PREFACE

The materialists and atheists do not believe in the existence of God (the Creator and Sustainer of the Universe). Their theory is that this world of ours has evolved out of energy and matter in some shape or other under certain natural laws; and in due course water was formed and from it, after over millions of years, came plant life, then animal life and finally the ancestors of the human race appeared. Over the centuries, the human race gained in wisdom and experience till it became the lord of Creation. They also believe that death is the end of things and there is no life after death. Some scientists and philosophers are also of the same opinion.

Allah is the Creator and Sustainer of the Universe and everything that exists on this Earth. He is Ever-living and Self-subsisting. He created ‘Man’ as His ‘Khalifa’ on Earth—that is one who rules over His creatures. He gave man wisdom and the ability to distinguish between ‘right’ and ‘wrong’. But for the guidance of man in his moral and spiritual life and for the betterment of his soul He sent messengers and prophets from time to time, who, on receiving Divine revelation, preached man the real aim and purpose of his life. Further the good deeds of man would be rewarded and bad deeds would entail punishment either in this worldly life or in the life after death. The messenger is also taught that this world
(ii)

would one day come to its end and there would be a Day of Resurrection. That the human soul would be given another suitable body and would be awarded Heaven or Hell according to its deeds on Earth. However, immediately after death and before the day of Resurrection, there is a period, which is known ‘Barzakh’ in Islam, and purgatory in Christianity. What happens to the human soul therein is only in the knowledge of Allah; or whatever He chooses to vouchsafe or reveal to His Messengers or Chosen people. There are some people who believe in the so-called ‘spiritualism’ and profess to be able to call the spirits of the dead through a ‘medium’, but no authentic or scientifically acceptable evidence is available to substantiate their contention.

The Holy Quran, contains revelations from Allah to the holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him). It refers in several places to the human soul, the life after death, reward or punishment for human deeds and heaven and hell. Similarly, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, under divine inspiration, has made several statements about the next world or life after death and the Day of Judgement, and has given examples to illustrate his sayings. But the actual conditions in that life, and the actual nature of the heaven and hell, is known only to God. Since no person has returned to this world after his death, there is no first-hand knowledge of what happens after death to the human soul and what kind of life it leads. However, Allah, the Almighty often reveals to His messengers and righteous chosen persons some of the secrets of that eternal life after death. They in turn tell their followers about them so that it may increase their faith and inspire them to lead a goodly life.
In order to collect the material on the immortality of human soul and the life after death and other allied matters, I have taken extracts from the verses of the Holy Quran and the sayings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad as well as the writings and spiritual experiences of the great Imams and holy men and especially from the great reformer in Islam of the 14th century Hijrah, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. He has written a book “The Teachings of Islam” in which he has discussed the subject of life after death purely from Quaranic point of view. I have fully derived benefit from this book and also from the writings of Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Ali and Dr. Basharat Ahmad.

M. A. Faruqui
CHAPTER I

From sometime now, scientists have declared that the atom is no longer known to be the smallest particle of matter, nor is it indestructable. New researches had disclosed that within the atom itself, there are small electrically charged particles known as electrons and protons. Later researches have further shown these electrons and protons as arising from a hazy mass known as a nebula, and this nebula originated in the darkesses of space which is termed the ether. The vastness of the ether is estimated to be millions of light years. In the vast expanse of the ether, Energy exists. In Islamic terminology this Energy is the Quwwat or power of Allah, the manifestation of which brings all things into existence. Within the dark domains of the ether, every moment sparks of black light known as photons or quanta are constantly being emitted. According to certain laws these photons are evolved into electrically-charged particles. Further along in the evolutionary process, atoms are formed from these particles of electricity. From these atoms, the different elements constituting matter are created. Higher up in the evolutionary scale, life takes shape, from which vegetable, animal and finally man comes into existence.
The Human Soul

_The Holy Quran says:_—“And they ask thee about the Soul. Say: The Soul is by the commandment of my Lord, and of knowledge you are given but a little”. (17:15) From the word ‘soul’ as applied to human beings is meant first the animal soul which is taken away in sleep or when one is unconscious, but the real _human soul_ is defined as—“the capacity for emotional or spiritual experience conditioning the function of Conscience, feeling, and rationality which is considered the core or centre of a person’s individuality, and credited by religious thought with the potentiality of eternal existence” (Odham’s Dictionary of the English Language) The Arabic word _Ruh_, translated as human soul, also means _inspiration_ or _revelation_; and the soul is also something that is inspired into a human body by God. As quoted earlier from the Quran, the real and true knowledge about the soul is known only to Allah; but He gives or imparts some of this knowledge to His messengers, prophets and chosen ones. One such person Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib, the _mujaddid_ of the 14th century (Hejira), has given an illuminating discourse on this subject in his book “The Teachings of Islam.” Its purport follows:

“...The soul is a light which springs up from the body which is being prepared in the womb. By the springing up of the soul I only mean that at first it is hidden and imperceptible, although its germs are present in the seed itself, and that as the body is gradually developed, the soul grows along with it and becomes manifest. There is not the least doubt that the inexplicable connection of the
soul with the seed is in accordance with the design of God and with His permission and will. It is a bright essence in the seed itself. It is not a part of it in the sense in which matter is part of matter, but at the same time it is untrue to say that it comes from outside, or, as some wrongly imagine, falling upon the earth is mixed with the substance of the seed. It is hidden in the seed as fire is latent in the flint. The holy Word of God lends no support to the view that the soul comes from the heavens as something distinct from the body, or that it falls suddenly upon the earth and, mixing with the seed accidentally, finds an entrance into the womb. Nay, the idea is utterly fallacious and totally opposed to the laws of nature. The thousands of insects which we observe daily in stinking and rotten articles of food or in unwashed wounds do not come from outside or descent from heaven. Their existence proves to our satisfaction that the soul comes out of the body and is as surely a creation of God Who, with His perfect wisdom and omnipotence, has created the soul out of the body, has willed and intended that a second birth of the soul should also be made manifest through the body. The movements of our soul depends upon that of the body and if the body is drawn in any direction, the soul must follow. The physical state of man’s life being of such great importance to the soul, the Word of God cannot be silent on the point. The Quran has, therefore, applied itself abundantly to the reformation of the physical state of man’s life. It gives us the most valuable and minute direction on all matters of importance with which man is concerned: all his movements, the manner of the satisfaction of all his requirements, his family, social and general
connections, health and sickness, are all regulated by laws and it is shown how external order and purity have their effect upon his spiritual state.”

