

# **Diseases of the Soul: Aversion for Death – Nakar Al-Maut**

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**Article**

## Diseases Of The Soul: Aversion For Death (Nakar Al-Maut)

*Behold! verily on the friends of Allah there is no fear, nor shall they grieve (The Qur'an, 10:62).*

*Those who believe and are God wary (The Qur'an, 10:63).*

*For them are glad tidings, in the life of the present and in the Hereafter... (The Qur'an, 10:64).*

A man asked the Prophet of God (s): “Why don't I like death?” The Prophet (s) said: ‘Do you have any wealth? So, send your wealth ahead of you, because a person is dependent on (attached to) his wealth. If he sends it ahead, he likes to reach it, and if he leaves it behind, he likes to stay with it.’”

[Al-Muttaqi al-Hindi, Kanz al-Ummal, hadith # 42139]

Imam Baqir (a): “A man came to the Prophet of God (s) and asked: ‘What is the reason that I dislike death?’ The Prophet (s) said: ‘Do you have any wealth?’ He said: ‘Yes.’ He said: ‘Have you sent it forward [for your afterlife]?’ He said: ‘No.’ He (s) said: ‘That is why you dislike death.’”

[Al-Sadduq, Al-Khisal, p. 13, hadith # 42]

## What Is Aversion For Death?

Human beings are born in this world and are naturally attracted to the wealth, pleasures, friends, relatives and their possessions and gradually develop attachment to the life as if they will live forever in this world. Thus, when they think or hear about death or when death is mentioned before them, they feel unhappy, become stressed and fearful and don't like to face the reality that they have to die and leave this world alone one day while fully knowing that they cannot avoid it.

- From Abu ‘Abd Allah [Imam Ja’far al-Sadiq] (a): **“A man came to Abu Dharr (r) and said to him, “O Abu Dharr, what is wrong with us that we abhor death?” Abu Dharr (r) replied, “That is because you have built and cultivated your world and ruined your Hereafter. So, you hate to be moved from prosperity towards desolation.” He was asked, “How do you see our entry into God’s presence?” Abu Dharr (r) replied, “As to the good-doer amongst you, he is like someone returning to his family after a (long) absence. As to the evil-doer amongst you, he is like an absconding slave**

being returned to his master.” He was asked, “How do you see our situation before God?” Abu Dharr replied, “Evaluate your deeds in view of the Qur’anic criterion. Verily God says:

*“Surely, the pious shall be in bliss” (82: 12).*

*“And the profane shall be in a fiery furnace” (82: 13).*

The Imam (a) added: ‘Thereat, the man said, “Then, where is the mercy of God?” Abu Dharr replied,

*“The mercy of God is near to the good-doers” (7:56).*

Abu ‘Abd Allah (a) continued: **A man wrote to Abu Dharr (r), “O Abu Dharr, teach me something new of knowledge.” Abu Dharr (r) wrote to him, “Knowledge is vast. However, if you can abstain from wronging someone that you love, do so.” The man asked him, “Have you seen anyone wrong someone that he loves?” Abu Dharr (r) replied, “Yes, your own self is the dearest of all things to you. And when you disobey God, you have wronged it.”** [Al Kulayni, Usul al-Kafi, vol. 2, Kitab al-’iman wa al-kufr, Bab muhasabat al-’amal, p. 458, hadith # 20].’

- Imam Hasan (a), in response to a man who asked him: “Why do we dislike death and do not like it? – said: **‘Because you have ruined your hereafter and made your world prosperous, and you do not like to be transferred from prosperity to ruin.’**” [Al-Sadduq, Ma’ani al-Akhbar, p. 390, hadith # 29].

## Three Levels Of Aversion For Death

- According to Imam Khomeini [ra], the aversion for death has three levels based on the group of people:

[1] **The deficient (naqisun) ones:** This group, in accordance with its original and God-given nature, loves life and survival and hates death and extinction. This love is related to false notion of immortality, everlasting life, and a life that knows no end. This group comes to love that which it imagines to be the enduring realm of life and hates that which it regards as being contrary to it. This is because the members of this group have no faith in the realm of the Hereafter and their hearts have no conviction in immortal life and eternal survival.

[2] **The middle (mutawassitun) ones:** This group has inadequate faith in Hereafter, because the attention of their hearts is turned to the development of the worldly life and they are neglectful of preparing for the Hereafter. Therefore, they don't like to move from a well-built and prosperous place to the desolate one. This attitude is also because of inadequate faith and conviction. Their fears, anxieties, and hatreds arise from unwholesomeness of deeds, waywardness and opposition to Master (mawla). Otherwise, if their evaluation was correct and had they critically examined themselves, they would not have been fearful of God's reckoning which is just and the judge (God) is the most just one.

