

## Programme Seven; Belief in the Last Day.

### 7. 1. Introduction.

It is necessary for Muslims to believe in the Last Day, when Allāh Almighty will take the accounts of all humans and designate each person a place in heaven or hell. In the Qur'ān and Ahādīth, we are told of the different names of this day:

- *al-Yaum al-Ākhir*. Because it the last day. Thereafter there will be no real concept of time because people will live forever in either heaven or hell.
- *Yaum al-Qiyāma* (75:1). This means the Day of Standing, because everyone will arise from their graves for the questioning.
- *Yaum al-Hisāb* (14:41). This translates as the Day of Account.
- *Yaum al-Hashr* (59:2). This means the Day of Gathering.

In his *Ihyā Ulūm al-Dīn*, Imam Ghazālī mentions over one-hundred names of this day.<sup>1</sup>

### 7.2 Logical proofs for the occurrence of the Day of Judgement.

We often see oppressive and tyrannical people who terrorise others, but then leave this world before receiving their due punishment. Conversely, there are countless people who are on the receiving end of oppression, but they are not rightly rewarded for their pains. If there was no hereafter, then the tyrant would be left unpunished and the oppressed would be left unrewarded. Such a situation is contrary to the wisdom of Allāh. Therefore it is imperative that another world exists where the tyrant will be duly punished and the oppressed will be duly rewarded.

In order to implement the notion of punishment and reward, the world we live in must cease. This is because punishment and reward can only be given once everyone's actions terminate. Until the actions of people and this world do not end, this system cannot take place.

For example, Qābil<sup>2</sup> initiated the sin of murder, and he will receive the punishment of everyone who commits murder thereafter. So until murder does not end, the process of writing his bad acts cannot be finished. When a person builds a mosque, then he is rewarded for every person who performs worship in that mosque. When a person establishes a place of idol-worship, then his account cannot be concluded until everyone has utilised the place.

For this reason, so long as this world remains and the people in it, the accounts of people cannot be comprehensively concluded, something which needs to be done before punishment and reward. This is why the Day of Judgement exists. In short, the wisdom of Allāh stipulates that a system of punishment and reward should be established, and to implement this requires the Day of Judgement.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> p. 206, vol. V. *Ihya Ulum al-Din*. Abu Hamid Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Ghazali (d. 505 A.H.) Dar al-Fajr li al-Turath, Cairo, 1999. Abdul Hakim Murad has translated the entire chapter on the remembrance of death and the afterlife from *Ihya (The Remembrance of Death and the Afterlife. Kitab Dhikr al-Mawt wa ma ba'duhu*. T.J. Winter. Islamic Texts Society. 2006).

<sup>2</sup> The son of Adam (peace be upon him).

<sup>3</sup> P. 98. *A Commentary of Surah Fatiha, based on Tabyan al-Qur'an*. Allama Ghulam Rasul Sa'idi. Translated by H. Ather Hussain al-Azhari. HSBT Publications, Birmingham, 2009.

### 7.3 The signs of the Last Day.

Allāh and His Messenger (peace be upon him) have told us several signs before the Last Day. These are divided into two types;

- a. *Sughra* (minor signs)
- b. *Kubra* (major signs).<sup>4</sup>

It seems that the minor signs are general descriptions that are more open to interpretation, regarding what will happen nearer the Day of Judgement. The major signs are definitive events that will occur.

#### 7.3.1 Some of the minor signs include:

- A slave girl will give birth to her mistress.<sup>5</sup>
- Bare-footed, naked, poor, sheep-shepherds will compete with one another in erecting buildings.<sup>6</sup>
- An increase in earthquakes.
- An increase in illnesses that were not known to previous people.
- People will appear claiming to be prophets.
- An increase in ignorance.
- An increase in murder and oppression.<sup>7</sup>
- The swift passing of time. Nearer to the Day of Judgement, time will pass very quickly so that a year will feel like a month.<sup>8</sup>

#### 7.3.2 The major signs are:

- i. The appearance of Mahdī. His name is Muhammad ibn Abdullah who will be from the descendants of Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him).
- ii. The appearance of Dajjāl. He will travel the earth causing havoc. He will be prohibited from entering Makka and Madina however. Those who believe in him will experience unprecedented prosperity and wealth, and the believers who reject him will suffer from poverty. He will trick people by his imagery of a garden and of fire. He will project the garden as heaven and the fire as hell, though in reality, the opposite will be true. The Muslims will not be deceived by him as they will be able to read the letters K-F-R on his forehead.<sup>9</sup>
- iii. The descending of Prophet Isa (peace be upon him). However, it is important to note that he will not appear in the capacity of a prophet, but as a follower of our Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and he will rule with his Shariah. He will kill the Dajjāl, smash the crucifix and outlaw swine. He will reside on earth for forty years and will then die.