Generally speaking, if the process of ‘evolution’ is correct, then it stands to reason that this human body, which contains the human soul, dies and turns to dust, and the progress of the human soul which is immortal, should continue. It would be something like the larva of a moth, which after developing into its winged state, leaves the cocoons, and flies away. So the human Soul on leaving its earthly body finds a new spiritual body which takes it to the spiritual regions of the after-life where it continues its progress. The laws of evolution demands that when a body progresses from a lower order to a higher order of things, then it does not revert back to the first stage, and so the human soul does not go back to its earthly body.

**The human soul is different from the animal life**

Life with its bodily functions is common between man and other animals, but the human soul that stands for human consciousness is something quite different from it. The life in the body becomes extinct on death, but the soul remains immortal as God willed it. The human soul gives a person the quality of ‘Self-Consciousness,’ and thus is given the intelligence to distinguish between right and wrong. This quality is not found in other animals which are compelled to follow their instincts which nature has provided them with. They have not got the self-consciousness and awareness like the human being.
Since the animals act under their instinct and natural inclinations without self-consciousness, hence they are not held accountable for their actions.

But the human being being, self-conscious and having intelligence to distinguish between right and wrong, is held accountable for his deeds. Hence the soul being the real motivating force in a person’s body, has to account for its deeds in the after-life.

The human conscience

Man like other animals strives to find food, nourishment and shelter for his body, and last but not the least to procreate his species. In addition to these material yearnings, he has been endowed by Allah with certain qualities in his nature—such as a feeling of mercy, a sense of justice, to be beneficent to the needy, to express sympathy with those in distress, to avoid evil and express gratitude for service done. Consequently his very nature makes him to bow down in worship to Allah and to seek His help. This is that ‘Spark’ of Divine light which God has kept latent in human nature, and which in ordinary parlance is called conscience.

The guidance of the Human Soul

Man through his intelligence and experience makes material progress. He is a social animal also who wants to live in company in with his fellow-beings. To regulate a social life some ethical laws have to be made. However even feeling instinctively the presence of a Higher Being, man cannot make any spiritual progress on his
own, unless that Higher Being Who created him sends His messengers and prophets and reveals His guidance and Commandments. The man has been given sufficient intelligence to make his choice between right and wrong and is rewarded or punished accordingly. He at times sees and endures the results of his deeds in this world's life, but the human soul being immortal is held to account in the after-life.

The Fostering of the Human Soul

The human soul has one peculiarity that it is conscious of and understands whatever it feels and that knowledge it preserves. In other words the human soul gets its education and training from the different senses of the human body. As the years pass and the body develops, this sense and knowledge of pleasure and pain becomes more and more sure and secure. Then death intervenes and the human soul takes leave of its material abode. It is obvious that the human soul when departing takes away with it certain natural inclinations and instincts, and feeling of senses and the knowledge or experience gained about them through the instrumentality of its once earthly abode—the human body. Hence its feelings and sensations of pleasure and pain in the after-life would be akin and somewhat similar to those it felt in this earthly life. Hence it follows that the following three things are common to the earthly life and the life in the hereafter:

(i) The presence of natural and instinctive requirements.
(ii) The means in the outside world to satisfy them.

(iii) The senses in the human soul to determine and feel as and when those natural requirements are satisfied.

The Relationship between the Human Body and the Human Soul

As long as the human body is alive and active the human soul is there along with it. When the brain centres of the body are resting or inactive whether that rest is temporary or permanent, the ‘soul’ loses contact with the material body. In the state of sleep, the brain centre rests and the person is not conscious, hence the ‘soul’ breaks contact with the body and the person is neither self-conscious nor has self-determination, and sense of responsibility. Some people talk in their sleep but they are not conscious of what they say. Some people walk in their sleep and may cause some trouble but they are not held responsible for it. Since in the state of sleep, the resting of the brain centres is temporary, hence when a person awakes, his ‘soul’ again resumes full connection with the human body. But in case of death the brain centres become senseless and soon become lifeless permanently, hence the ‘Soul’ cannot regain contact with its body.

The Holy Quran says: “Allah takes (men’s) souls at the time of their death, and those that die not, during their sleep. Then He withholds those on whom He has passed the decree of death and sends the others back till an appointed term. Surely there are signs in this for a people who reflect” (39:42).
It is clear that it is not the animal soul that is taken away in sleep, it is the soul that stands for human consciousness. In death both are taken away. The statement further makes it clear that the word توفق (tawaffa) used in the Quranic verse is applied to the taking of the soul and not to the removal of the body from one plane to another. Although in this earthly life the human soul together with its abode—the human body—are both participants in the commission of deeds—right or wrong, but since the human soul furnishes the discretion it is held responsible and taken away to the after-life to answer for its deeds and bear the consequences.

The fine distinction between the human soul and the spirit

The Holy Quran mentions about the creation of man, it says:—“then He made him complete and breathed into him of His spirit...” (32:9). Here that part of the spiritual light which gets infused into the human body at its birth is called Ruh. But when the human death is mentioned—“Allah takes (men’s) souls at the time of their death...” (39:42), here the word نفس (Nafs) is used instead of روح (Ruh). This signifies that the particle of the spiritual light after it getsseeded into the human body, is called نفس (Nafs) because then it partakes of the senses and capabilities of that body according to its knowledge and experience, and becomes something which has now an entity of its own which remains with it and survives.
CHAPTER II

Bringing the Dead to Life

Nobody comes back to this world after death to describe as to what he had gone through. However God’s chosen persons are given glimpses of the after-life through dreams, visions and Divine revelations. Miraj, the ascension of the Holy Prophet Muhammad is a proof of the same. The Holy Quran tells us that death is not the end of things, but is an entrance to a life of higher spiritual plane. Just as from the quintessence of dust the human body comes into being, so from the deeds of man a new life and a better personality takes shape. God says in the Holy Quran:

“We have created you, why Do you not then accept? See you that which you emit? Is it you that create it or are We the Creators? 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 know not’. (56 : 57-61).

