



Ramadan Daily Quran Study, by Dr Zahid Aziz, 2023

Adapted and edited from *The Religion of Islam* by Maulana Muhammad Ali
Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat Islam Lahore (UK)

Fast 29: Life after death — begins in this world

- According to the Holy Quran, the heavenly life for the good, and a life in hell for the wicked, is not a mystery beyond the grave but begins in this very life. It says:

وَلِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ جَنَّاتٌ ۖ

“And for him who fears to stand before his Lord are two Gardens.” — 55:46

Fast 29

1



The two gardens are a garden in this life and a garden in the hereafter. The garden of this life is the spiritual bliss which the righteous find here in the doing of good. In another place the Quran says:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ ۖ ارْجِعِي إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَرْضِيَّةً ۖ فَادْخُلِي فِي عِبَادِي ۖ وَأَدْخُلِي جَنَّتِي ۖ

“O soul who is at rest! Return to your Lord, well pleased (with Him), well pleasing (Him). So enter among My servants and enter My Garden!” — 89:27–30

That soul is addressed here which has already found contentment in this world. It is directed, at the time of death, to return to its Lord, being well pleased with God during its life on earth, and having well pleased God. It is then made to enter into the garden of the next life.

Fast 29

2



That garden is a reflection of the contentment the soul already found in this world by performing good deeds.

- The light of guidance that a person followed in this world becomes a visible light for him in the next world. Consider this verse:

أَوْ مَنْ كَانَ مَيِّتًا فَأَحْيَيْنَاهُ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُ نُورًا يَمْشِي بِهِ فِي النَّاسِ كَمَنْ مَثَلَهُ فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ لَيْسَ بِخَارِجٍ مِنْهَا

“Is he who was dead, then We raised him to life and made for him a light by which he walks among the people, like him whose likeness is that of one in darkness from which he cannot come forth?” — 6:122

This verse refers to a spiritually dead person in this life who finds the *light* of right guidance and leads his life according to it (“walks among the people”). Then about the life after death, the Quran says:

Fast 29

3



يَوْمَ تَرَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَسْعَى نُورُهُمْ بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَبِأَيْمَانِهِمْ بُشْرَاكُمُ الْيَوْمَ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿٥٧﴾

“On that day you will see the believers, men and women, their light gleaming before them and on their right hand. Good news for you this day! — Gardens in which rivers flow, to abide in them! That is the mighty achievement.” — 57:12

This verse says that in the next life the righteous, both men and women, will be seen with a light in front of them and on their right hands. This is the same light that led them during their earthly life, but which will become visible as a light in the next life.

- Likewise, regarding the wrong-doers the Quran says:

Fast 29

4



وَمَنْ كَانَ فِي هَذِهِ أَعْمَىٰ فَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ أَعْمَىٰ وَأَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا ﴿٤٤﴾

“And whoever is blind in this (world) he will be blind in the Hereafter, and further away from the path.” — 17:72

That is to say, those who remain spiritually blind in this life, blind to truth and right guidance, will find they have no sight in the next life. It is a reflection of the same blindness. Regarding the fire of hell, the Quran says:

نَارُ اللَّهِ الْمَوْقُودَةُ ﴿٦﴾ الَّتِي تَطَّلِعُ عَلَى الْأَفْئِدَةِ ﴿٧﴾

“It is the Fire kindled by Allah, which rises over the hearts.” — 104:6–7

The fire which burns within the heart of a person in this life, by for example love of wealth, it becomes the fire of hell in the next life.



- Thus the blessings of paradise, and the torments of hell, of the next life do not come from somewhere outside. These are all the unfolding of the spiritual condition that a person developed in this life, due to his/her good or bad deeds. What you will see there is what you already had here, but here you could not see it in its full clarity.
- According to the Quran, within an individual in this life a spiritual body is prepared according to his deeds. The deeds are preserved or “written down”. The Quran says:

كَلَّا بَلْ تُكذِّبُونَ بِالذِّبَانِ ﴿٩﴾ وَإِنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ حَافِظِينَ ﴿١٠﴾ كِرَامًا كَاتِبِينَ ﴿١١﴾ يَعْلَمُونَ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

“No, but you call the Judgment a lie, and surely there are keepers over you, honourable recorders, they know what you do.” — 82:9–12



مَا يَلْفُظُ مِنْ قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ ﴿١٨﴾

“He (a person) utters not a word but there is by him a watcher at hand.” — 50:18

- The Quran speaks of a “book” in which deeds are recorded:

هَذَا كِتَابُنَا يَنْطِقُ عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْحَقِّ إِنَّا كُنَّا نَسْتَنْسِجُ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾

“This is Our record (*kitāb*) that speaks against you with truth. Surely We wrote what you did.” — 45:29

It is not meant, of course, that there will be a physical book, a collection of pages. The word *kitāb* does not always mean a book as such; sometimes it signifies the knowledge of God. A study of the verses in which the recording of actions, or the book of deeds, is mentioned, leads to the conclusion that it is the *effect produced by those actions* that is called the “book”. For instance:

Fast 29

7



وَكُلَّ إِنْسَانٍ أَلْزَمْنَاهُ طَبْعَةً فِي عُنُقِهِ وَنُخْرِجُ لَهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ كِتَابًا يَلْقَاهُ مَنْشُورًا ﴿١٣﴾ اِقْرَأْ
كِتَابَكَ كَفَىٰ بِنَفْسِكَ الْيَوْمَ عَلَيْكَ حَسِيبًا ﴿١٤﴾

“And We have made every human being’s actions to cling to his neck, and We shall bring forth to him on the Day of Resurrection a book which he will find wide open. Read your book. Your own soul is sufficient as a reckoner against you this day.” — 17:13–14

Making the actions cling to the doer’s neck is clearly to cause the effect of the actions to appear on the person concerned; in other words, all actions, good or bad, leave their impression on man. An inner self of man is being prepared in this life. That inner self is really his book of deeds, a book in which is noted down the effect of every deed done.

Fast 29

8



The effect of those deeds becomes so clear and manifest on the Day of Judgment that no outside reckoning is needed. It is the person himself who reads his own book, that is to say, he sees all his actions in the marks left on him, and judges himself because the reckoning has already appeared in his own self.