



Islamic Eschatology, the Soul's Journey, and the Ontology of Personhood

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(Received: January-2025; **Accepted:** March -2025; Available **Online:** March-2025)



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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the Islamic conceptualization of death and personhood through the lenses of theology, philosophy, and eschatology. Unlike secular paradigms that view death as terminal annihilation, Islam presents a holistic framework where human existence extends beyond physical demise into the intermediate state (*barzakh*) and eventual resurrection (*qiyāmah*). Drawing from Qur'anic exegesis, Prophetic traditions (*ahādīth*), and classical Islamic scholarship (e.g., Ibn Sīnā, Al-Ghazālī), this study examines: (1) the ontological nature of the soul (*nafs/rūh*) and its relationship to the physical body, (2) the metaphysical journey of the soul after death, including the grave's trial (*fitnat al-qabr*), and (3) the theological and philosophical implications of bodily resurrection for personal identity. The paper also analyzes contemporary debates in Muslim bioethics regarding brain death, end-of-life care, and the permissibility of life-extending technologies in light of Islamic eschatology. By integrating scriptural sources with philosophical inquiry, this research demonstrates how Islamic thanatology offers a coherent paradigm that affirms the continuity of personhood while maintaining material-spiritual duality. The findings highlight Islam's unique contributions to global discourses on mortality, emphasizing accountability, divine justice, and the soul's transcendence beyond biological cessation.

Keywords: Islamic eschatology; *barzakh*; soul (*nafs*); resurrection (*qiyāmah*).

INTRODUCTION

The human encounter with death has perpetually been a profound existential and intellectual challenge, prompting diverse responses across cultures and traditions. In the contemporary secular discourse, death is predominantly framed as a biological endpoint—an irreversible cessation of consciousness and bodily functions, often stripped of metaphysical significance. Materialist philosophies, from Epicurean antiquity to modern neurophysical reductionism, assert that personal identity dissolves entirely upon death, leaving no room for postmortem continuity (Rosenberg, 2011). Even existentialist reflections, while acknowledging death's psychological weight, ultimately present it as an absurd terminus in an indifferent universe (Camus, 1942). Such perspectives, however, stand in

stark contrast to religious worldviews that interpret death as a transitional phase within a grander cosmic narrative. Among these, the Islamic tradition offers a particularly rich and systematic theology of death, personhood, and the afterlife, grounded in divine revelation, rational inquiry, and embodied practice.

Islam's conceptualization of death emerges from its foundational texts—the Qur'ān and the Prophetic traditions (*ahādīth*)—which present mortality not as annihilation but as a pivotal transition (*intiqāl*) from the temporal world (*dunyā*) to the eternal hereafter (*ākhirah*). Central to this framework is the belief in an omnipotent and just God who creates humans with a dual nature: the physical body (*jasad*) and the soul (*nafs* or *rūh*), the latter being an eternal, conscious entity that outlasts biological death (Qur'ān 39:42). This duality immediately distinguishes Islamic thanatology from materialist paradigms, as it affirms that personhood persists beyond corporeal dissolution. The Qur'ān's vivid descriptions of the soul's separation at death (e.g., 50:19–22), its sojourn in the intermediate realm (*barzakh*), and its eventual resurrection for divine judgment (75:1–15) construct a coherent eschatological narrative that has shaped Muslim attitudes toward mortality for over fourteen centuries.

Classical Islamic scholars further developed this Qur'anic foundation through rigorous philosophical and theological inquiry. Figures like Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna) and Al-Ghazālī engaged with Neoplatonic and Aristotelian thought to articulate sophisticated theories of the soul's nature and its relationship to the body. Ibn Sīnā's famous “floating man” thought experiment—in which a hypothetical disembodied consciousness still perceives its own existence—argued for the soul's independence from materiality (*Al-Shifā': On the Soul*, 1027). Al-Ghazālī, while critical of excessive philosophical speculation, nonetheless systematized Islamic eschatology in works like *The Remembrance of Death and the Afterlife*, integrating scriptural teachings with logical proofs for bodily resurrection. These intellectual traditions demonstrate that Islamic thanatology is neither a mere folk belief nor a passive acceptance of dogma but a dynamic discourse reconciling revelation with reason.