Again the Holy Quran says:

“Does not man see that We have created him from the small life-germ? Then lo! he is an open disputant. And he strikes out a likeness for Us and forgets his own creation, Says he:
Who will give life to the bones, when they are rotten? Say: He will give life to them, Who brought them into existence at first, and He is Knower of all creation. Who produced fire for you out of the green tree, so that with it you kindle. Is not He Who created the heavens and the earth able to create the like of them? Yea! and He is the Creator (of all), the Knower.” (36: 77-81).

Here God has given a fine and convincing argument as to how the revival will take place after death. Here an example is given to show as to how that Great Creator has caused green trees to grow out of which when burnt fire is produced. Life after death is the deepest of all natural secrets, for a person who tries to unravel it hasn’t yet died to experience and relate it. Of those persons who died, a few did visit certain chosen persons in their dreams, but they only proved that they had been given another life, but as to how it was done, nobody could explain. In the verses quoted above, God mentions that He would give life to you again just like He produces fire from the green trees. Here it may be noted that man has been likened to a green tree. The greenness of a tree is due to a chemical material called ‘chlorophyll’. The peculiarity of this material is that when the light and the rays of the sun fall on the green leaves a chemical action starts which is called ‘photo-synthesis’. Through this action, the moisture and the carbon dioxide gas which the tree absorbs from the surrounding atmosphere produces Glucose, etc. which sustains the tree, but is converted into two other matters—the Carbon
particles which are used by the tree itself, and oxygen gas which it emits into the atmosphere. It is this oxygen gas which helps maintain animal life on earth.

Similarly if a man takes advantage of the Divine light he accomplishes two objects—firstly, he absorbs the spiritual light, warmth and energy in his own self, and secondly he imports the same to his fellow creatures.

The second thing mentioned in the above Quranic verses, is that one obtains the wherewithal from the tree to start a fire. But when does a man use the tree wood to burn? Only when the tree has been cut from its roots in the ground, and has become dry, so does a man looses contact with the earth, when he dies. That dried-up tree when it is set on fire causes its carbon contents to mix with oxygen from the air to start a blaze. These elements of carbon and oxygen are produced from this tree under the action of the sunlight, but now the process is reversed. The tree gets burnt down to ashes, but it leaves behind its light and heat. Similarly the human body having come out of dust returns to dust and mixes with it, but the deeds he has done have been preserved in a spiritual form along with his soul which is immortal. It is an amazing law of Nature that even in its material form the ray of light once produced does not cease to exist but goes on travelling at the speed of over 1,86000 miles per second. The astronomers say that the starlight that you see in the night had started from its source—some thousands of years ago—as the star is some millions of light-years away from the Earth. It is quite possible that that particular star may have met with an
accident some years ago and had been decimated, yet its light is still being seen.

**Faith in the Life Hereafter**

To believe in the life hereafter is one of the fundamental beliefs of the religion of Islam. It is not only a customary belief, for it opens a new door for the progress and advancement of man in a new spiritual world compared to which this earthly existence loses its charm. The Holy Quran says:

"And whoso desires the Hereafter and strives for it as he ought to strive and he is a believer—those are they whose striving is amply rewarded. All do We aid—these as well as those—out of the bounty of thy Lord, and the bounty of thy Lord is not limited. See how We have made some of them to excel others. And certainly the Hereafter is greater in degrees and greater in excellence." (17 : 19-21).

In the first section of Chapter 2 (The Cow) of the Holy Quran, certain cardinal principles of religion have been laid down for the pious Muslims; and one of those is — "...and of the Hereafter they are sure," that is they believe in the Day of Judgement. To taste and enjoy the pleasures of heaven or to suffer the burning in the hell, one does not have to die and enter the After-life, for certain glimpses of those are witnessed in this world's life as well. For the righteous there is the contentment of mind, peace in their nature and spiritual pleasure at a life well-spent according to the Lord's Commandments; while the evil-doers and Sinners have no peace of mind for they are
ever afraid of the punishment that may overtake them. Regarding righteous persons, the Holy Quran says:

(i) "O soul that art at rest, Return to thy Lord, well-pleased, well-pleasing, So enter among My Servants, And enter My Garden" (89:27-30).

There is a report from Hazrat Abdullah ibn Umar, commenting on this verse, that when a pious man is about to die Allah sends two angels to him along with some heavenly present, and the angels address the soul of the man—O thou restful soul come forth with thy nice smells (due to good deeds) to thy Lord Who is pleased with thee—then the soul does come forth like the sweet smell of musk, and the angels take it heavenward. In some sayings of the Holy Prophet, the ultimate limit of the stay of souls of pious persons on this earth is forty days, then they go heavenward.

(ii) The Quran elucidates as to what awaits the souls of evil-doers in the after-life as such.

(a) "It is the Fire kindled by Allah, which rises over the hearts" (104:6,7).

(b) "And certainly We will make them taste a lighter punishment before the greater chastisement, that happily they may turn."

