” (32:10-11)

The infidels assume that when one dies he goes into the state of non-existence and from the state of being non-existent he cannot be made existent again. The holy Quran proves the fallacy of this thought in the above quoted verse. The reality of the life is not physical body but the spirit which is taken out by the angel on the

command of Allah (SWT). The body may decay but the spirit is always alive and reviving of the souls is dependent on the spirit.

Another suspicion of the infidels is about the power of the Creator to resurrect the souls on the day of Resurrection. They have qualms in accepting the fact that Allah (SWT) is capable of bringing back to life the dead. The Noble Quran responds to such doubts of disbelief in the following words:

“Have they not considered that Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth and was not tired by their creation, is able to give life to the dead? Aye! He has surely power over all things.” (46:33)

The reviving of the creation is easier than the first original creation done by Allah (SWT) from void. The All Powerful Lord Who created all creation from void has surely power to bring back the same creation into life again after its death:

“And they say: What! When we shall have become bones and decayed particles, shall we then certainly be raised up, being a new creation? Say: Become stones or iron, or some other creature of those which are too hard (to receive life) in your minds! But they will say: Who will return us? Say: Who created you at first? Still they will shake their heads at you and say: When will it be? Say: Maybe it has drawn nigh.” (17:49-51)

“It is He Who begins (the process of) creation; then repeats it; and for Him it is most easy. To Him belongs the loftiest similitude (we can think of) in the heavens and the earth: for He is Exalted in Might, full of wisdom.” (30:27)

Certainly, the making of first original creation is more difficult in comparison to the second reviving of the dead souls but the deniers do not heed such a simple fact.

The rejecters of Maad or resurrection also express doubts about the knowledge of Allah (SWT) that how is it possible for Allah to accurately keep accounts of all dead and then bring them back alive.

The glorious Quran mentions that Allah's knowledge surpasses and surrounds all creation, and nothing escapes His knowledge:

"Say: He will give life to them Who brought them into existence at first, and He is cognizant of all creation" (36:57)

Allah's knowledge is perfect, and His capability is beyond comprehension of the human beings. He not only restores the creation but with all its biological characteristics and markers, and this is because of His unbounded knowledge and power:

"Nay! I swear by the day of resurrection. Nay! I swear by the self-accusing soul. Does man think that We shall not gather his bones? Yea! We are able to make complete his very fingertips" (75:1-4)

Verses which declare the Resurrection as Divine Promise or Covenant

There are numerous verses which mention the day of resurrection as the promised hour which is bound to take place. The resurrection is inevitable and there is no denying about it:

"Most surely the hour is coming, there is no doubt therein, but most people do not believe" (40:59)

"And they swear by Allah with the most energetic of their oaths: Allah will not raise up him who dies. Yea! It is a promise binding on Him, quite true, but most people do not know" (16:38)

"Those who disbelieve think that they shall never be raised. Say: Aye! By my Lord! You shall most certainly be raised, then you shall most certainly be informed of what you did; and that is easy to Allah." (64:7)

"But they reject the hour, and We have prepared a burning fire for him who rejects the hour." (25:11)

All these above quoted verses firmly signify the coming of the Day of Judgment or resurrection. If one has belief in the power of Allah

(SWT) then he cannot have doubts or deny His promise of occurring of the inevitable Hour.

Verses which present the intellectual and logical basis for the need of Resurrection

As there is definite purpose in the creation of Allah and there is not a single being or object which has been created without a purpose, so there is also a purpose for human actions and this purpose itself necessitates the requirement for resurrection for accounting.

The Noble Quran mentions this fact repeatedly that this vast and grand creation of cosmos and living beings is not in vain:

“And We did not create the heaven and the earth and what is between them in vain; that is the opinion of those who disbelieve then woe to those who disbelieve on account of the fire. Shall We treat those who believe and do good like the mischief-makers in the earth? Or shall We make those who guard (against evil) like the wicked?” (38:27-28)

The treatment of the righteous ones similar to the wicked or mischief-makers is not just, so it requires a Day of Judgment or resurrection so that accounts could be settled and the righteous are rewarded and sinners get punishment for their wrong doings.

“What! Did you then think that We had created you in vain and that you shall not be returned to Us?” (23:115)

This verse clearly indicates that the entire universe and the creation of mankind would be futile without the principle of Resurrection. God is the All-Wise and nothing is made in vain, therefore the return of creation is certain.

This argument is an exclusive syllogism (qiyās), whereby the first premise is a conditional proposition, which indicates that the creation of man in this world is with a wise purpose whereby he returns back to God and receives the outcome of his actions in this world.” [3]

Let us finish the discussion with a supplication from As-Sahifa al-Sajjadiya in which Imam Ali ibn al-Husayn (AS) pleads to His Creator Lord for bestowal of His mercy in the life after death:

“My Master, and have mercy upon me when my trace is cut off from this world, my mention is effaced among the creatures, and I join the forgotten, like the forgotten ones!

My Master, and have mercy upon me at the change of my form and state when my body decays, my limbs are scattered, and my joints are dismembered! O my heedlessness toward what was wanted from me!

My Master, have mercy upon me at my mustering and uprising and on that day, appoint my standing place with Thy friends, my place of emergence with Thy beloveds, and my dwelling in Thy neighbourhood! O Lord of the worlds!” [4]

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