[3] **The perfect (kamilun) ones:** This group has no abhorrence of death, although they may regard it with fear and anxiety on account of their awe of the Majesty of God, the Exalted, and His dignity. Some have fear because of love and yearning for God Almighty manifested in them through the Names of Beauty (Jamal). This irradiation (tajalli) brings an awe submerged with yearning, and their fear is because of the manifestation of Divine Majesty and its vision. The lover's heart palpitates with fear and anxiety at the time of meeting with the beloved. Others have anxiety and grief as God Almighty is manifested in them through the Names of Majesty (Jalal) and Glory. This tajalli creates an intense yearning suffused with fear and a wonder with an awe immersed with grief.

- Imam Ali (a) used to say: **“By God, the son of Abu Talib is more intimate with death than an infant with its mother's bosom.”** [Nahj al-Balaghah, Sermon # 5]

## So, What Is Death Itself?

- Death is a transition from the dark, lowly sphere of corporeal (mulki) and transient existence to the radiant world of immortal life and the everlasting higher sphere of incorporeal (malakuti) existence. As hearts do not believe it and cling to the earthly nature and the corporeal realm and do not believe in the life and immortality of the other world of Hereafter, which is the realm of pure life, it leads to fear, repulsion, and resentment of death.
- The Prophet of God (s): **“When one of you dies, his resurrection will take place. So, worship Allah as if you see Him and ask His forgiveness at every moment.”** [Al-Muttaqi al-Hindi, Kanz al-Ummal, hadith # 42748]
- The Prophet of God (s): **“When one of you dies, his resurrection will take place, and he will see his good deeds and his bad deeds.”** [Al-Muttaqi al-Hindi, Kanz al-Ummal,

hadith # 42123]

- Imam Ali (a): **“Death is the beginning of justice in the Hereafter.”** [Al-Amidi, Ghurar al-Hikam wa Durar al-Kalim, hadith # 1435]
- Imam Ali (a): **“Death is the destroyer of your joys, the darkener of your desires, and the one who separates you from your goals. It is an unwelcome guest, an invincible foe, and an unaccountable bloodshed. It has trapped you in its traps...you are about to be covered by the darkness of shadows of death and the severity of its pains.”**  
[Nahj al-Balaghah, Sermon # 230]

## **An Advice To Cure This Disease**

An intelligent human being irrespective of his religious, racial, cultural, national or geographic background is realistic about himself. He has deep and sharp observation about his changing environment, his fragile existence, the stages of his life from childhood to old age and the ultimate end of his life which can happen any moment either because of a fatal disease or an accident or any other disaster that can suddenly fell upon him.

Thus, he prepares himself for death before it comes. This means adopting a virtuous lifestyle, not forgetting aim of his life, settling all his accounts on daily basis or as soon as possible, seeking forgiveness from those who are wronged by him and asking for forgiveness from God on daily basis, doing good works and his duties as fast as one can and having hope that God will keep him alive for doing more good works; while enjoying pleasure, takes them as transient, and finally, courageously faces the challenges and hardships of life taking them as a test (bala) from God and as an inherent part of human existence.

- The Prophet of God (s): **“He who anticipates death will hasten to do good deeds.”** [Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, vol.77, p.171, hadith # 7]
- Imam Ali (a): **“He who does not prepare himself for death and does not consider opportunities as spoils of war is heedless of the onslaught of death. Pack your bags for the journey, for it hastens to take you, prepare for death, for it has cast its shadow over you.”** [Al-Amidi, Ghurar al-Hikam wa Durar al-Kalim, hadith # 4513 &

- The Imam al-Sadiq (a) (said to a man): **“Verily, you have been made your own doctor. The malady has been described to you, the sign of health has also been made known to you, the medicine has been shown to you. Hence look how you attend your own soul.”** [Al-Kulayni, Al-Kafi, vol. 2, Kitab al-’iman wa al-kufr, Bab muhasabat al-’amal, p. 454, hadith # 6]
- Imam Sadiq (a): **“The remembrance of death extinguishes the desires of the soul, uproots the habits of negligence, strengthens the heart with the promises of God, softens the nature, shatters the banners of lust, extinguishes the fire of greed, and makes the world seem insignificant in the eyes.”** [Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, vol.6, p.133, hadith # 32]
- Imam al-Kazim (a): **“He is not from among us who does not examine and evaluate himself every day. So, if he has done a good deed, he asks Allah for more of it, and if he has committed a sin or an evil deed, he asks Allah for forgiveness for that sin and turns repentant to Him.”** [Al-Kulayni, Al-Kafi, vol. 2, Kitab al-’iman wa al-kufr, Bab muhasabat al-’amal, p. 453, hadith # 2]

## Conclusion

Imam Ali (a): **“He who is prepared for his journey is happy and is comforted by his presence.”** [Al-Amidi, Ghurar al-Hikam wa Durar al-Kalim, hadith # 4513 & 4514]

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