



What is *Yawm al Ākhir*?

This is the Last Day. A day after which there will be no more days. A day when all mankind will be raised from the dead and judged according to their deeds. A day when all will be called to account for their actions and omissions whilst on earth.



What do you mean by ‘called to account’?

All of us on that Day will be made to look back upon our lives. Those that did bad, will be forced on that Day to face the evil of their actions. Those that did good, will be reminded of what they did and will be rewarded.



So, nobody, as they say, will ‘get away with murder’?

Nobody will ‘get away’ with *anything*, let alone murder! A person may think that his or her evil actions are out of sight and therefore beyond punishment, but they would be wrong. Nothing of our deeds on earth has gone unrecorded by the angels, and nothing will pass without examination on that Day. Whether good or bad, the tiniest deeds of mankind will be judged. Allāh سبحانه وتعالى says,

يَوْمَئِذٍ يَصُدُّرُ النَّاسُ أَشْتَاتًا لِيُرَوْا أَعْمَالَهُمْ فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ

That Day, the people will depart¹ separated (into categories) to be shown (the result of) their deeds. So, whoever does an atom’s weight² of good will see it, and whoever does an atom’s weight of evil will see it.

Sūrah Az Zalzalah, 99:6-8



How did the disbelievers in Makkah, respond when they heard of this Day?

The Qur’aish denied it and mocked the passages of the Qur’ān that spoke of it. They scoffed at the notion that once a person is dead, he or she can be raised to life,

وَقَالُوا مَا هِيَ إِلَّا حَيَاتُنَا الدُّنْيَا نَمُوتُ وَنَحْيَا وَمَا يُهْلِكُنَا إِلَّا الدَّهْرُ وَمَا لَهُم بِذَلِكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَظُنُّونَ

And they say, “There is not but our worldly life; we die and live,³ and nothing destroys us except time.” And they have of that no knowledge; they are only assuming.

Sūrah al Jāthiyah, 45:24

¹ From the place of Judgement to their final abode. Another interpretation is “emerge separately” (from the graves).

² or the weight of a small ant.

³ i.e., some people die, and others live, replacing them.

It's common sense. The Qur'aish of then and the atheists of today, should reflect upon how they were created in the first place i.e. from nothing? Allāh tells us in the Qur'ān that, as the Supreme Creator, recreating something is no big deal at all,

أَوَلَمْ يَرَ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنَّا خَلَقْنَاهُ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ فَإِذَا هُوَ خَصِيمٌ مُبِينٌ وَضَرَبَ لَنَا مَثَلًا وَنَسِيَ خَلْقَهُ قَالَ مَنْ يُحْيِي الْعِظَامَ وَهِيَ رَمِيمٌ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِنَ الشَّجَرِ الْأَخْضَرِ نَارًا فَإِذَا أَنْتُمْ مِنْهُ تُوقَدُونَ

Does man not consider that We created him from a (mere) drop of sperm – then at once⁴ he is a clear adversary? And he presents for us an example⁵ and forgets his (own) creation. He says, “Who will give life to bones while they are disintegrated?” Say, “He will give them life who produced them the first time; and He is of all creation, Knowing.”

Sūrah Yā Sīn, 36:77-79

The evidence of Allāh's power to create, destroy and recreate are all around us, happening every day.



Happening every day? What do you mean?

Just look at the natural world around you. It is awash with birth, life, death and rebirth. Destruction and resurrection are routine phenomena. Green pastures turn to dustbowls, and with the intervention of simple H₂O, they come to life again. This is reflected in many verses of the Qur'ān,

وَاللَّهُ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ الرِّيحَ فَتُثِيرُ سَحَابًا فَمَسْنَا بِهِ بِلَدٍ مَيِّتٍ فَأَحْيَيْنَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا كَذَلِكَ
النُّشُورُ

It is Allāh Who sends the winds, and they stir the clouds, and We drive them to a dead land and give life thereby to the earth after its lifelessness. Thus, is the resurrection.