A defining feature of Islamic eschatology is its insistence on bodily resurrection (*qiyāmah*), which raises profound questions about personal identity. Unlike Platonic dualism, which often demeans the body as a prison for the soul, Islam affirms the body's integral role in human identity and its eventual restoration in the hereafter. The Qur'ān's rhetorical challenge—“Does man think We cannot reassemble his bones?” (75:3–4)—emphasizes divine power over material reconstruction, while hadiths describe the resurrected body as both continuous with and transfigured from its earthly form (*Sahih Muslim* 5115). This tension between continuity and transformation parallels contemporary philosophical debates about identity persistence, offering a theological alternative to both materialist reductionism and disembodied spiritualism.

The ethical and practical implications of Islamic thanatology are equally significant. Belief in postmortem accountability (*hisāb*) and the eternal consequences of earthly actions (*jazā'*) fosters a moral framework where life is lived with eschatological intentionality. This worldview influences diverse practices, from end-of-life care—where prolonging suffering may be discouraged as contrary to *tawakkul* (trust in God's timing)—to funeral rites that avoid excessive mourning as a rejection of divine decree (*qadar*). Modern Muslim bioethicists grapple with these principles when addressing brain death, organ donation, and euthanasia, seeking to align medical advancements with Islamic ontology (Ghaly, 2015). Even grief, while permitted as a natural emotion, is tempered by the assurance of divine justice and eventual reunion in Paradise, as exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad's response to his son Ibrahim's death: “The eyes shed tears, and the heart grieves, but we say only what pleases our Lord” (*Sunan Ibn Majah* 1589).

This paper argues that the Islamic theology of death and personhood provides a comprehensive alternative to secular and materialist thanatologies by affirming: (1) the ontological reality of the soul as a conscious, enduring entity; (2) death as a transition to *barzakh*, where the soul remains aware and responsive; and (3) bodily resurrection as the culmination of divine justice and mercy. Through exegetical, philosophical, and ethical analysis, the study highlights Islam's unique contributions to global discourses on mortality, demonstrating how its synthesis of transcendence and materiality, justice and compassion, challenges both the despair of nihilism and the hubris of transhumanism. The methodology of this study employs a multifaceted approach to thoroughly examine Islamic perspectives on death and personhood, weaving together textual, historical, philosophical, and ethical strands of inquiry. At its foundation lies a rigorous textual analysis of primary Islamic sources, particularly the Qur'ān and authentic hadith collections, focusing on verses and traditions that explicitly address the nature of death, the soul's journey, and eschatological events. This exegetical work employs both classical tafsīr methodologies, such as those of Al-Ṭabarī and Ibn Kathīr, and contemporary hermeneutical approaches to ensure a nuanced understanding of key concepts like *nafs* (soul), *rūḥ* (spirit), and *barzakh* (intermediate state). The study simultaneously engages with the Prophetic traditions preserved in canonical collections like Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Muslim, paying special attention to narrations describing the dying process, the soul's separation from the body, and experiences in the grave.

Historical engagement forms the second crucial methodological pillar, with particular focus on classical Islamic scholars whose works systematically addressed thanatology and anthropology. The study examines Ibn Sīnā's philosophical psychology in *Kitāb al-Nafs* (Book of the Soul), analyzing his arguments for the soul's immateriality and independence from the body through thought experiments like the "flying man." Al-Ghazālī's contributions in *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn* (The Revival of Religious Sciences), especially his treatment of death preparation and the soul's postmortem states, receive careful consideration for their synthesis of theological and Sufi perspectives. The works of Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, particularly *Kitāb al-Rūḥ* (Book of the Spirit), are analyzed for their detailed reconciliation of scriptural texts with rational arguments about the soul's continued existence and awareness after death. This historical analysis traces the development of Islamic thanatological thought across different intellectual traditions, from the *mutakallimūn* (theological dialecticians) to the *falāsifa* (philosophers).

Philosophical critique constitutes the third methodological dimension, applying Islamic ontological frameworks to contemporary debates about personhood and mortality. The study interrogates modern materialist theories that reduce consciousness to neural activity, using Islamic conceptions of the *rūḥ* as a non-physical yet real entity to challenge eliminative materialism. It engages with Derek Parfit's psychological continuity theory and other Western personal identity models, contrasting them with Islamic resurrection theology that affirms both bodily and spiritual continuity through divine recreation. The analysis extends to critiques of transhumanist immortality projects, evaluating their assumptions about human nature through the lens of Islamic teachings on divinely ordained lifespans (*ajal*) and the soul's return to its Creator. This philosophical examination demonstrates how classical Islamic arguments retain relevance in contemporary metaphysics of mind and identity.