<sup>4</sup> p. 382. *al-Sharh al-Qawim fi Hill Alfaz al-Sirat al-Mustaqim*. ‘Abd Allāh al-Harawi. Dar al-Masami’; Beirut, Lebanon, 2004.

<sup>5</sup> *Sahih Muslim*. Book of Iman. Hadith no. 9.

<sup>6</sup> *Sahih Muslim*. Book of Iman. Hadith no.9.

<sup>7</sup> p. 382-3. *al-Sharh al-Qawim fi Hill Alfaz al-Sirat al-Mustaqim*. ‘Abd Allāh al-Harawi. Dar al-Masami’; Beirut, Lebanon, 2004.

<sup>8</sup> p. 53. *Islam: The Basic Articles of Faith, according to the Beliefs of the Ahl Sunna wa al-Jama’a; A Modern English Translation of Bahar-e-Shariat*. Part One. Crescent Publishing, Rochdale, 1998. Over twenty minor signs are mentioned in this book (pp.51-54).

<sup>9</sup> pp. 55-56. *Islam: The Basic Articles of Faith, according to the Beliefs of the Ahl Sunna wa al-Jama’a; A Modern English Translation of Bahar-e-Shariat*. Part One. Crescent Publishing, Rochdale, 1998.

- iv. The appearance of Yajūj and Majūj (Gog and Magog). These are two beastly tribes that will appear in the Far East. The Muslims will be saved from their terror by taking refuge on Mount Tūr.<sup>10</sup>
- v. The rising of the sun from the west. When this happens, the door of repentance will be closed.
- vi. The appearance of the beast of the earth (*Dāba al-Ardh*).
- vii. The smoke that will last on the earth for forty days.
- viii. The sinking in the east, west and the Arab Peninsula.<sup>11</sup> This has been referred to as the *Khasaf*. A disastrous catastrophe will occur in which people will be swallowed by the earth.<sup>12</sup>
- ix. The raising of the Qur'ān from the chests and from the books. When this occurs, Khidr (peace be upon him) will die.<sup>13</sup>

## 7.4 The Length of the Last Day.

In the Qur'ān, Allāh states the length of the Day of Judgement:

'The angels and the *Rūh* (Jibra'īl) ascend to Him on a Day the measure whereof is fifty thousand years.' (70: 4).

Imām Abū Ya'la reports:

'Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (may Allāh be pleased with him) narrates that it was said to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), 'O Messenger of Allāh! The Qur'ān mentions that the Day of Judgement will be the equivalent of fifty thousand years. How long is this day!' The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said, 'I swear by the Being whose hands control the soul of mine! The believer will be relieved on this day, to the extent it will feel as long as it takes to read the compulsory prayers of *Zuhr* in the previous life.'<sup>14</sup>

<sup>10</sup> p. 58. *Islam: The Basic Articles of Faith, according to the Beliefs of the Ahl Sunna wa al-Jama'a; A Modern English Translation of Bahar-e-Shariat*. Part One. Crescent Publishing, Rochdale, 1998.

<sup>11</sup> p.94-95. *Sharh al-Risala al-Nafi'a wa al-Hujaj al-Qaat'ia*. Sheikh Muhammad Abd al-Latif Salih al-Farfur (d. 1407 A.H.). Dar al-Nu'man li al-Ulum Publications, Damascus.

<sup>12</sup> p. 51. *Islam: The Basic Articles of Faith, according to the Beliefs of the Ahl Sunna wa al-Jama'a; A Modern English Translation of Bahar-e-Shariat*. Part One. Crescent Publishing, Rochdale, 1998.

<sup>13</sup> p. 390. *al-Sharh al-Qawim fi Hill Alfaz al-Sirat al-Mustaqim*. 'Abd Allāh al-Harawi. Dar al-Masami'; Beirut, Lebanon, 2004.

<sup>14</sup> *Musnad Abū Ya'la*. Vol. II, p. 134. Dar al-Ma'mun Publications, Beirut, 1404.