Sūrah Fātir, 35:9

إِنَّ اللَّهَ فَالِقُ الْحَبِّ وَالنَّوَى ۚ يُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَمُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتِ مِنَ الْحَيِّ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ اللَّهُ ۚ فَاتَىٰ تُؤَفَّكُونَ



⁴ i.e., as soon as he becomes self-sufficient.

⁵ Attempting to establish the finality of death.

Indeed, Allāh is the cleaver of the grain and the date seeds.⁶ He brings the living out of the dead, and brings the dead out of the living. That is Allāh; so how are you deluded?
Sūrah al An'ām, 6:95

Also,

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was asked: "How does Allāh give life to the dead? And what is the sign of that in His creation?" The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied: Haven't you passed by your family's barren river?" The man said: "Yes." The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said: "And then you passed by it full of life and green," the man replied: "Yes." The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said: "He (Allāh) also gives life to the dead, and that is His sign in His creation."

Ahmed, Abu Dawood, Ibn Mājah



So, the same 'resurrection' he can do with us too?

What Allāh does as a matter of routine in nature, He can do with us, with ease. Anyone who thinks otherwise and seeks to limit His Powers, is arrogant indeed,

أَيَحْسَبُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنْ نَجْمَعُ عِظَامَهُ

Does man think that We will not assemble his bones?

Sūrah al Qiyāmah, 75:3



What will that Day be like?

The Qur'ān speaks repeatedly about the gravity of this Day, especially in the *sūrahs* towards the end. We can get an idea of what's in store, by a simple review of the other names that this Day carries. For example, this Day is also known as,

- *Yawm-ul-Qiyāmah*, the Day of Standing or Day of Resurrection;
- *As-Sa'ah*, the Hour;
- *Yawm al Haq*, The Day of Truth
- *Yawm-ul-Ba'th*, the Day of Revival from the Dead;
- *Yawm-ul-Khurūj*, the Day of Exit, when all servants of Allāh exit their graves;
- *Al-Qāri'ah*, the Striking Calamity;
- *Yawm-ul-Fasl*, the Day of Judgment;
- *Yawm an Nushūr*, the Day of Rising;
- *Yawm-ud-Dīn*, the Day of Recompense;⁷
- *Al-Sākhkhah*, piercing blast of the Horn which signals Resurrection;
- *Al-Tāmat-ul-Kubra*, the Overwhelming Calamity;
- *Yawm-ul-Hasrah*, the Day of Regret;
- *Al-Ghāshiyah*, the Overwhelming Event;
- *Yawm-ul-Khulūd*, the Day of Eternity;
- *Yawm-ul-Hisāb*, the Day of Accounting;⁸
- *Al-Wāqi'ah*, the Occurrence;⁹
- *Yawm-ul-Wa'īd*, the Day of the Threat;

⁶ Causing them to split and sprout.

⁷ i.e., repayment and compensation for whatever was earned of good or evil during life on this earth.

⁸ "Allāh will recount/enumerate the actions of the man regarding good and evil and recount His favours/blessings upon him." – Al Qurtubi

⁹ Literally "that which befalls" meaning the Resurrection.

- *Yawm-ul-Āzifah*, the Approaching Day (because it is near);
- *Yawm-ul-Jam'i*, the Day of Gathering;
- *Al-Hāqqah*, the Day of the Inevitable Reality;
- *An Naba'*, the Great News;
- *Al Fazaul Akbar*, the Greatest Terror;
- *Yawm-ut-Talāq*, the Day of Meeting;
- *Yawm-ut-Tanādi*, the Day of Calling;¹⁰
- *Yawm-ut-Taghābun*, the Day of Deprivation;¹¹
- *Yawm al Hashr*, the Day of Crowding.



There were some very worrying words there.