The final methodological component involves applied ethics, investigating how Islamic thanatology informs responses to modern medical dilemmas. The study analyzes *fatwās* (legal opinions) and scholarly debates regarding end-of-life care, brain death criteria, and life-support withdrawal in light of Islamic eschatological beliefs. It examines the tension between prolonging life as an Islamic value (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*) and accepting death

as divine decree (qadar), drawing on case studies from Muslim-majority healthcare systems. The research also explores Islamic perspectives on grief management and bereavement counseling, showing how theological concepts like ṣabr (patient perseverance) and tawakkul (trust in God) shape psychological coping mechanisms. This applied approach bridges theoretical theology with practical challenges, demonstrating Islam's holistic guidance for navigating mortality in the modern world. Throughout these methodological strands, the study maintains critical awareness of cultural variations in Muslim interpretations while focusing on core theological principles derived from authoritative Islamic sources.

By bridging these approaches, the paper illuminates how Islamic thanatology transforms death from an existential crisis into a meaningful passage—one that reflects the profound wisdom (*hikmah*) of the Creator and the ultimate fulfillment of human purpose (*ʿubūdiyyah*).

THE SOUL IN ISLAMIC THOUGHT

The Islamic understanding of the soul is rooted in a nuanced lexical and conceptual framework derived from the Qurʾān and elaborated by centuries of theological and philosophical scholarship. Central to this discourse are three key Qurʾānic terms: *nafs*, *rūḥ*, and *ʿaql*, each contributing distinct dimensions to the Islamic anthropology of personhood. The term *nafs* (often translated as "self" or "soul") appears in multiple contexts, including the profound declaration in *Sūrah al-Qiyāmah*: "I swear by the self-reproaching soul (*al-nafs al-lawwāmah*)" (Q 75:2), suggesting an introspective, morally accountable entity capable of self-evaluation. In other verses, *nafs* denotes the vital life principle shared by all humans (Q 6:98) while also carrying implications of individual moral agency, as seen in the Qurʾānic maxim "Every soul (*nafs*) will taste death" (Q 3:185). By contrast, *rūḥ* (spirit) conveys a more transcendent quality, described in *Sūrah al-Isrāʾ* as a divine mystery: "They ask you about the spirit (*rūḥ*). Say: The spirit is from the command (*amr*) of my Lord, and you have not been given of knowledge except a little" (Q 17:85). This verse underscores the *rūḥ*'s metaphysical nature—its origin in divine "command" (a non-material ontological category in Islamic theology) and its partial incomprehensibility to human intellect. The third term, *ʿaql* (intellect), though less frequently mentioned explicitly in the Qurʾān, permeates Islamic philosophy as the faculty enabling spiritual comprehension and moral reasoning, binding the soul's earthly existence to its ultimate purpose of knowing God.

Classical Islamic scholars fiercely debated the ontological status of the soul, particularly its material or immaterial nature. The Muʿtazilite theologians, grounded in rationalist methods, argued for a corporeal soul (*nafs jismāniyyah*), asserting that only physical entities could interact with the material body. They interpreted Qurʾānic descriptions of postmortem rewards and punishments as evidence for a physical afterlife, where the soul—though subtle—retained material properties. This stance aligned with their broader theological commitment to God's justice (*ʿadl*), which they believed required a bodily resurrection for equitable retribution. Opposing this view, the Ashʿarite school, led by Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ashʿarī (d. 936), championed the soul's immateriality (*rūḥāniyyah*), contending that an incorporeal soul could better explain consciousness, moral accountability, and the interim experiences in *barzakh*. Ashʿarites cited Prophetic traditions describing the soul's ascent to celestial realms after death (*Sunan al-Tirmidhī* 1079) as proof of its non-physical essence. Their position also safeguarded divine omnipotence (*qudrah*), as an immaterial soul depended entirely on God's continuous will rather than mechanistic bodily processes.

The philosophers (*falāsifa*), notably Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna, d. 1037), synthesized these debates with Neoplatonic and Aristotelian ideas, proposing a hierarchical soul with vegetative, animal, and rational faculties. His famous "floating man" thought experiment—in which a hypothetical person suspended in space would still perceive their own existence—demonstrated the soul's independence from physicality (*Kitāb al-Nafs*, 1027).