(32:21)

Although the Divine law of reward for good deeds and punishment for evil deeds is in operation all the time, but our human eyes cannot see the results of our deeds. However in the life Hereafter we would be given spiritual bodies with such keen senses that we would be
able to witness the same. The Holy Quran Says:

(i) "And We have made every man’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." (17:13,14)

(ii) "For him are (angels) guarding the consequences (of his deeds), before him and behind him, who guard him by Allah’s Command...". (13:11)

(iii) "Nay, but you give the lie to the Judgement, And surely there are keepers over you, Honourable recorders. They know what you do” (82:9-12)

(iv) "And We will set up a just balance on the day of Resurrection, so no soul will be wronged in the least. And if there be the weight of a grain of mustard seed, We will bring it. And Sufficient are We to take account.” (21:47)

These verses signify that the ‘book of deeds’ which would be handed over to a person on the day of Resurrection, would be the consequences of one’s deeds. So in effect what is preserved is not the deeds in themselves but what the doer did. In other words the commission of a deed, good or bad, leaves behind impressions or prints on the mind and nature of the doer, so that every person carries along with him the history-sheet of his deeds.
The difference between the earthly life and the Life Hereafter

This world’s life is transitory and mortal, and thus is confined within certain limitations. But the Life Hereafter is everlasting hence everything is not confined to any restrictions or limits. So it follows that compared to the limited means of pleasures and comforts of this world, such means as available in the after-life would also be limitless and perpetual in their nature; and although these means would not be identical with those of the earthly means, yet they would be somewhat similar so that the human soul may understand and make use of them to enjoy the pleasures and comforts. The Holy Quran says:

"And give good news to those who believe and do good deeds, that for them are gardens in which rivers flow. Whenever they are given a portion of the fruit thereof, they will say: This is what was given to us before; and they are given the like of it. And for them therein are pure companions and therein they will abide."  (2:25)

However, the Holy Prophet has said that the good things and pleasures of Heaven would be so excellent, delicious and different in all respects that no human eye has ever seen these before nor human ears have heard of them, and the human mind cannot quite comprehend them.
CHAPTER III

What is the state of Man after his Death

The state after death is not altogether a new state; it is in fact a complete representation, a full image of our spiritual state in the present life. Here the good or bad conditions of deeds or beliefs of a man are latent within him and their poison or panacea casts its influence upon him secretly, but in the life to come they shall become manifest and clear as daylight. An idea of it, although a very imperfect one, may be had from the manner in which a person sees as predominant in his temperament. When he is due for an attack of fever, he may see in a dream flames of burning fire, whereas he may find himself in floods of water when he is about to catch cold. When the body is prepared for a particular disease, a dream often discloses the embodiment of the conditions giving rise to it. From the manner in which internal conditions are represented in physical forms, in dreams, we can have an idea of the embodiment of the spiritual conditions of this world in the life to come. After our earthly course is ended, we are translated to regions where our deeds and their consequences assume a shape and what is hidden in us in this world is unrolled there and laid open before us. These embodiments of spiritual facts are substantial realities, as even in dreams, though the sight soon vanishes away, yet so long as it is before our eyes, it is
taken to be a reality. As this representation by images is a new and a perfect manifestation of the power of God, we may as well call it not a representation of certain facts but a new creation brought about by the All-powerful hand of the Creator.

In the Quranic verse quoted earlier (2:25) what is implied is that those who believe and do good works prepare a paradise with their own hands for themselves. Their faith stands for trees and their good deeds for fruits. It is of the fruits of this garden that they are spiritually made to taste here and of the fruits of the same will they eat in the next life. They will be able to identify the fruits of that life with those of this and witnessing the close resemblance between the two, will cry out. “These are the fruits which were indeed given to us in the former life!” It is, no doubt, true that these blessings are represented as material things, but we are told that their source is spirituality and righteousness.

The Three States of Man’s Life after Death

The Holy Quran mentions three states of man’s life after death:

(i) The following verses will show how the Holy Quran has repeatedly asserted that life after death is not a new life but only an image and a manifestation of the present one:

“And We have made every man’s actions cling to his neck and We shall bring forth to him on the day of Resurrection a book which he will find wide open......” (17:13). The Arabic word *ta'ir,*
used in this verse, literally means a 'bird', and is here used metaphorically to signify the actions of men. The bliss or burden which a person feels in the performance of an act vanishes, but it leaves its impression upon the heart. Every action of a man is in fact followed by an action of God which imprints its good or bad effect not only upon the hearts but also upon the hands, the feet, the ears, the eyes etc. of the doer. This book which, hidden from the human eye, is being prepared, recording every action in this life, shall show itself clearly in the next.

At another place the Holy Quran says about the dwellers of Paradise:

"On that day thou wilt see the faithful men and the faithful women their light gleaming before them and on their right hand ........" (57:12)

Again it addresses the evil-doers:

"Abundance diverts you, until you come to the graves. Nay, you will soon know. Nay would that you knew with a certain Knowledge! You will certainly see hell; then you will see it with certainty of sight; then on that day you shall certainly be questioned about the boons" (102:1-8)

Here God has divided the knowledge or certainty into three stages: *ilm al-yaqin*, (certainty by inference), *Ain al-yaqin* (certainty by sight), and *haq al-yaqin*,

(certainty by realization). For instance, seeing some smoke in the distance, you have only certainty of knowledge of a fire but walking to the source of smoke, you have certainty of sight of the fire, but if you thrust your hand into it you have certainty of realization, that it definitely is a fire that is raging.

These are also the states of human knowledge with regard to hell. The knowledge of certainty can be had in this world by those who will put in the interval between death and resurrection; a man sees hell with the eye of certainty, while at the day of resurrection he shall realise the truth of the certainty by himself entering into hell.

So the first state of man’s life is the present one called the “World of earning and of the first creation.” It is here that man earns a reward for the good or bad deeds he does. Although there are stages of advancement of the good after Resurrection, yet that advancement is granted simply by the grace of the Beneficent God and does not depend upon human efforts.
CHAPTER IV

Alam-i-Barzakh—The Intermediate State between Death and Resurrection

The second state of man's life is termed بَرْزَخ (Barzakh). The word originally means an "intermediate state" because it falls between the present life and the Resurrection. The word Barzakh is a compound of bar and zakh, and literally means that "the period of earning, merit or demerit, by deeds is over". The Holy Quran says:

"Until when death overtakes one of them, he says: My Lord! send me back, That I may do good in that which I have left. By no means! It is but a word that he speaks. And before them is a barrier (Barzakh) until the day they are raised."
(23:99,100)

The state of barzakh is that in which the soul leaves the mortal body, and the perishable remains are decomposed. The body is thrown into a pit and also the soul as is indicated by the word because it loses the power to do good or bad deeds as it loses its contact with the body. It is evident that a good state of the soul is dependent upon the soundness of the body. A shock communicated to a particular part of the brain causes a loss
of memory, while an injury to another part is certain to injure the reasoning faculty and may even destroy consciousness. Similarly a convulsion of the brain muscles or hemorrhage or morbidity of the brain may by causing obstruction, lead to insensibility, epilepsy or acute apoplexy.

