

ISLAMIC CREED SERIES • 5

THE FINAL DAY

THE MINOR RESURRECTION

(What Happens After Death)
In the Light of the Qur'an and Sunnah

القيامة الصغرى

Dr. 'Umar S. al-Ashqar

الدار العالمية للكتاب الإسلامي

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IN THE NAME OF
ALLAH
THE ALL-COMPASSIONATE, ALL-MERCIFUL



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In the Light of the Qur'an and Sunnah

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'Umar S. al-Ashqar

Translated by:
Nasiruddin al-Khattab



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CONTENTS

TRANSLITERATION CHART.....	15
SYMBOLS' DIRECTORY	17
PUBLISHER'S NOTE.....	19
TRANSLATOR'S FOREWORD.....	21
INTRODUCTION	23

SECTION ONE

AL-QIYÂMAH AŞ-ŞUGHRA

(THE MINOR RESURRECTION, i.e., DEATH)

CHAPTER ONE

DEFINITIONS	31
1. Definition of <i>Al-Qiyâmah aş-Şughra</i>	31
2. <i>Al-Barzakh</i> (interval).....	32
3. <i>Al-Mawt</i> (death)	33
(1) <i>Al-Mawt</i> from a semantic point of view	33
(2) Greater death and lesser death.....	34
(3) Death is inevitable	35
(4) There is an appointed time for death.....	36
(5) The time of death is not known to us.....	38

CHAPTER TWO

THE MOMENT OF DEATH	39
1. The Coming of the Angels of Death.....	39

2. The Stupor of Death.....	45
Those for whom the agony of death is reduced	48
3. At the Time of Death, a Person Wishes to go Back.....	49
4. The Believer’s Joy at Meeting His Lord.....	50
5. The Presence of the <i>Shaytân</i> at the Time of Death.....	51
6. Causes of a Bad End.....	53
(1) Corruption in one’s belief (<i>‘aqeedah</i>).....	53
(2) Persisting in sin.....	54
(3) Turning away from righteousness.....	56
(4) Weakness of faith	54
7. The Prophets Were Given the Choice at the Time of Death.....	59

CHAPTER THREE

THE SOUL’S DEPARTURE AND JOURNEY TO HEAVEN.....	61
---	----

CHAPTER FOUR

THE GRAVE.....	67
1. The Terrors of the Grave.....	67
The darkness of the grave.....	68
2. The Squeezing of the Grave.....	68
3. The Trial (<i>Fitnah</i>) of the Grave.....	69
(1) How will this trial be?.....	69
(2) Will the <i>kâfir</i> be tested in his grave?.....	71
(3) Will anybody other than those who are accountable be tested?.....	72
4. The Torment and Blessing of the Grave.....	73

(1) The <i>aḥâdeeth</i> about the torment and blessing of the grave are <i>mutawâtir</i>	73
The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) heard the voices of those who were being tormented.....	78
People other than the Messenger (ﷺ) heard the voices of those who were being tormented	79
(2) Description of the blessings and torment of the grave.....	80
(3) Are the Muslims punished in their graves?.....	83
(4) Reasons for the punishment of the grave.....	83
(5) Things which save one from the trial and torment of the grave	96
Seeking refuge with Allah from the trial of the grave and the torment of the grave.....	98
(6) Those who are protected from the trial and torment of the grave	100
5. The Lessons of Death.....	102
(1) Death is the greatest lesson	102
(2) Thinking about death.....	103
(3) Examples of lessons	103
(4) More lessons from Arabic poetry	108
(5) The effect of remembering death on reforming people.....	111

CHAPTER FIVE

THE SOUL: <i>AR-ROOH</i> AND <i>AN-NAFS</i>	115
---	-----

1. Definitions.....	115
2. Does the Soul Have a Shape that may be Understood?	117

3. The Soul is Separate from the Body.....	117
4. The Seat of the <i>Rooḥ</i> in the Body.....	121
5. The <i>Rooḥ</i> is Created.....	122
(1) <i>Ijmâ'</i> (scholarly consensus).....	122
(2) The Qur'an and Sunnah.....	123
6. The Specious Arguments of those who Claim that the Soul is not Created.....	126
7. Different Kinds of <i>Nafs</i>	129
8. Do Souls Die?.....	131
9. The Abode of the <i>Rooḥ</i> in <i>Al-Barzakh</i>	132
(1) The souls of the prophets.....	132
(2) The souls of the martyrs.....	132
(3) The souls of the righteous believers.....	133
(4) The souls of the sinners.....	134
(5) The souls of the <i>kuffâr</i>	134
10. Problems and Answers.....	135
11. Does the Torment in <i>Al-Barzakh</i> Affect the Soul, the Body or Both?.....	136
12. Does a Person know Anything About What is Happening in this World After He Dies?.....	138