## 7.5 Our belief regarding the Gathering (*Hashr*).

It is *Wājib* that we believe in the Gathering; that all humans and jinns will be gathered for questioning.<sup>15</sup> The first person for whom the ground will open up for will be our beloved Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) whilst he is alive in his grave. Each and every person will be full of immeasurable and fright and anxiety. The sun will be above the heads of everyone which will lead to everyone drowning in sweat<sup>16</sup>. Seven types of people will be spared from the intensity of the heat and will take comfort in the *Shade of Allāh*, as explained by the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him):

1. A just Imam.
2. A young Muslim who began to worship Allāh in his youth.
3. A man whose heart is attached to the mosque.
4. Two men who love each other of the sake of Allāh.
5. A man who remembers Allāh so much that he cries.
6. A man who was called by a woman who possesses beauty or status but he refuses and says 'I fear Allāh'.
7. And a man who gives *Sadaqa* secretly to such an extent that his left does not know what his right has given.<sup>17</sup>

## 7.6 The Accounting.

Allāh will call upon each person to justify his actions on the Day of Judgement. The Qur'ān states:

'Every soul will taste of death. And you will be paid on the Day of Resurrection only that which you have fairly earned' (3:185).

'And We suffice as reckoners.' (21:47)

Allāh has made ten witnesses that will witness against mankind on the Day of Judgement. They are:

1. The tongues.
2. The hands.
3. The feet.
4. The ears.
5. The eyes.
6. The skin.
7. The earth.
8. The night.
9. The day.
10. The angels appointed to each individual.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>15</sup> People shall be driven barefoot and naked to the place of Gathering, which will be white and perfectly smooth (*Ihya Ulum al-Din*, Imam al-Ghazali, p. 201, vol. V. Dar al-Fajr li al-Turath, Cairo, 1999).

<sup>16</sup> p. 202-3. *Ihya Ulum al-Din*, Imam al-Ghazali, p. 201, vol. V. Dar al-Fajr li al-Turath, Cairo, 1999

<sup>17</sup> *Sahih al-Bukhari*. Book of Raqa'iq. Hadith no. 5998.

<sup>18</sup> p. 99. *Sharh al-Risala al-Nafi'a wa al-Hujaj al-Qaat'ia*. Sheikh Muhammad Abd al-Latif Salih al-Farfur (d. 1407 A.H.). Dar al-Nu'man li al-Ulum Publications, Damascus.

The Qur'ān says:

‘And they will say to their skins: ‘Why do you testify against us?’ They will say: ‘Allāh has given us speech, He Who gives speech to all things, and Who created you at the first time, and to Whom you are returned. And you have not been hiding against yourselves, lest your ears and your eyes, and your skins testify against you, but you thought that Allāh knew not much of what you did’ (41: 21-22).

‘On the day when their tongues and their hands and their feet testify against them as to what they used to do’ (24:24).

## 7.7 The Scales.

Allāh says in the Qur'an:

‘And the weighing on that day is true. So as for those whose scale of good deeds will be heavy, they will be the successful. And as for those whose scale will be light, they are those who will lose their own selves because they used to deny Our signs’ (7: 8-9).

The good and bad actions of every person will be written down on papers and this will be placed on the Scale, which will be governed by Jibra'īl and Mikā'īl. Those fortunate people who have more good deeds than bad will find that the Scale weigh in their favour and thus will be saved from punishment.

## 7.8 The Bridge.

The *Sirāt* is a bridge that is situated above the fire of hell. From the Ahādīth, we are informed that this Bridge is as thin as a hair and as sharp as a sword. Everyone will be required to cross it, but as a reflection of their faith, they will do so at different speeds and ease. Some will shoot across it like a bolt of lightning whereas others will not be able to cross it.<sup>19</sup>

## 7.9 The *Hawdh* (Fountain).

After crossing the Bridge, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) will await for his followers at a pool called the *Hawdh*. In size, its length and width is a month's travel. The drinking vessels will be more in number than the stars in the sky. The drink will be whiter than milk, sweeter than honey and more-fragranced than musk perfume. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said that a person will never feel thirsty ever again after drinking from the *Hawdh*.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup> p. 395. *al-Sharh al-Qawim fi Hill Alfaz al-Sirat al-Mustaqim*. ‘Abd Allāh al-Harawi. Dar al-Masami'; Beirut, Lebanon, 2004.

<sup>20</sup> p. 396. *al-Sharh al-Qawim fi Hill Alfaz al-Sirat al-Mustaqim*. ‘Abd Allāh al-Harawi. Dar al-Masami'; Beirut, Lebanon, 2004.