**A body is necessary for the Soul**

Experience, therefore, establishes the fact beyond all reasonable doubt that with all its connections severed from the body, the soul can serve no purpose. It is idle to assert that human soul can, at any time, enjoy a bliss without having any connection with the body. We can hardly imagine the soul to be in a perfect condition with all its connections to the body cut off in the face of our daily experience that the slightest derangement of the physical system also interrupts the functions of soul.

These observations should be sufficient to demonstrate that the soul is nothing unless it has its connection with a body. Had it any value apart from the body, the action of an All-Wise Being in uniting the soul with a short-lived body would have been quite meaningless. Moreover, man is eventually a progressive animal, and the advancement which he aims at is by no means a limited one. Now if the soul is unable to make any advancement in the brief life without the assistance of the body how could it attain to the higher stages of advancement in the next life.

Various arguments, therefore, prove conclusively that, according to the Islamic principle, the perfection of soul
depends upon its permanent connection with a body. There is no doubt that, after death, this body of clay is separated from the soul, but then in the barzakh every soul receives temporarily a new body to be in a position to taste of the reward or punishment of its deeds. This new body is not a body of clay but a bright or dark body prepared from the actions of this life. It may appear as a mystery to some, but this much at best must be admitted that it is not unreasonable. The perfect being realize the preparation of such a bright body even in this life. Those who have a keen and bright spiritual light will have no difficulty in realizing the truth of a bright or a dark body after death, prepared from actions in this life. In other words, the new body granted in the barzakh becomes means of the reward of good or evil.¹

**The knowledge about after-life is gained through spiritual visions**

The eye sees things, but it is in vain to expect it to serve as an organ of taste, similarly the tongue tastes things. In like manner, the deep secrets of the other

¹ Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Mujaddid of 14th century A.H., states: I have personal experience in this matter. Many a time, when fully awake, I have had visions in which I saw those who were dead. I have seen many an evil-doer and a wicked person with a body quite dead and smoky. I have personal acquaintance with these matters and I assert it strongly that, as God has said, everyone is granted a body either transparent or dark. It is not necessary that maimed reason should be able to look into these mysteries. The deep secrets of the other world, upon which light is thrown only by visions, cannot be discovered by the help of reason”. *(The Teachings of Islam).*
world, upon which light is thrown only by visions, cannot be discovered by the help of reason. The Almighty has established certain laws in this world and every thing must be judged accordingly.

It must be remembered that the Word of God has described those who walk in error and wickedness as dead and lifeless, while the good it calls living. The secret of it is that the means of life of those who are ignorant of the Lord, being simply eating, drinking or indulging in their bestial passions are cut off along with their death. Of spiritual food they have no share and, therefore, their resurrection will only be for their punishment. We are told:

"Whoso comes guilty to his Lord, for him is surely hell. He will neither die therein nor live." (20:74)

It may be added that the chosen ones of God do not die with their physical death, for they have their means of sustenance with them.

The difference between the state of Barzakh and the state of Resurrection

After the state of Barzakh comes the world of Resurrection. It might be argued that when a long period of time must elapse before the state of Resurrection would occur, and the souls of both good and bad men meanwhile must remain in the Barzakh it is no better than a useless lock-up for souls. The objection is based upon ignorance. The Barzakh is as well
a place of reward for good and evil as the Resurrection itself. The Holy Quran describes it as a place where punishment and reward shall be given though not so openly as after the Resurrection. It abounds in verses stating that a man meets with his due immediately after his death. Thus speaking of a certain person, it says:

"It was said (to the man who believed in the Truth): Enter the Garden" (36:26)

With reference to another person, the Holy Book says:

"Then he looked down and saw him (his friend) in the midst of hell,"¹ (37:55)

Punishment and reward are thus bestowed immediately after death, and those whose proper place is hell are brought to hell, while those who deserve paradise are brought to paradise. In some authentic Sayings of the Holy Prophet it is mentioned that after death in the grave of a righteous person, a window is opened (figuratively speaking) towards Paradise for him to see the beauty of Paradise; while in the grave of an evil person, a window is opened towards hell for him to see the all-consuming fire. In both the collections of Tradition Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim, it is reported from Hazrat Abdullah ibn Umar, that the Prophet said: When a person dies then his place in Heaven or Hell is shown to

¹. A good man had an unbelieving friend and when both died, the good man, anxious to know the state of his friend, was shown that the latter was in the midst of hell!
him (in the new body of his soul) in the morning and in the evening. To this verses 45, 46 of Chapter 40 of the Holy Quran also refer to: "The Fire. They are brought before it (every) morning and evening, and on the day when the Hour comes to pass: Make Pharaoh's people enter the severest chastisement."

It is shown in some of the authentic Sayings of the Holy Prophet that a righteous person benefits after death in three ways: Firstly, from the good deeds that he had done in this world's life, and secondly, due to the benefits that people derive from his sermons and writings on religious matters and regular charities left behind; and thirdly, from the prayers and almsgiving given by his bereaved family for the betterment of the deceased. However, the souls of those Sidaiq (one who is always truthful in his belief and actions) and Shahid (one who bears witness to the truth of the religion of Allah both by his words and deeds) including contributions in defence of Islam, would be wholly admitted to Paradise after their death. Similarly those who are confirmed evil-doers and the disciples of the devil would be wholly thrown into Hell after their death.

About the end of a righteous person's life, God says in the Holy Quran.