SECTION TWO

THE SIGNS OF THE HOUR

CHAPTER ONE

THE TIME OF THE HOUR.....	143
1. The Hour Has to Come, there is no Doubt.....	143
2. The Hour is Close at Hand.....	146

3. No One Knows the Exact Time of the Hour.....	150
4. The Reason Why Knowledge of the Timing of the Hour is Concealed.....	152
5. It is not Permissible to Try to Find out the Exact Time of the Hour.....	153
6. Confusion Surrounding the Idea of Specifying the Time of the Hour.....	156
7. Definition of Signs (<i>Ashrât</i> and <i>Âyât</i>).....	159
8. The Benefits of Studying the Signs of the Hour and the Unseen Events to Appear in the Future.....	160
9. Categorizing the Signs of the Hour.....	168

CHAPTER TWO

SIGNS OF THE HOUR WHICH HAVE HAPPENED.....	171
1. The Sending of the Messenger (ﷺ) and his Death.....	171
2. The Splitting of the Moon.....	172
3. The Fire in Ḥijâz Which Illuminates the Necks of the Camels in Buşra.....	173
4. The <i>Jizyah</i> and <i>Kharâj</i> will no Longer be Collected.....	183

CHAPTER THREE

THE SIGNS WHICH HAVE OCCURRED AND ARE ONGOING, OR WHICH OCCURRED ONCE AND MAY BE REPEATED.....	185
1. Conquests and Wars.....	185
2. Emergence of Imposters (<i>Dajjâls</i>) who Would Claim to be Prophets.....	190
3. <i>Al-Fitan</i> (Tribulations, Turmoil).....	192
(1) Warning of tribulation (<i>fitan</i>).....	192

(2) Examples of tribulations.....	196
(3) How to save oneself from tribulation.....	199
How should the Muslim deal with wars that happen among Muslims?.....	200
(4) The focal point and source of tribulation.....	203
4. The Appointment of Unqualified People to Positions of Authority.....	206
5. The Corruption of the Muslims.....	208
6. The Slave Woman Will Give Birth to Her Mistress and the Barefoot, Naked Shepherds Will Compete in Building Lofty Structures.....	210
7. The Nations Will Call one Another to Attack the Muslim Ummah.....	212
The reason for this co-operation (among the <i>kuffâr</i>).....	213
8. Landslides, Stones from Heaven and Transformation into Animals, by Means of Which Allah Punishes Some People Among this Ummah.....	214
9. Abundance of Wealth.....	216
10. Exclusive Greetings, Widespread Trade and Severance of Family Ties.....	218
11. The Standards by Which People are Measured Will Become Distorted.....	218
12. The Police Will Whip the People.....	219

CHAPTER FOUR

THE SIGNS WHICH HAVE NOT YET HAPPENED..... 221

1. The Arabian Peninsula Will Become Gardens and Rivers Once More.....	221
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2. The New Moon Will Increase in Size.....	221
3. Animals and Inanimate Objects Will Speak to Men.....	222
4. The Euphrates Will Uncover a Mountain of Gold.....	223
5. The Earth Will Bring Forth its Hidden Treasure	224
6. The Muslims Will be Besieged in Madeenah.....	225
7. Al-Jahjâh Will Seize Power.....	226
8. The Tribulation of the Saddle-Cloth and the Little Black Tribulation.....	226
9. The Appearance of the Mahdi.....	228
(1) Texts which describe the Mahdi.....	228
(2) The degree of soundness of the <i>aĥâdeeth</i> which speak of the Mahdi.....	231
(3) The beliefs of the Muslim sects concerning Mahdi.....	233
(4) The time when he will emerge.....	236
(5) Is the Mahdi the <i>khaleefah</i> who will scoop up handfuls of wealth?.....	238

CHAPTER FIVE

THE MAJOR SIGNS	239
Introduction: The Major Signs in Order of Occurrence.....	239
1. The Smoke.....	242
2. <i>Fitnat ad-Dajjâl</i> (the Tribulation of the <i>Dajjâl</i>).....	246
(1) His tribulation will be the greatest tribulation in human history.....	246
(2) The reason why he is called <i>Al-Maseeh ad-Dajjâl</i>	248
(3) The state of the Muslims at the time when the <i>Dajjâl</i> will emerge.....	249