## 7.10 The Intercession (*Shafā'a*).

*Shafā'a* means to ask someone for good on behalf of a third party.<sup>21</sup> The Qur'ān informs us that intercession will occur on the Day of Judgement, but only with Allāh's permission.<sup>22</sup> Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) will perform Intercession for the Muslim sinners and this plea will be accepted by Allāh.<sup>23</sup> His intercession will precede all other intercessions. This *Shafā'a* will take on many forms:

### 7. 10.1 The Great Intercession<sup>24</sup>

This great intercession will be on the Day of Judgement. People will throw themselves at the feet of prophets and messengers to intercede for them to their Lord.

Abū Huraira narrates that (may Allāh be pleased with him): Some cooked meat was brought to Allāh's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and the meat of the forearm was presented to him as he used to like it. He ate a morsel of it and said:

'I will be the chief of all people on the Day of Judgement. Do you know the reason for it? Allāh will gather all the human beings of early generations as well as later generations on one plain so that the announcer will be able to make them all hear his voice and the watcher will be able to see them all. The sun will come so close to the people that they will suffer distress and trouble, as they will not be able to bear or stand. Then the people will say, 'Don't you see what state you have reached? Won't you look for someone who can intercede for you with your Lord?' Some people will say to some others, 'go to Adam (peace be upon him)'. So they will go to Adam (peace be upon him) and say to him, 'you are the father of mankind, Allāh created you with his own hand, and breathed into you of his spirit (meaning the spirit which he created for you). And He also ordered the angels to prostrate before you, so please intercede for us with your Lord. Don't you see what state we are in? Don't you see what condition we have reached?' Adam (peace be upon him) will say, 'today my Lord has become angry as he has never become before, nor will ever become thereafter. He forbade me to eat the fruit of the tree but I disobeyed him. Myself! Myself! Myself! Go to someone else'. So they will go to Noah (peace be upon him) and say to him, 'O Noah (peace be upon him)! You are the first of Allāh's messengers to the people of the earth, and Allāh

<sup>21</sup> p. 405. *al-Sharh al-Qawim fi Hill Alfaz al-Sirat al-Mustaqim*. 'Abd Allāh al-Harawi. Dar al-Masami'; Beirut, Lebanon, 2004.

<sup>22</sup> In Ayat al-Kursi, Allah states 'Who is he that can intercede with Allah except with His permission? (2: 255). There are several verses that prove that *Shafa'a* will certainly occur on the Day of Judgement (See 74:48, 7: 53) Verses that deny the existence of intercession on this Day refers to the disbelievers (see 26: 100); only the Muslims will be the successful recipients.

<sup>23</sup> There are countless Ahadith which conclusively prove that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) will perform intercession for the Muslim sinners on the Day of Judgement. Anas ibn Malik (may Allah be pleased with him) reports that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: 'I am the first of the people to perform *Shafa'a* in paradise...' (*Sahih Muslim*). Zaid ibn Arqam (may Allah be pleased with him) reports from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: 'My intercession on the Day of Judgement is truthful. So he who does not believe in it has no right to it.' Cited in *al-Radd ala Mustafa Mammud fi Inkar al-Shafa'a*. A. Muhdi ibn A. Qadir ibn A. Hadi. Dar al-I'tisam, Cairo, 1999, p. 34.

<sup>24</sup> This is also referred to as the *Maqam Mahmud* in the Holy Quran and Ahadith.