"O soul that art at rest, Return to thy Lord, well-pleased, well-pleasing. So enter among My Servants, And enter My Garden." (89:27-30)

Similarly on the Night of Ascension (Miraj)
the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him), saw and met the souls (in their new spiritual bodies) of many Messengers and Prophets of God (like Adam, Abraham, Moses, Jesus etc.) For them doors of Paradise had been opened to admit them. Says the Holy Quran:

"And whoever obeys Allah and the Messenger, they are with those upon whom Allah has bestowed favours from among the prophets and the truthful and the faithful and the righteous, and a goodly company are they!" (4:69)

But to enter Paradise, the soul has to be given a new spiritual body as the fruits and other pleasures of Paradise are not material. That is why on the Night of Ascension the Holy Prophet met the old prophets in their 'new bodies'; and it may be noted that the 'body' of Jesus was no different from the others. In one place God says in the Holy Quran:

"And think not of those who are killed in Allah's way as dead. Nay, they are alive being provided sustenance from their Lord."

(3:168)

The old scriptures of other religions also endorse the same view. So on entering Paradise, soul does not stay there doing nothing and with no purpose in view, but it enjoys and benefits from all the good and pleasant things of Paradise. It may be concluded from the above verse that direct entry into Paradise has been reserved only for those who are killed in Allah's way, is entirely wrong. A Muslim can dare say that our Holy
Prophet is still marking time to enter Paradise while those of his followers who happened to be slain in Allah's way have had access to Paradise and all its good things. The truth of the matter is that whosoever has placed his life at the disposal of the Lord, and is completely submissive to His Will, is to be treated as Shahid. Hence the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) is surely the first and the best of the Shahids.

Here it may be argued that if every righteous person, who has no burden of sins on his shoulders, gains admission to Paradise on his death, then why bother and believe in the Day of Resurrection? For once a person enters Paradise, he is not to be turned out of it, as the Holy Quran says: “Toil afflicts them not therein (Paradise), nor will they be ejected therefrom.” (15:48)

It may be said in reply that in spite of the fact that righteous persons would be granted admittance into Paradise, just after their death, yet the other injunction of the Holy Quran that there will be a Day of Resurrection, when the dead will be raised to life, is equally true and we believe in it. But there is a difference between the two. For the first admittance into Paradise is in the abstract sense, and the spiritual bodies given to the righteous persons just after death are still not perfect in every respect. The Day of Resurrection is the day of the manifestation of the highest glory of God which His transcendant wisdom has ordained.
On that day, every person will have an open and complete record of his actions.

In short, a person after death enters a kind of heaven and hell according to his deeds, and he would not be taken out of that condition, but can progress from a lower stage to a higher stage. However, the ultimate stage would be allotted on the Day of Resurrection, when perfect and complete spiritual bodies would be given to all persons, and only then will they taste of the total and full pleasures of Paradise or punishments of Hell. So those who were in Paradise before would not sever their relation with it but would present themselves before God, as such, when called on the Day of Ressurrection. God in the Holy Quran has described the heavenly life as everlasting: “......a gift never to be cut off” (11:108).

But the Lord God is also merciful and forgiving, hence, He did not make the punishment of Hell everlasting. For reference see 6:129, 11:107 and 78:23.

There is a report from Ibn i-Masud mentioned in Ibn-i-Jarir from the Holy Prophet, that a time will come, after the inmates of Hell have their allotted punishment, when one would knock at the doors of Hell (figuratively speaking) and nobody would respond from within (for it would be empty). The doctrine of the Intercession of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) on the Day of Judgement, also lends support to this. It is also reported from the Holy Prophet that God will say: Angels, Prophets and other Righteous persons, having God’s
permission to do so, have interceded, so now the most Merciful of those who show mercy is the only one left. So He will take a ‘handful’ of persons suffering in Hell and take them out, and forgive them though they had done no good deed at all. One can well imagine the ‘handful’ of God as to what and how much it could contain (see Quran 39:67).

The deeds will have a similitude

The second point of importance, which the Holy Quran has described with reference to the life to come, is that the spiritual facts of this life shall be represented in the next as embodiments, whether it is the world of Barzakh or the world of Resurrection. God says:

“And whoever is blind in this (world) will be blind in the Hereafter, and farther away from the (right) Path” (17:72).

In other words, the spiritual blindness of this world shall become apparent in the next, and the weight of sensual and earthly passions which has bowed his head and eyes towards the earth, would be embodied into a heavy weight ringed round his neck in the after-life. The heart-burning of this world shall likewise be clearly seen as flames of burning fire. It should, therefore be remembered that the punishment which overtakes a man is one prepared by his deeds. This law is elsewhere expressed in the following words: “(O ye wicked ones) walk on to the shadow, having three branches, neither cool, nor availing against flame.” (77:30, 31)
The three branches spoken of here represent bestiality, savageness and infatuation which, remaining unmodified, lead to transgressions and evil deeds.

Again the Quran says:
“On that day thou wilt see the faithful men and the faithful women, their light gleaming before them and on their right hands” (57:12).

And again, “On the day when (some) faces turn white and (some) faces turn black.....” (3:105)

The Infinite progress in the After-Life

The third point of importance described in connection with the life after death is that the progress to be made in that life is infinite:

“. . . and those who believe with him (the Prophet). Their light will gleam before them and on their right hands—they will say: Our Lord, make perfect for us our light, and grant us protection; surely. Thou art Professor of power over all things.” (66:8)

This continuous desire for progress shows clearly that progress in Paradise will be endless. For, when the inmates will have attained one excellence they will not stop there but, seeing a higher stage of excellence, will consider it as imperfect and will, therefore, desire the attainment of a higher excellence.