The great battle and the conquest of Constantinople.....	250
(4) Drought and famine before the emergence of the <i>Dajjâl</i>	254
(5) The attributes and characteristics of the <i>Dajjâl</i>	254
General description	255
The <i>Dajjâl</i> will be one-eyed	256
Written between his eyes is “ <i>kâfir</i> ”	258
He will not have any offspring	259
(6) The falsehood of his claim to lordship	259
(7) The <i>Dajjâl’s</i> ability to create <i>fitnah</i> (tribulation, trial).....	260
(8) Where will he emerge from.....	265
(9) How long he will remain on earth	265
(10) The followers of the <i>Dajjâl</i>	266
(11) Madeenah and Makkah will be protected from the <i>Dajjâl</i>	267
(12) How to save oneself from the <i>Dajjâl</i>	269
(13) His destruction and the end of his tribulation; the destruction of his Jew followers.....	272
(14) The belief of <i>Ahl as-Sunnah</i> concerning the <i>Dajjâl</i>	286
(15) Ibn Şayyâd and the <i>Dajjâl</i>	275
(16) The <i>Dajjâl</i> according to the report of Tameem ad-Dâri	279
3. The Descent of ‘Eesa ibn Maryam.....	282
(1) When he will descend.....	284

(2) How will 'Eesa rule after he descends?.....	285
(3) 'Eesa (Jesus) will kill the <i>Dajjâl</i>	287
(4) The mission of 'Eesa after killing the <i>Dajjâl</i> , and the destruction of Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj.....	289
(5) What we learn from the texts which speak of 'Eesa.....	290
(6) Good living after the Messiah comes	293
(7) 'Eesa's stay on earth.....	294
(8) The virtue of those who will accompany 'Eesa	294
4. The Emergence of Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj.....	295
5. The End of Islam, the Removal of the Qur'an and the Death of Good People	302
6. Mankind's Return to Ignorance and Idol-Worship	304
7. The Destruction of the Ka'bah by <i>Dhul-Suwayqatayn</i>	306
8. The Rising of the Sun from the West.....	308
9. The Emergence of the Beast	308
10. The Fire which Will Gather the People	309
REFERENCES	315
GLOSSARY.....	319
INDEX OF THE QUR'AN	329
INDEX OF HADITH.....	333



TRANSLITERATION CHART

أ	a
آ . آى	â
ب	b
ت	t
ة	h or t (when followed by another Arabic word)
ث	th
ج	j
ح	ḥ
خ	kh
د	d
ذ	dh
ر	r
ز	z
س	s
ش	sh
ص	ṣ
ض	ḍ
ط	ṭ



ظ	z
ع	,
غ	gh
ف	f
ق	q
ك	k
ل	l
م	m
ن	n
هـ - ه - هـ	h
و	w
و (as vowel)	oo
ي	y
ي (as vowel)	ee
ء	,
	(Omitted in initial position)

َ	Fathah	a
ِ	Kasrah	i
ُ	Dammah	u
ّ	Shaddah	Double letter
◌	Sukoon	Absence of vowel

SYMBOLS' DIRECTORY

(سُبْحٰنُهٗ) : *Subhânahu wa Ta'âla* — “The Exalted.”

(سَلَامُهٗ) : *Şalla-Allahu 'Alayhi wa Sallam* -
“Blessings and Peace be upon him.”

(سَلَامٌ) : *'Alayhis-Salâm* — “May Peace be upon him.”

(رَضِيَ) : *Rađi-Allahu 'Anhu* — “May Allah be pleased with him.”



PUBLISHER'S NOTE

All praise and thanks belong to Allah, the Lord of the Universe. May there be Allah's choicest blessings and peace on the last of the prophets and messengers Muhammad, his family members, Companions and all those who follow his footsteps till the Doomsday.

Ma'ad or Hereafter is the third of the Trio of the Islamic Dogma, *Tawḥeed*, *Risâlat* and *Ma'ad* i.e., the Oneness of God, Prophethood and Hereafter. The author after discussing the first two parts of the creed — the oneness of God, and Messengers and Messages — has dealt with the Final Day/Hereafter. He has divided it into three parts, What happens after Death, the Day of Resurrection and the Paradise and Hell. This book deals with the initial and the first phase of the belief and concept of the Hereafter. Dr. 'Umar Sulaymân al-Ashqar, as usual, has discussed this issue exhaustively based on the texts of the Qur'an and the Sunnah and the highly acclaimed and renowned authorities thereon. A number of editions of the Arabic original have been published and it is on increase. This speaks of the popularity of the noble work.

