

Fast 28: Life after death

- A faith in a life after death is the last of the basic principles of Islam. The word generally used in the Holy Quran to indicate this life is *al-ākhirah*, which signifies *that which comes after*, or *the future*, or *the last*. *Al-yaum al-ākhir* or *the last day* is also used instead of *al-ākhirah*.
- Death, according to the Holy Quran, is not the end of a human being's life; it only opens the door to another, a higher, form of life:

“We have ordained death among you and We are not to be overcome, that We may change your state and make you grow into what you do not know.” —
56:60–61

- Just as from the small life-germ grows a human being, and he does not lose his individuality for all the changes which he undergoes, so from this human is made the higher human, his state being changed, and he himself being made to grow into what he cannot conceive at present. That this new life is a higher form of life is also made clear:

“And certainly the Hereafter is greater in degrees and greater in excellence.”
—17:21

- The Holy Quran accords to faith in the Future Life an importance which is next only to faith in God. Very often all the doctrines of faith are summed up as amounting to belief in God and the Future Life:

“And there are some people who say, We believe in Allah and the Last Day, and they are not believers.” — 2:8 (see also 2:62, 2:126, 2:228, etc.)

- *Surah Fatiha*, the opening chapter of the Holy Quran, plays the greatest part in creating a true Muslim mentality, for the Muslim must recite it in the five prayers. In this chapter God is spoken of as “Master of the Day of Requit” (or Day of Recompense), and thus the idea that every deed must be requited is brought before the mind of the Muslim continually. It undoubtedly impresses on the mind the reality of a future life, when every deed shall find its full reward. The greater the faith in the good or bad consequences of a deed, the greater is the incentive which urges a person to do that deed if it is good, or which deters him from doing that deed if it is bad.
- The Holy Quran not only speaks of a life after death which opens out for human beings a new world of advancement, it also shows that the basis of that life is laid in this our life on earth. For the good, the heavenly life, and for the wicked, a life in hell,

begin even here, though the limitations of this life do not allow most people to realize that other life:

“(O man) you were indeed heedless of this, but now We have removed from you your veil, so your sight is sharp this day.” — 50:22

This shows that the spiritual life which is hidden from the human eye in this life by reason of material limitations, will become manifest in the Resurrection; because human perception will then be clearer, since the veil of material limitations will have been removed.

- **Life has an aim:** An argument for the life after death advanced by the Holy Quran is that human life has some great aim and purpose to fulfil:

“Does man think that he will be left aimless?” — 75:36

“Do you then think that We have created you in vain and that you will not be returned to Us?” — 23:115

Belief in the life after death introduces a seriousness into person’s life which cannot be otherwise attained. It will be taking too low a view of human nature to imagine that, with all those vast capacities for ruling nature and its wonderful forces, human life itself has no aim. Man has a higher object to fulfill, he has a higher life to live beyond this world, which is the aim of human life in this world.

- **Good and evil must have their reward:** Another argument put forward by the Holy Quran in support of the life after death is that good and evil must have their reward. Of the whole living creation, man alone has the power to discriminate between good and evil. And so acute is his perception of good and evil that he strives with all his might to promote good and to eradicate evil. Yet in practical life, good is often neglected and starves, while evil prospers. That is not as it should be. Good and evil must bear their **full fruit** in another life, which indicates the continuity of the life of man in another world, when death has put an end to it in this world. The Quran says:

“Allah does not waste the reward of the doers of good.” — 11:115, 12:90, etc.

“We do not waste the reward of him who does a good work.” — 18:30

“I will not let the work of any worker among you to be lost, whether male or female, each of you is as the other.” — 3:195

“So whoever does an atom’s weight of good will see it. And whoever does an atom’s weight of evil will see it.” — 99:7–8