The spiritual state of life

The highest stage of the spiritual progress of human
life in this world is that a person finds comfort and peace of mind in God, so that all his pleasure and satisfaction lies in abiding by the commandments of God and serving Him. Then he finds his soul at rest ( النفس مطمئنة) and that is termed in other words as a heavenly life. Of course the Heaven in the Life Hereafter is yet to come. The door to oneness with God is not opened by mere philosophy and logic and argumentation; for spiritual knowledge is beyond its ken. To guide men on the ‘straight path, God sends His Messengers and Prophets to whom He reveals His message and commandments so that they may guide the seekers of truth. Man must always pray to God for His Light to show the way and guide him to the ultimate spiritual attainment.
CHAPTER V

The Resurrection Day

In the very first chapter of the Holy Quran, one of the attributes of God has been mentioned as—"Master of the Day of Requital" (مالك يوم الدين). In the second Chapter (The Cow), in the beginning are given certain articles of Faith, one of which is "......and of the Hereafter they are sure." (2 : 4)

Then again in the 75th Chapter (The Resurrection) Allah says:

"Nay, I swear by the Day of Resurrection! Nay, I swear by the self-accusing spirit! Does man think that We shall not gather his bones? Yea, We are Powerful to make complete his whole make. Nay, man desires to go on doing evil in front of him. He asks, When is the day of Resurrection? So when the sight is confused, and the moon becomes dark, and the Sun and the Moon are brought together—man will say on that day: Whither to flee?

"No! There is no refuge! With thy Lord on that day is the place of rest. Man will on that day be informed of what he sent before and what he put off. Nay, man is evidence against himself, though he put up excuses." (75 : 1-15)
In the above verses some indication has been given as to what would happen on the day of Resurrection; and some more verses on the subject would be given later. How all this would be brought about only the Creator of the Universe knows.

Further on, the Holy Quran says:

“And the trumpet is blown, when lo! from their graves they will hasten on to their Lord. They will say: O woe to us! Who has raised us up from our sleeping-place? This is what the Beneficent promised and the messengers told the truth. It is but a single cry, when lo! they are all brought before us. So this day no soul is wronged in aught; and you are not rewarded aught but for what you did” (36: 51-54).

Here the Arabic word صور (sur) is used for trumpet, and it carries two significances. It means the trumpet, and the trumpet is generally blown to gather men together, which will be done on the day of Resurrection. But the word sur is said by some to be the plural of Surat, meaning a form; so it can also mean—when the souls shall be blown into the forms of the dead.

Then again the Holy Quran says:

“The Calamity! What is the Calamity?
And what will make thee know how terrible is the calamity? The day wherein men will be as scattered moths, and the mountains will be as carded wool. Then as for him whose measure
(of good deeds) is heavy, He will live a pleasant life. And as for him whose measure (of good deeds) is light, the abyss is a mother to him.”

(101: 1-9)

At another place it says:

“But when the deafening cry comes;—the day when a man flees from his brother, and his mother and his father, and his spouse and his sons. Every one of them, that day, will have concern enough to make him indifferent to others. Faces one that day will be bright, laughing, Joyous. And faces on that day will have dust on them, darkness covering them. Those are the disbelievers, the wicked.” (80: 33-42)

Other verses run as follows:

“Nay, when the earth is made to crumble to pieces, And thy Lord comes with the angels, ranks on ranks: And hell is made to appear that day. On that day man will be mindful, and of what use will being mindful be then? He will say: O would that I had sent before for (this) my life! But none can punish as he will punish on that day. And none can bind as He will bind on that day. O soul that art at rest, Return to thy Lord well-pleased, So enter among My servants, and enter My garden.” (89: 21-30)

Yet again it says:

“Nay, but you love the present life, and neglect
the Hereafter. (Some) faces that day will be bright, looking to their Lord. And (other) faces that day will be gloomy, knowing that a great disaster will be made to befall them.”

(75: 20-25)

No human eye can view the dazzling light of the presence of God; but in the Life Hereafter, the eyes of the spiritual body would be able to see God in all His radiant majesty. This view in itself is the greatest of the pleasures and favours that would be granted to the dwellers of Paradise.

The Holy Prophet on Resurrection

As has been mentioned earlier that man cannot by virtue of his knowledge and intelligence ravel the mysteries of the Life Hereafter and the day of Resurrection. Only God Almighty can give partial information about the same through His revelation to His messengers and prophets. So the last and greatest of the Prophets Muhammad (peace be on him) was imparted this information and knowledge through vision and revelation from God. As to when and how the crack of doom would occur and Resurrection take place only God knows. These will come about at the proper time as ordained by God. However, some signs and events signifying the near approach of the Doomsday had been vouchsafed by God to the Holy Prophet, and some of these are mentioned below:

'‘Hazrat Ayesha (the wife of the Prophet) reports that many people used to come to the Holy Prophet and
questioned him about the Day of Judgement. The Prophet would look towards the youngest of the bunch and say: “If this young boy remains alive, then by the time old age overtakes him, your doomsday (on your death) would have been established.” At another place the Holy Prophet remarked: “One who dies meets with his Judgement day”. (Bakhari and Muslim).

As has been explained before, after death in the state of Barzakh, a man starts his new life in heaven or hell according to his deeds.

According to the sayings of the Prophet, when God will the world would come to an end with a terrific and ear-splitting sound, and it would be a Friday.

Hazrat Anas reports the Prophet to have said: “One of the first signs of the approach of Doomsday would be that ‘Fire’ which drive the people from the east to the west.” (Bukhari). Here the ‘Fire’ meant; not the ordinary fire but it points to some wars or terrible happenings, or it may mean the invasion of the Western countries by some Eastern Powers.

(4) Hazrat Abu-Huraira reported the Prophet to have said: “Doomsday would not come until Muslims have had an all-out fight with the Jews; then Muslims would be slaying the Jews who would be taking shelter behind stones and trees which would be calling (figuratively speaking) to the Muslims to come and kill the Jews hiding behind them. However, one tree ‘Gharqad’ (غرقد) would not be saying it as it is friend of the Jews” (Muslim). Here the statement points to some terrible and conclusive
fight between the Muslim armies and the Jews (probably the present Arab-Israeli conflict). According to a prophecy of the Holy Prophet, a great Armageddon would be fought out between ‘Anti-Christ’ (certain Christian nations) and ‘Gog’ and ‘Magog,’ (the ancestors of the present Teutonic and Slav races and the Anglo-Saxon races) in the regions of Syria and Palestine, in which they will destroy each other. A reference to this is also made in the last two sections of Chapter 18 (the Cave) of the Holy Quran. A prophecy has also been made in the book of ‘Ezekiel’ (38 : 2 and in chapter 39) where Gog and Magog and the ‘dwellers of the Isle’ are clearly mentioned, and their destruction in the region of Palestine has been predicted.