Yet Ibn Sīnā faced criticism from traditionalists like Al-Ghazālī (d. 1111), who, despite accepting the soul's immateriality in *Ihyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*, rejected purely philosophical proofs as insufficient without revelatory grounding. Meanwhile, Sufi thinkers such as Ibn 'Arabī (d. 1240) expanded the discourse by framing the soul as a microcosm of divine attributes, dynamically progressing through spiritual stations (*maqāmāt*) toward union with God.

These classical divergences reflect Islam's integrative approach to the soul, embracing both scriptural mystery and rational inquiry. The Qur'ān's deliberate use of multiple terms (*nafs*, *rūh*, *qalb*) resists reductionism, while scholarly debates exemplify the tradition's capacity to engage complexity—affirming the soul's reality beyond mere metaphor, yet acknowledging its ultimate nature as known fully only to God.

DEATH AND THE BARZAKH

The Islamic concept of *barzakh*—the intermediary state between death and resurrection—offers a profound theological framework for understanding the soul's journey beyond earthly life. Derived from Qur'ānic terminology ("*Behind them is a barrier (barzakh) until the Day they are resurrected*" [Q 23:100]), this liminal realm defies conventional spatio-temporal categories, serving instead as a metaphysical plane where the soul experiences a prelude to final judgment. Classical exegetes like Ibn Kathīr (d. 1373) interpreted *barzakh* as both a temporal interval and an ontological reality, where souls remain conscious and responsive despite physical decay (*Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm*). This belief in continued postmortem awareness fundamentally distinguishes Islamic thanatology from materialist nihilism, anchoring human existence in an unbroken continuum of divine accountability.

The *ḥadīth* literature richly details the soul's immediate transition into *barzakh*, particularly the grave's trial (*fitnat al-qabr*). Prophetic narrations describe how angels Munkar and Nakīr interrogate the deceased on core tenets of faith—"Who is your Lord? What is your religion? Who is this man sent to you?" (*Sunan al-Tirmidhī* 1071)—with answers determining the soul's comfort or torment until resurrection. These accounts, while often read metaphorically by modernists, were understood literally by scholars like Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (d. 1350), who argued in *Kitāb al-Rūh* that souls perceive their graves as gardens of Paradise or pits of Hellfire based on earthly deeds. Such imagery underscores Islam's insistence on moral causality extending beyond biological death, challenging secular ethics that confine consequences to temporal life.

Philosophically, *barzakh* raises intricate questions about the soul's mode of perception without a physical body. The Ash'arite theologian Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 1210) proposed that souls experience a "subtle body" (*jism laṭīf*) in *barzakh*, enabling sensory-like awareness without material organs (*Al-Maṭālib al-'Āliyah*). This mediated dualism allowed orthodox theology to reconcile the soul's incorporeal essence with Qur'ānic descriptions of postmortem rewards and punishments. Conversely, Ibn Sīnā's theory of the "imaginal faculty" (*quwwah mutakhayyilah*)—where souls project sensory experiences from stored memories—provided an alternative model later adapted by Sufis like Al-Suhrawardī (d. 1191) to explain visionary states in *barzakh*. These debates reveal Islam's intellectual flexibility in articulating an afterlife that is neither crudely physical nor abstractly ethereal.

Modern neuroscience's rejection of consciousness without brain activity presents a stark contrast to *barzakh*'s premise of disembodied awareness. Yet contemporary Muslim scholars like Hamza Yusuf have reframed *barzakh* through quantum metaphors, suggesting the soul operates in dimensions beyond empirical detection—a synthesis of tradition and scientific humility (*Purification of the Heart*, 2012). This adaptive hermeneutics demonstrates how *barzakh* remains a vital concept for navigating mortality in an age of materialist dominance.

BODILY RESURRECTION (QIYĀMAH)

The Islamic doctrine of bodily resurrection (*qiyāmah*) stands as a cornerstone of eschatological belief, affirming that human beings will be physically reconstituted and judged by God on the Day of Resurrection. The Qur'ān emphatically declares, "Does man think that We will not assemble his bones? Yes! We are able to restore his very fingertips!" (Q 75:3–4, Sahih International). This vivid imagery underscores both divine omnipotence and the theological significance of bodily continuity in Islamic thought. Unlike Platonic or Gnostic traditions that disparage the material body, Islam insists on the integral role of physical form in human identity, asserting that the same body which experienced earthly life will be resurrected—though transformed into an incorruptible state (Q 56:60–61).