We are happy to produce the work in a number of languages in order to acquaint the humanity at large about the significance of this aspect of the Islamic belief. This is the English version rendered by brother Nâşiruddîn al-Khaṭṭâb who translated his other works too.

May Allah bless with acceptance the efforts of the author, the translator and all those associated with its publication.

Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Muḥsin Al Tuwaijri

General Manager

International Islamic Publishing House, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia



TRANSLATOR'S FOREWORD

What happens after death? Doctors and scientists are able to describe in detail what happens to the body once death has occurred, but what happens to the essence, the soul, the person who dwelt in that body? This is a question which concerns many, of all backgrounds and walks of life. Many have tried to answer this question, producing theories that range from the fanciful to the nihilistic. But man-made notions cannot answer questions about matters which man has no way of seeing. No-one has ever come back from “the other side” with a scientific report on what really happens.

In this as in so many other issues, Islam brings us answers. Surely the One Who gives life and takes it away, is the One Who is the best to inform us of what happens after death. He has informed us about these matters, in His Book and through His last Prophet (ﷺ). Death is acknowledged to be a difficult matter, and so we are instructed to seek refuge with Allah from the trials of death as well as of life. We are also informed of what will take place after death, including the questioning of the angels and the torment of the grave, and Islam offers us the comfort of being able to seek Allah’s protection from that torment.

Death is only one part of the future that concerns us. Human beings have a fascination with the future, as is apparent from the proliferation of soothsayers and fortunetellers. Although the Prophets have warned mankind repeatedly that consulting such charlatans is *ḥarām* (and harmful), they have exerted an influence over people down throughout history. In contrast, Islam tells us about the future just that which we need to know. For example, we are told that the Hour (the Day of Judgement) will certainly come, but we are not told when. This knowledge is all we need to know, so that we may

continually strive to be prepared to meet our Lord. The believers have always had this sense that the Hour is imminent, from the time of the Prophet (ﷺ) until the present day.

We do not know when the Hour will come — for even the Prophet (ﷺ) was not granted this knowledge. But we have been told of the signs and portents which will herald its coming. Many of the minor signs have already come to pass, or are happening now. Learning about these signs helps us to make sense of a world that sometimes seems to be going out of control. When we see that events and trends fit the pattern described in the Qur'an and *ahâdeeth*, we understand that there is a plan and a purpose, and that Allah is in control of the universe.

In this book, Dr. 'Umar al-Ashqar examines all these issues from the point of view of the Qur'an and Sunnah. As always, he quotes extensively from the texts, placing these issues squarely within an Islamic framework and dispelling the myths and misunderstandings that have arisen and become prevalent.

May Allah reward the author for sharing his deep knowledge with the ummah, and may He cause this book to be of benefit to all who read it.

Naşiruddin al-Khaţţâb

INTRODUCTION

Praise be to Allah, the giver and taker of life, the One Who puts the souls into the bodies and takes them, the One Who created us from dust and returns us to it, and when He wills, He will bring us back from the dust and will resurrect us.

And I send blessings and peace upon the Chosen Prophet who spoke at length about death and how difficult it is, about the Day of Resurrection with its horrors and terrors, about the Fire and its torment, about Paradise and its delights; who woke people from their negligence, rid them of their confusion and pointed them in the right direction.

And I send blessings and peace upon his pure family and noble Companions, and those who follow them in truth, those who live in this world whilst their hearts long for the Hereafter, so they strive for that eternal abode, and this is how they continue until they meet their Lord, so may Allah be pleased with them.

We have been brought to this life by the will of the Giver and Initiator of life, and we leave this life when the One Who gave us the soul decides to take it away. People come and others go. They are like the waves of the sea which come one after another; every time a wave crashes upon the shore, another wave follows it. They are like a running river which you see flowing constantly, but the water which you see in front of you now is not the same water which you saw just a moment ago. They are like a field of plants which is always green; whenever something in it dies, something else grows. They are like a panel illuminated with hundreds of thousands of candles; you see it always shining, but when we look closely at it we discover the secret behind its continual light, that is, whenever one part of the wax burns out it is replaced by another.

But this long and ongoing human existence will come to an end one day. There will come a day when all of human life will come to a halt, and indeed the entire universe will be destroyed. All the stars will be extinguished and the waves of the sea will come to a standstill. All vegetation will shrivel and die, and the rivers and springs will dry up. But this destruction will not be the end; it is only one of the stages that man will go through. There will come a day when we will all be brought back to life, to account for our previous deeds.