(5) Hazrat Abu Huraira reports the Prophet to have said: ‘Doomsday would not come until two big groups of people have not fought a terrific battle with each other

1. The Holy Prophet is reported to have said: He who remembers the first ten verses of the chapter “The Cave” (Al-Kahf) is protected from the tribulations of Dajjal (Anti-Christ)” (Muslim). In another Saying the last verses of the same chapter are mentioned. Now in the first and last sections of this chapter the Christian doctrine of the divinity of Jesus has been condemned: Dajjal signifies one who conceals the truth with falsehood, or a liar or a great deceiver. Christianity, in its present form, being opposed to the true teachings of Jesus Christ, is thus the only Antichrist known to the Quran.

2. The two tribes of Tubal and Meshech (Scythian tribes) gave their names to the two rivers of Tobal and Omosk (Ezek. 38 : 2), where the cities of Moscow and Tobolsk are located. Besides, in the Guildhall, London, two huge effigies of Gog and Magog are located from ancient times. This indicates some relationship between the Anglo-Saxons and the Scythians (Gog and Magog).
and both would be making the same claim . . . . . and Doomsday would not come—(i) until the earth would be swarming with people who will be cunning and cheats and trouble-makers and would be attributing wrong and false statements to God and His Prophet . . . . (iii) and the knowledge about religion and ethics would not be learnt: and (iv) the time of the frequency of earthquakes would be witnessed and (v) the time of the appearance of Imam Mehdi would draw near, and (vi) there would be appearance of riots, robbery and murders, and (vii) there would be so much excess of wealth and prosperity that one would be searching for a needy person to give him alms and (viii) people would be taking pride in erecting big and beautiful buildings, and (ix) yet a person passing a grave would be wishing that he was buried in there instead, and (x) until the ‘sun’ rises from the West (meaning the sun of Islam shining in the Western countries and people in great number accepting it), so that when the ‘sun’ has risen from the West in all its glory, then the people would see it and most of them would accept the faith (of Islam); but that would be the time when accepting the faith would not be as beneficial as for those who had accepted it before . . . .” (Bukhari and Muslim).

(6) Hazrat Abu Hurairah has reported the Prophet to have said: “When ‘anfal’ (spoils of War or voluntary gifts) would be treated as wealth gained (that is the people in power would consider the voluntary gifts or spoils of War as their own property and not give anything to the poor people), and when the property given in trust would be
embezzled, and when Zakat (Poor-rate) would be considered as a fine or penalty, and when a man (a husband) would be obeying the dictates of his woman (wife), and when the son would be disobedient to his mother and make her grieved, and when man would prefer his friend as companion and associate and neglect his father, and when people would be talking loudly and frequently of all sorts of rubbish, and when a transgressor (from the faith of Islam) would be heading the nation, and the national affairs would be dealt with by mean and unworthy persons and when a man would be praised and respected so as to escape from the harm that he could do and when singing (and dancing) women will be common and people will be intimate with them, and when musical instruments and their playing would be common, and when open drinking (of liquors) would be indulged in, and when the latter day people would be calling the people of former days bad names and cursing them, that is the period of time when you should await the ‘blowing of red and destructive storms and hurricanes’, of earthquakes, of cracking and subsidence of earth, of distortion and twisting out of shape of faces and appearances, and the falling of stones from up above: and these would be the signs of the approach of Doomsday.’’ (Tirmizi).

7. Hazrat Ibn Abbas reports the Prophet to have said: ‘‘You would be assembled on the Day of Judgment, in a condition when you would be barefooted, naked and uncircumcised; then he recited the Quranic verse: ‘‘As We begin the first creation, We shall reproduce it. A promise (binding) on Us, We shall bring it about’’
(21:104). Then the Holy Prophet said: On the Day of Judgement, the first person to be clothed would be Prophet Abraham. Some of my friends would be seen being dragged towards Hell, when I will exclaim: These are my companions (why are they being condemned). God will say that since you left them, they went astray from the true faith. Then I (Muhammad) will say what the pious man (Jesus Christ) said:

"......and I was a witness of them so long as I was among them but when Thou didst cause me to die Thou wast the watcher over them."

(Bukhari and Muslim) (5:117)

From some of the Sayings of the Holy Prophet it can safely be concluded that the total span of life and existence of the children of Hazrat Adam on this earth is Seven Thousand Years, and the last Adam, following the appearance of the first Adam, would appear at the tail end of the Six Thousandth year (which is the Sixth day, in the sight of God, one thousand years being equivalent to a day (The Quran 22:47). So the appearance of the last Adam would be in the afternoon (the time of the Asr prayer) of the seventh day.

Conclusion

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Mujaddid of the 14th century Hijrah, the Promised Messiah and Mehdi, has referred to this fact in his book, Izala-i-Auham that he had been given this tidings in a revelation: "I (vicegerent God) am making you my Khalifa on Earth":
and it was revealed that the (last of the successors is being sent in the name of Adam’)(1)

The Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement has also mentioned that it was made known to him by God, that the total numerical value of the letters in the chapter 103 (al-‘Asr of the Holy Quran), amount to 4740. This also denotes the period of time according to lunar calendar, which has elapsed between the time of Hazrat Adam and the calling to Prophethood of the Prophet Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

1. If the total span of existence of children of Prophet Adam is calculated to be 7000 years, as mentioned above (and as also supported by the Christian belief) then as a matter of interest rough calculations may be made as to the probable time of the Doomsday. The Hijrah Era started about 15 years after the call to prophethood of the Prophet Muhammad, and 1973 A.D. almost tallies with 1393 A.H.

So 1393 + 15 = 1408 + 4740 = 6148 years (lunar) have passed from the time of Hazrat Adam to date. This leaves 7000 - 6148 = 852 (lunar years) before the coming of the Doomsday. But the true knowledge lies with God alone.