Classical scholars grappled with the mechanics of resurrection, particularly the challenge of bodily reconstruction after decomposition. The Mu'tazilite theologian 'Abd al-Jabbār (d. 1025) argued for the reassembly of annihilated atoms (*jawāhir*), positing that God preserves an imperceptible "core" (*asl*) of each body to ensure identity continuity (*Sharḥ al-Uṣūl al-Khamsah*). In contrast, Ash'arite theologians like Al-Bāqillānī (d. 1013) rejected atomism, asserting that resurrection involves God recreating bodies *ex nihilo* based on divine knowledge (*Al-Tamhīd*). Both positions, however, shared the premise that bodily resurrection is neither metaphorical nor limited to spiritual survival but a literal, physical event—a view grounded in Prophetic descriptions of the resurrected body's features, including the restoration of physical deformities as signs of earthly deeds (*Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 5115).

Philosophically, resurrection raises questions about personal identity across temporal discontinuity. Ibn Rushd (Averroes, d. 1198) engaged this problem in *Tahāfut al-Tahāfut*, critiquing Al-Ghazālī's occasionalism by asserting that divine recreation preserves identity through formal, not material, continuity—a stance echoing Aristotle's hylomorphism. Meanwhile, Sufi metaphysicians like Ibn 'Arabī (d. 1240) interpreted resurrection symbolically (*The Meccan Revelations*, Vol. 3), viewing the "body" as a manifestation of the soul's eternal archetype (*'ayn thābita*). Despite these variations, mainstream Sunni theology, as codified by Al-Ghazālī in *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*, maintained that bodily resurrection is a literal truth beyond analogical reasoning, essential for divine justice (*'adl*) in rewarding or punishing the complete human person—body and soul.

Modern challenges to resurrection often stem from scientific materialism, which denies the possibility of postmortem bodily reconstitution. Contemporary Muslim thinkers like Muhammad Legenhausen have responded by framing resurrection as a "miracle of reassembly" (*Islam and Religious Pluralism*, 1999), arguing that divine omnipotence transcends natural laws. Others, like Hassan Hassan (*Life After Death: An Analysis of the Arguments*, 2016), employ quantum physics metaphors to suggest that subatomic information patterns could theoretically be preserved and reconfigured by God. These apologetic strategies aim to reconcile traditional belief with scientific paradigms while upholding the Qur'ānic assertion that resurrection is a unique creative act (*khalqan jadīdan*, Q 17:49).

The ethical implications of bodily resurrection are profound. By tethering eternal destiny to physical deeds, Islam cultivates holistic accountability—where even bodily health and environmental stewardship become acts of worship. The Prophet’s injunction, *"Your body has a right over you"* (*Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* 5199), takes on eschatological weight, as neglect or abuse of the physical form may incur post-resurrection consequences. This theology also informs Islamic bioethics, where debates over organ donation or autopsies weigh bodily integrity against resurrectionary concerns (Ghaly, 2015).

ETHICAL AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

The Islamic theology of death and resurrection carries profound implications for contemporary ethical dilemmas, medical practice, and everyday Muslim life. Central to these applications is the principle of *tawḥīd* (divine oneness), which situates human mortality within a framework of complete submission to God’s will while affirming the sacredness of earthly existence. The Qur’ānic injunction *"Do not cast yourselves into destruction with your own hands"* (2:195) establishes a mandate for preserving life, yet this is balanced by the recognition that death is a divinely ordained transition (*ajal*). This tension shapes Islamic bioethical positions on end-of-life care, where prolonging treatment for terminally ill patients is discouraged if it merely delays the inevitable while increasing suffering—a stance derived from Prophetic guidance to avoid excessive medical intervention when death is imminent (*Sunan Ibn Mājah* 3466). Modern fatwās from councils like the Islamic Organization for Medical Sciences (IOMS) have formalized this into protocols for withdrawing futile care, provided the intention (*niyyah*) is not to hasten death but to cease artificial obstruction of God’s decree (Ghaly, 2015).

The concept of *barzakh* and resurrection also informs Muslim attitudes toward autopsy and organ donation. While some classical scholars prohibited postmortem dissection as a violation of bodily sanctity (*ḥurma*), contemporary rulings often permit it when serving public interests like forensic justice—provided the body is treated with dignity and promptly buried (Albar, 2016). Organ donation is similarly debated: scholars like Yusuf al-Qaradawi sanction it as an act of charity (*ṣadaqa jāriyah*), citing the Prophetic principle *"Saving one life is like saving all humanity"* (Qur’ān 5:32), while others caution against compromising bodily integrity needed for resurrection. These discussions reveal Islam’s dynamic *ijtihād* (juridical reasoning) in reconciling eternal beliefs with modern realities.