Yes, words that cause real unease, but unease only for those who truly believe, those who are sure about the arrival of this tremendous Day, those who believe in their inevitable meeting with Allāh سبحانه وتعالى at that time. For those who hold this kind of faith and concern, the Last Day carries real meaning. Its inevitably totally affects how they live their lives.



How? How does it affect the way they live their lives?

Such believers are wary of everything they do, every minute of every second of the day. Every step they take, every action they perform, every utterance they emit from their lips, are all done in the knowledge that they will face a mighty judgement on a ferocious Day. Allāh سبحانه وتعالى tells us that they are those,

الَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُلَاقُوا رَبِّهِمْ وَأَنَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

Who are certain that they will meet their Lord, and that they will return to Him.

Sūrah al Baqarah, 2:46



How will *Yawm al Ākhir* be for such people. Will it still be a calamity?

No. They are the winners that Day. They will be the luckiest of all. Allāh promises that they will be welcomed and protected,

لَا يَحْزَنُهُمُ الْفَرَاغُ الْأَكْبَرُ وَتَتَلَقَّاهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ هَذَا يَوْمُكُمْ الَّذِي كُنْتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ

They will not be grieved by the Greatest Terror, and the angels will meet them saying,

"This is your Day, which you have been promised."

Sūrah al Anbiyā, 21:103

وُجُوهُ يَوْمَئِذٍ نَاصِرَةٌ

Some faces, that Day, will be radiant

Sūrah al Qiyāmah, 75:22

فَوَقَاهُمُ اللَّهُ شَرَّ ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمِ وَلَقَّاهُمْ نَضْرَةً وَسُرُورًا

So Allāh will protect them from the evil of that Day and give them radiance and happiness.

Sūrah al Insān, 76:11

¹⁰ When the criminals will cry out in terror, the people will call to each other (see 7:44-45), and the angels will call out the results of each person's judgement.

¹¹ Suggests having been outdone by others in the acquisition of something valued. That Day the disbelievers will suffer the loss of Paradise to the believers.



And what about those who don't take these warnings seriously?

Well, wherever there are winners, there must also be losers. The losers on that Day will be those that were entirely satisfied only with the life of this world, who cared not for any eventual meeting with Allāh, who sinned throughout their lives and took no heed of the warnings sent to them,

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ لِقَاءَنَا وَرَضُوا بِالْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَاطْمَأَنَّنُوا بِهَا وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ آيَاتِنَا غَافِلُونَ

Indeed those who do not expect the meeting with Us and are satisfied with the life of this world and feel secure therein and those who are heedless of our signs.

Sūrah Yūnus, 10:7

For these people, *Yawm al Qiyāmah* will be an horrific trial.

وَنَحْشُرُهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عَلَىٰ وُجُوهِهِمْ عُمِيَآ وَبُكْمًا وَصُمًّا مَّا وَهَمُّ جَهَنَّمَ كَلَّمَا خَبَتِ زَنَاهُم سَعِيرًا

And We will gather them on the Day of Resurrection (fallen) on their faces – blind, dumb and deaf. Their refuge is Hell; every time it subsides, We increase them in blazing fire.

Sūrah al Isrā', 17:97

They will belatedly plead for mercy and respite, saying,

رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ قَرِيبٍ نُّجِبْ دَعْوَتَكَ وَنَتَّبِعِ الرَّسُولَ

"Our Lord, delay us for a short term; we will answer your call, and follow the Messengers."

Sūrah Ibrahim, 14:44



What do you mean by 'respite?'

A break, a pause in proceedings, another chance, a stay of execution. They will even ask to be allowed to return to earth,

وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذِ الْمُجْرِمُونَ نَاكِسُو رُءُوسِهِمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ رَبَّنَا أَبْصَرْنَا وَسَمِعْنَا فَارْجِعْنَا نَعْمَلْ صَالِحًا إِنَّا مُوقِنُونَ

If you could but see when the criminals are hanging their heads before their Lord, (saying),

"Our Lord, we have seen and heard, so return us (to the world); we will work righteousness.

