

MIFTAAH SEMINAR

THE JOURNEY OF THE SOUL



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SESSION 2

The Stages of This Life

- The First Stage
 - Our soul is blown into our body while we are in the womb during the third trimester of pregnancy.
- The Second Stage - The Life of Youth
 - This stage begins when a child reaches the age of puberty.
 - A child is mature at the age of 14 years and 7 months if no other signs of maturity are there.
 - Children can reach puberty earlier if they show the signs of maturity.
 - A child is not accountable for any actions they do until they reach puberty.
 - Although this is true, parents are responsible to encourage them to do good.
 - When a parent teaches their child to do something good, they will also receive the reward for that.
 - When they reach puberty, they become responsible for fulfilling all of the commandments of Islam.
 - At this time, the angels start to record everything which we do.
 - It is the responsibility of the parents to remind them that they are now accountable.

- This is the stage in which the foundations of life are set.
 - It is also the stage where a person will take the most risks since their brain has not fully developed when it comes to making decisions.
 - Youth can be misled or guided during this stage and it will set them up for the rest of their lives.
- This stage continues until a person reaches the age of 35.
- The Third Stage - The Adult Stage
 - This is from the age of 35-50.
- The Fourth Stage - Seniority
 - This is from the age of 50-70.
- The Fifth Stage - Decrepitude
 - This is from the age of 70 and up.

The Third Stage of Life

- During this stage a person typically begins to settle down into their life.
 - They may get married, have children, etc.
- Allah SWT speaks about this stage and specifically the age of 40.

وَلَمَّا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ آتَيْنَاهُ حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا ۗ وَكَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٢:٢٢﴾

(12:22) And when Joseph reached the age of maturity, We granted him judgement and knowledge. Thus do We reward those who do good.

- Almost all of the Prophets were given prophecy at the age of 40.
 - Scholars mention that this is because at this age, the mind fully matures.
- It is typically at this age that people begin to look back at their lives and contemplate what they have accomplished in their lives.
 - Many times people feel like they have not accomplished much which leads them to making major changes in their lives.

- Imam Ghazali stated that if by the age of 40, a person's good does not overcome his bad, he has a difficult task ahead of him.
 - By this age, a person becomes generally fixed in their ways and it would be much more difficult to change everything.
 - We should strive to orient ourselves on the right path before the age of 40 so that we can be fixated in a good direction.
 - It is always possible for a person to change their ways, even after the age of 40, however, it will be more difficult.
- Allah SWT mentioned in the Quran:

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَبَلَغَ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً قَالَ رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَيَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ وَأَصْلِحْ لِي فِي ذُرِّيَّتِي إِنِّي تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَإِنِّي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ (46:15)

(46:15)...And when he is grown to full maturity and reaches the age of forty, he prays: "My Lord, dispose me that I may give thanks for the bounty that You have bestowed upon me and my parents, and dispose me that I may do righteous deeds that would please You, and also make my descendants righteous. I repent to You, and I am one of those who surrender themselves to You." (46:15)

- This is the dua which Allah SWT tells us to make dua at the age of 40.
 - In this dua, we are asking Allah SWT to allow us to be thankful for the blessings which He gave us and to allow us to continue doing more good.
- Allah SWT also mentioned:

أَوَلَمْ نُعَمِّرْكُم مَّا يَتَذَكَّرُ فِيهِ مَنْ تَذَكَّرَ وَجَاءَكُمُ النَّذِيرُ فَذُوقُوا فَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ نَصِيرٍ (35:37)

...(They will be told): "Did we not grant you an age long enough for anyone to take heed if he had wanted to take heed? Besides, there came a warner to you. So have a taste of the torment now. None may come to the help of the wrong-doers." (35:37)

- Some scholars state that this verse refers to the age of 40 while most state that it refers to the age of 60.
- Allah SWT is saying that we had plenty of time to do good due to our long age.
- We have many warnings before the end of our lives.
 - White hair
 - Diseases
 - Immobility
- Even with these warnings, many people do not change themselves for the better.
- Shaykh Abdul Wahab Al-Sharani stated: "Our oaths were taken that when reaching the age of 40, we folded our mats, except when overpowered by sleep and we constantly became aware that with every breath we are travelers to the Hereafter. No rest remains. No repose for us. No competitions on any positions in the world now. No joy over anything worldly because life narrows after 40. Distractions and playing are inappropriate for a person who nears the battleground of death."
- After the age of 40, a person has very few years of life remaining and these years must be taken seriously.
- Imam Maalik stated: We know people who studied deen until the age of 40, after which they occupied themselves with practice.
- At the age of 40, Imam Shafi'i took a staff and began walking with it although he would walk fine without it. When someone asked him why he had a staff he said, "To remind myself that I am a traveler. I now see myself as a bird who has extricated himself from his cage until only the foot is left caught. I have no desire to remain in this world now and I grant no permission to any of my companions to mention anything of the world except what is legally necessary for me."

- Wahab ibn Munabih stated: I have read somewhere that every morning, a harold announces from the fourth heaven, 'Oh people of 40, you are a crop whose harvest is nile (meaning the crop is almost ready to be cut). Oh people of 50 what have you sent ahead for yourself and what have you kept back? Oh people of 60, you have no more excuse. Would that creature had never been created and if/when they were created, they knew why they were being created. The hour has come so beware!