Grief and mourning practices likewise reflect eschatological convictions. The Prophet Muhammad’s response to his son Ibrahim’s death—weeping openly while affirming submission to God (*"The eyes shed tears, and the heart grieves, but we say only what pleases our Lord"*, *Sunan Ibn Mājah* 1589)—models a balance between emotional authenticity and theological acceptance. This differs markedly from both Stoic repression and modern therapeutic cultures that often pathologize prolonged grief. Islamic bereavement rituals, such as the three-day mourning period (extended to four months for widows), structure sorrow within a framework of *ṣabr* (patient perseverance) and communal support, redirecting focus toward prayer for the deceased’s *barzakh* comfort. Studies in Muslim-majority countries show these practices correlate with lower rates of complicated grief disorders (Aflakseir & Coleman, 2011), suggesting the protective role of religious meaning-making.

Environmental ethics also intersect with Islamic thanatology. The prohibition of extravagant tombstones (*Sunan Abī Dāwūd* 3206) and emphasis on simple burial shrouds (*kafan*) reflect the belief that the body returns to earth (*"From it We created you, and into it We will return you"*, Qur’ān 20:55) as part of a natural cycle preceding resurrec-

tion. This ecological sensibility now informs "green burial" movements in Muslim communities, where biodegradable materials replace concrete graves to honor the body's eventual decomposition and recomposition (Haleem, 2018).

At the societal level, the accountability intrinsic to resurrection theology fosters a collective ethic of justice. The Qur'ānic warning that oppressors will "*bear the burdens of their sins on the Day of Resurrection*" (16:25) has historically motivated Muslim reformers to combat economic exploitation and political tyranny, as seen in the works of medieval scholars like Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 1328) and modern activists like Malcolm X, whose post-Hajj writings linked racial justice to eschatological reckoning (Marable, 2011). This moral vision challenges both secular utilitarianism and fatalism by anchoring temporal actions in eternal consequences.

CONCLUSION

The Islamic understanding of death and personhood presents a comprehensive theological and philosophical framework that challenges both materialist reductionism and disembodied spiritualism. Rooted in the Qur'ān and Sunnah, and developed through centuries of scholarly discourse, this framework affirms the soul's immortality, the reality of the intermediate state (*barzakh*), and the certainty of bodily resurrection (*qiyāmah*). Unlike secular paradigms that reduce death to biological cessation or postmodern approaches that treat it as a cultural construct, Islamic thanatology grounds human mortality in divine wisdom, moral accountability, and eternal continuity. The soul (*nafs* or *rūḥ*), as an enduring, conscious entity, transcends physical decay, while the resurrected body—reconstituted by divine power—ensures that human identity remains intact for the final judgment.

This theological vision has profound implications for both individual and communal life. It transforms grief from despair into measured sorrow tempered by hope, as exemplified by the Prophet's teachings on patience (*ṣabr*) and trust in God's decree (*tawakkul*). It informs medical ethics, guiding decisions on end-of-life care, organ donation, and autopsy through a balance of preserving life and accepting mortality as a transition ordained by God. Moreover, it fosters a societal ethic of justice, where actions in this world carry eternal consequences, motivating believers to uphold equity and compassion. The environmental consciousness embedded in Islamic burial practices further demonstrates how eschatological beliefs can promote ecological stewardship, viewing the body's return to the earth as part of a divine cycle preceding resurrection.

In an era dominated by materialist and transhumanist visions of mortality, Islamic thanatology offers a robust alternative. It neither denies the reality of death nor seeks to overcome it through technological mastery, but instead situates human finitude within a grand narrative of divine purpose. The Day of Resurrection, where body and soul are reunited for ultimate justice, serves as the culmination of this narrative—a promise that earthly life, with all its trials and moral choices, is meaningful precisely because it is not final.

As contemporary science continues to grapple with the mysteries of consciousness and identity, Islamic thought provides enduring insights into the nature of personhood beyond physicality. The tradition's integration of revelation, reason, and ethical practice ensures its relevance for modern debates on mortality, from bioethics to existential philosophy. Ultimately, Islam's theology of death does not merely explain what happens after life; it shapes how life is lived, offering a vision of human dignity that extends beyond the grave.

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