Indeed, we are (now) certain."

Sūrah as Sajdah, 32:12



Those sound like words of someone in a state of shock?

Yes. That will be the day of real shock and awe, and they will blame each other for their stunning predicament,

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَنْ نُؤْمِنَ بِهَذَا الْقُرْآنِ وَلَا بِالَّذِي بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ ۗ وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذِ الظَّالِمُونَ مَوْقُوفُونَ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ

يَرْجِعُ بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَىٰ بَعْضٍ الْقَوْلَ يَقُولُ الَّذِينَ اسْتَضَعَفُوا لِلَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا لَوْلَا أَنْتُمْ لَكُنَّا مُؤْمِنِينَ

And those who disbelieve say, "We will never believe in this Qur'ān, nor in that before it."

But if you could see when the wrongdoers are made to stand before their Lord, refuting each

others' words... Those who were oppressed will say to those who were arrogant, "If not for you, we would have been believers." *Sūrah Saba', 34:31*



What about the idols they used to worship on earth?

They will certainly be questioned about those other 'gods,'

قُلْ لِمَنْ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ قُلْ لِلَّهِ كَتَبَ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ
الرَّحْمَةَ لِيَجْمَعَنَّكُمْ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ
الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ

And (mention, O Muhammad), the Day We will gather them all together; then We will say to those who associated others with Allāh, "Where are your 'partners' that you used to claim (with him)?"
Sūrah al An'ām, 6:22



Those stones will not only not defend them, they will reject them outright,

كَلَّا سَيَكْفُرُونَ بِعِبَادَتِهِمْ وَيَكُونُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ ضِدًّا

No! They will deny their worship of them and will be against them opponents.
Sūrah Maryam, 18:82



Will these evildoers be shown what they did in the past?

Yes. A clear record will be presented against them. Nothing will be left out.

وَوُضِعَ الْكِتَابُ فَتَرَى الْمُجْرِمِينَ مُشْفِقِينَ مِمَّا فِيهِ وَيَقُولُونَ يَا وَيْلَتَنَا مَا لِ هَذَا الْكِتَابِ لَا يُغَادِرُ
صَغِيرَةً وَلَا كَبِيرَةً إِلَّا أَحْصَاهَا وَوَجَدُوا مَا عَمِلُوا حَاضِرًا ۗ وَلَا يَظْلِمُ رَبُّكَ أَحَدًا

And the record (of Deeds) will be placed (open), and you will see the criminals fearful of that within it, and they will say, "Oh, woe to us! What is this book that leaves nothing small or great except that it has enumerated it?" And they will find what they did, present (before them). And your Lord does injustice to no one.

Sūrah al Kahf, 18:49

Even their body parts will testify against them,

يَوْمَ تَشْهَدُ عَلَيْهِمْ أَلْسِنَتُهُمْ وَأَيْدِيهِمْ وَأَرْجُلُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

On that Day when their tongues, their hands, and their feet will bear witness against them as to what they used to do.

Sūrah an Nūr, 24:24



Will anyone be available to help us that day?

No, except by Allāh's permission. We will discuss this and further matters relating to this awesome Day, in our next chapter, Insha'Allāh.

The Last Day [part a]

Questions

1. What is the Last Day?
2. What is the Arabic Name for the “Last Day”?
3. How did the Qur’aish of Makkah respond when warned about the Last Day?
4. The evidence is everywhere of Allāh’s Power to Create, Destroy and Recreate. Discuss.
5. Give ten other names by which the Last Day is also known, in Arabic and English.
6. How do you think knowledge of this Day would affect your day-to-day life as a Muslim?
7. What kinds of things will the disbelievers do or say on that day? Give a few examples.
8. As for those who worshipped idols, will those idols help them on that Day?



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