The belief that we will be brought back to life for eternity is essential to correct man's course. For in the depths of his heart, man has a love for immortality and eternal life. Hence *Iblees* (Satan) tempted Adam to eat from the tree of which he had been forbidden to eat, by claiming that eating from it would grant him and his wife eternal life:

﴿فَوَسْوَسَ إِلَيْهِ الشَّيْطَانُ قَالَ يَا آدَمُ هَلْ أَدُلُّكَ عَلَى شَجَرَةِ الْخُلْدِ وَمُلْكٍ لَّا يَبُوءُ﴾

﴿Then *Shayṭân* [Satan] whispered to him, saying: 'O Adam! Shall I lead you to the Tree of Eternity and to a kingdom that will never waste away?'﴾
(*Qur'an* 20: 120)

Disbelief in the resurrection brings misery to human souls and causes mankind to deviate from his intended path in this life.

Some of those who reject the idea of being brought back to life wail and lament, the fact that their life is diminishing with every moment that passes. This may lead them to isolation and pain until death takes them. If they are writers or poets, they record their feelings of grief over their lives in articles, books or verses which embody their misery, confusion and pain, to offer consolation to those who are in the same situation. But in fact this only increases their suffering and makes the sick person even more sick, and it does not bring any healing. Some of those who disbelieve in the resurrection hasten to make the most of physical pleasures, as if they are racing with time and are afraid that their days will come to an end before they have

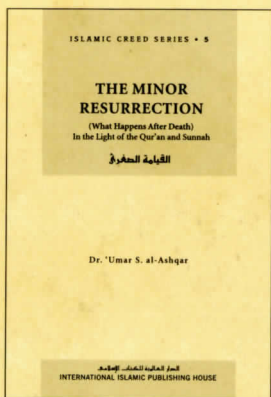
had their fill of life's pleasures.

The short period of our existence in this world is extremely important with regard to the next life. The way to eternal happiness which leads to eternal life in the abode of eternity depends on our achieving real perfection in ourselves and in others. This perfection, which purifies our souls and corrects our deeds, has a clear foundation which has been explained by the Messengers and in the divinely-revealed Books.

Because the connection between this life and the life of the Hereafter is so strong, such that this life is like ploughing and sowing, and that life is like reaping and harvesting, man needs to know enough about his life in the Hereafter in order to make him prepare for it and live his life in this world in a manner that will bring him good in the life of the Hereafter.

Because the life of the Hereafter is unseen, the veil cannot be lifted from it even by people with sharp minds and deep insight, let alone those who have less insight. But Allah has told them where they will go after this life, and has informed them about their inevitable course. Mention of the life of the Hereafter is mixed with mention of this life because the two are interconnected, so that souls may be set straight and reformed in a world where many creatures, human and jinn alike, are striving to mislead people and take them far from the right path.

The information which Allah has provided us about that unseen Day when we will meet Him cannot be referred to in hints and symbols. It must be spoken of clearly and in detail, in such a way that man will be encouraged to have firm faith (*yaqeen*) with no element of doubt. Whoever looks at what we have compiled in this book about the Last Day will see abundant quotations from the Qur'an and *ṣaḥeeḥ* Sunnah, which give a detailed picture of many of the things that will happen after death and on the Day of Resurrection.



What happens after death? When will the end of the world be? Are we really living in the "last days"? These are questions which concern everyone, no matter what his or her background. Many have tried to answer these questions, producing theories that range from the fanciful to the nihilistic. But man-made notions cannot answer questions about matters which man has no way of finding out by himself.

In these as in so many other issues, Islam brings us answers. Surely the One Who gives life and takes it away, is the One Who is the best to inform us of what happens after death. The One Who has created this universe and mankind is the best to tell us about when this world will come to an end and mankind will be called for Judgement. He has informed us about these matters, in His Book and through His Prophet (pbuh).

In this book, Dr. 'Umar S. al-Ashqar examines all these issues from the point of view of the Qur'an and Sunnah. He looks at issues of death and what happens to a person's soul after death, including the questioning of the angels and the torment of the grave. He also examines the signs of the Hour, which indicate that the Day of Judgement is approaching - many of which are already happening. As always, he quotes extensively from the texts, placing these issues squarely within an Islamic framework and dispelling the myth and misunderstandings that have arisen and become prevalent.

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