The Fourth Stage of Life - Seniority

- Allah SWT stated in the Quran:

هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ عَلَقَةٍ ثُمَّ يُخْرِجُكُمْ طِفْلًا ثُمَّ لِيَتَّبِعُوا أَشْدَّكُمْ ثُمَّ لِيَتَّكُونُوا شُيُوخًا وَمِنْكُمْ مَنْ يَتَّوَفَى مِنْ قَبْلٍ وَلِيَتَّبِعُوا أَجَلًا مُسَمًّى وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ (40:67)

It is He Who has created you from dust, then from semen, then from a clot, then brings you forth as an infant [from womb], then [makes you grow] to reach the age of full strength, and afterwards to be old, though some among you die before [you reach an advanced age, but some of you live and] reach an appointed term in order that you may understand. (40:67)

- This verse describes the various stages of life and tells us that we can die at any point in any of the stages.
- The Prophet SAW said: The reaping of my nation will be between 60 and 70.
- He SAW described the period between 60 and 70 as the battleground of death.
- The Prophet SAW said: Allah SWT will accept the excuses of someone who Allah SWT has delayed their time of death until they reach 60.
 - When a person reaches this age, there are no more excuses.

- The people of the past nations had much longer lifespans than we do now.
 - The Prophet SAW told Allah SWT that his nation had a very short lifespan, so Allah SWT told him about laylatul Qadr.
- At this stage, people start to become more righteous and leave the worldly matters.
 - One of the people who Allah SWT will not look at on the Day of Judgement is an old man who commits adultery.
- It is at this age where people will have white hair.
 - One poet stated: White hair is a hole in life which can not be plugged and whose worsening can not be repaired by time. It is a light that rises as the breath of life sets. It is a mover of people to the place of rotten bones. Do not burn the light of your white hair with the fire of your sins.

The Fifth Stage of Life - Decrepitude

- This is the age of 70 and older where a person begins to become weak and more dependant on others.
 - This stage begins before the age of 70 for some people.
- This continues until death.
- Allah SWT stated in the Quran:

اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ ضَعْفٍ ثُمَّ جَعَلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ ضَعْفٍ قُوَّةً ثُمَّ جَعَلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ قُوَّةٍ ضَعْفًا وَشَيْبَةً ۗ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ ۗ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيمُ الْقَدِيرُ (30:54)

It is Allah Who created you in a state of weakness; then after weakness He gave you strength, then after strength He made you weak and old. He creates what He pleases. He is All-Knowing, All-Powerful. (30:54)

- Allah SWT also stated:

وَاللَّهُ خَلَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ يَتَوَفُّكُمْ وَمِنْكُمْ مَن يُرَدُّ إِلَىٰ أَرْدَلِ الْعُمْرِ لِكَيْ لَا يَعْلَمَ بَعْدَ عِلْمٍ شَيْئًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ قَدِيرٌ (16:70)

(16:70) Allah has created you, and then He causes you to die. Some of you have your lives prolonged to an abject old age, when one loses all knowledge after having acquired it. Allah is All-Knowing, All-Powerful.

- One poet stated: If 70 is your sickness then you will find no doctor until you die.
- This stage is very difficult to go through.

The Third Life - Life After Death

- Allah SWT stated:

لَعَلَّيْ أَعْمَلُ صَالِحًا فِيمَا تَرَكْتُ كَلَّا إِنَّهَا كَلِمَةٌ هُوَ قَائِلُهَا وَمِنْ وَرَائِهِمْ بَرْزَخٌ إِلَىٰ يَوْمٍ يُبْعَثُونَ (23:100)

(23:100) that I have left behind. I am likely to do good."Nay, it is merely a word that he is uttering. There is a barrier behind all of them (who are dead) until the Day when they will be raised up.

- The life of Barzakh begins from the moment a person dies until the moment that the horn is blown.
- As a person is passing away, we should encourage them to recite the shahadah.
- When a person passes away, we should speak about the good things which they did and abstain from speaking about their bad.
- In the Barzakh, the soul becomes dominant and the physical body is secondary.
 - The physical body will slowly dissolve until a small part of the spine is left.

- The bodies of prophets and martyrs will remain the exact same in the grave.
- A hadith states: When a janazah is being held for a righteous person, they will be saying 'hurry me forward". If it is a non-righteous person they will say, 'Woe be to it! Where are you taking it?'
- It was mentioned in hadith that those who have passed away can hear even while in the grave.
- It is unknown exactly how much they can hear.
- Upon the burial, everyone should put 3 handfuls of soil over the grave and recite:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ وَعَلَىٰ مِلَّةِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ
مِنْهَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ وَفِيهَا نُعِيدُكُمْ وَمِنْهَا نُخْرِجُكُمْ تَارَةً أُخْرَىٰ (٢٠:٥٢)

In the name of Allah and upon the deen of the Messenger of Allah (20:55) From this very earth We created you and to the same earth We shall cause you to return, and from it We shall bring you forth to life again.

- After the burial, the people pray for steadfastness.
 - Immediately after the person is buried, the questioning will begin.
 - The angels names Munkar and Nakeer will ask 3 questions:
 - Who is your lord?
 - What is your religion?
 - Who is your prophet?
 - It is said that we will be shown an image of the Prophet SAW and we will be asked who this is.
 - A believer will identify the Prophet SAW even though they have never seen him.

- The Prophet SAW said: The grave is either a pit of hell or a garden of paradise.
- Uthman RA's beard would be drenched when he visited the graves. When he was asked about this, he said that he heard the Prophet SAW saying, "The grave is the first of the stages of the Hereafter. If a person is able to do well, it becomes easier. If he does not then what comes after is even worse."