has named you a thankful slave, please intercede for us with your Lord. Don't you see what state we are in?' Noah (peace be upon him) will say, 'today my Lord has become angry as he has never become before or will thereafter. In the world I had the right to make one definitely accepted prayer (Du'a) and I made it against my nation. Myself! Myself! Myself! Go to someone else, go to Abraham (peace be upon him). So they will go to Abraham (peace be upon him) and say, 'O Abraham! You are Allāh's apostle and *Khalīl* from amongst the people of the earth so please intercede for us with your Lord. Don't you see what state we are in?' He will say to them my Lord today has become angry like never before or thereafter... Myself! Myself! Myself! Go to someone else. Go to Mūsā (peace be upon him)'. So the people will go to Mūsā (peace be upon him) and will say 'O Mūsā! You are Allāh's apostle and he gave you superiority above the others with this message and with his direct talk to you. So please intercede for us, don't you see what state we are in?' Mūsā (peace be upon him) will say, 'My Lord today has become angry like never before or thereafter. I killed a person who I was not sanctioned to kill. Myself! Myself! Myself! Go to someone else, go to Isā (peace be upon him). So the people will go to Isā (peace be upon him) and will say, 'O Isā (peace be upon him)! You are Allāh's apostle and His word that he sent to Maryam, and a superior soul created by him, and you talked to the people whilst still in the cradle. So please intercede for us to your Lord, don't you see what state we are in?' Isā (peace be upon him) will say, 'my Lord today has become angry like never before or thereafter. Isā (peace be upon him) will not mention any sin but will say 'Myself! Myself! Myself! Go to someone else, go to Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). So they will come to me and say 'O Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) you are Allāh's Apostle and the last of the prophets and Allāh forgave you early and late sins. Please intercede for us with your Lord, don't you see what state we are in?' The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) added 'then I will go beneath Allāh's throne and fall in prostration before my Lord. And then he will guide me to such praises and glorification's to him, as he has never guided anybody else before me. Then it will be said 'O Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him)! Raise your head. Ask and it will be granted. Intercede and your intercession will be accepted'. So I will raise my head and will say, My followers, O my Lord! My followers! O my Lord!' It will be said, 'O Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him)! Let those of those of your followers who have no accounts enter through such a gate of the gates of paradise as lies on the right, and they will share the other gates with the people'. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) further said, 'By him in whose hand is my soul, the distance between every two gate posts of paradise is like the distance between Makkah and Busra.'<sup>25</sup>

Abd al-Hādī, a professor at al-Azhar University, Cairo, writes after citing the above Hadith:

'This Hadīth refutes numerous points that the deniers of *Shafā'a* purport. Firstly, *Shafā'a* is not Shirk with Allah, nor is it independent from His order. Rather the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) will prostrate to Allah and then praise Him which Allah Himself inspires him to say. [Secondly], *Shafā'a* is not done according to the opinion of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in that he personally chooses

<sup>25</sup> pp. 219-221. *Ihya Ulum al-Din*, Imam al-Ghazali, p. 201, vol. V. Dar al-Fajr li al-Turath, Cairo, 1999.

who exits the fire. Instead, Allah sets the limits. [Thirdly], people should not depend on *Shafā'a* because it cannot save someone from entering the fire for a period of time. And whose skin can bear the fire of hell for even a moment? We ask forgiveness from Allah.<sup>26</sup>

Other forms of the Prophet's (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) intercession will be:

- a. Intercession for those to enter paradise without accounting.
- b. Intercession to spare punishment from those who have had their accounting and are destined to Hell.
- c. Intercession for the disobedient Muslims who believe in *Tawhīd*.
- d. Intercession in the lightning of the punishment from the dwellers from the Fire, like Abu Tālib and others.<sup>27</sup>

### 7.10.2 Other forms of intercession

Other people and things will perform *Shafā'a* on the Day of Judgement. For example:

- Other prophets.
- The scholars.
- The martyrs.<sup>28</sup>
- The angels.<sup>29</sup>
- The Qur'ān.
- Fasting (*Sawm*)<sup>30</sup>
- The Black Stone.

<sup>26</sup> p. 32. *al-Radd ala Mustafa Mammud fi Inkar al-Shafa'a*. A. Muhdi ibn A. Qadir ibn A. Hadi. Dar al-I'tisam, Cairo, 1999.

<sup>27</sup> p. 101. *Sharh al-Risala al-Nafi'a wa al-Hujaj al-Qaat'ia*. Sheikh Muhammad Abd al-Latif Salih al-Farfur (d. 1407 A.H.). Dar al-Nu'man li al-Ulum Publications, Damascus.

<sup>28</sup> The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: 'Three will perform intercession on the Day of Judgement; the prophets, then the scholars, then the martyrs.' (*Sunan Ibn Maja*, Book of *Zuhd*, Chapter, the mentioning of *Shafa'a*, Hadith no. 4304).

<sup>29</sup> *Sahih Muslim*. Book of Faith, Hadith no. 269.

<sup>30</sup> The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: 'Fasting and the Qur'an will perform intercession on the Day of Judgment for the servant. Fasting will say: 'O Lord! I stopped from food and desires in the day, so please accept my intercession for him.' And the Qur'an will say: 'I stopped him from sleeping at night, so please accept my intercession for him.' So their intercession will be accepted.' (*Musnad Ahmad*, Musnad of Abd Allah ibn Amr al-Aas. Hadith no. 6337).