

Is the Messenger of Allah Alive?

Allah says in His noble Book; "And do not say about those who are killed in the Way of Allaah, "they are dead." Rather they are alive, but you perceive it not" [2:154]

Many people misunderstand this verse. They understand from the verse that: if the martyrs are alive, then surely the Prophet salallahu alaihi wa sallam, must also be alive. And if he, salallahu alaihi wa sallam, is alive, then we can call upon him, and ask him for our needs.

But Allaah has said in another verse, concerning one who is far superior to the martyrs: **Indeed you (O Muhammad) will die and verily, they (too) will die** [39:30]. This verse clearly states that the Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) will die. Let us examine the final moments of the Prophet, and the subsequent reaction of his Companions to further understand whether he (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) has truly died.

The death of the Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam)

On the day of his death, he (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) said: "**There is no true god but Allah. Death is full of agonies**" [Sahih al-Bukhari, 2:640].

Bukhari narrates that Allah's Messenger (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) passed away in the house of Aa'ishah (radhi allahu anha). Abu Bakr (radhi allahu anhu) uncovered the blessed face of Allah's Messenger (sallallahu alaihi wa-sallam), tended down, kissed him and cried. He then said: "May my father and mother be sacrificed for your sake! Verily, Allah will not cause you to die twice. You have just experienced the death that Allah had ordained." Then he went out and said: "Now, he who worshiped Muhammad (sallallahu alaihi wa-sallam), Muhammad (sallallahu alaihi wa-sallam) is dead now! But he who worships Allah, He is Ever-Living and He never dies. As Allah says: "**Muhammad is no more than a Messenger and Indeed, (many) Messengers have passed away before him. If he dies or is killed, will you then turn back on your heels (as disbelievers)? And he who turns back on his heels, not the least harm will he do to Allah, and Allah will give reward to those who are grateful.**"[3:144]

Umar (radhi allahu anhu) said: "By Allah! As soon as I heard Abu Bakr say it, I fell down to the ground. I felt as if my legs had been unable to carry me, so I collapsed when I heard him say it. Only then did I realize that Muhammad (sallallahu alaihi wa-sallam) had really died" [Sahih al-Bukhari .5:.733].

Not a single Companion contradicted Abu Bakr when he said: "*Muhammad (sallallahu alaihi wa-sallam) is dead now!*" They could have said that the Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa-sallam) is still alive, quoting the above verse: "**And say not of those who are killed in the Way of Allaah, "they are dead." Nay they are living, but you perceive it not"**. But the Companions understood that the Prophet was a human being, a mortal, and that he had died.

The Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) in his grave.

We have established above that the Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa-sallam) is not alive. How then do we understand the following authentic hadith: Anas bin Malik reported that Allah's Messenger (sa) said: "**The Prophets are alive in their grave and they are praying (therein)**" [Sahih-ul-Jami].

And does this hadith contradict the verse: **Indeed you (O Muhammad) will die and verily, they (too) will die.** [39:30]? The answer is that although the Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) lives and prays in his grave, **his live is not the life of this world, but the life of the *Barzakh*** (the stage between this life and the Hereafter). The life in the barzakh is not like the life in this world; its reality cannot be

understood by the people of this world. Whoever dies enters the barzakh and never returns back to this world. Hence the Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) died as other Prophets and other people before him died. Allah says: **“And We granted not to any human being immortality before you (O Muhammad); then if you die, would they live forever?”** [21:34]

The Companions understood that Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) had died.

Moreover, the Sahaabah (may Allaah be pleased with them) washed him, shrouded him, offered the funeral prayer for him and buried him. If he had been alive in the worldly sense, they would not have done so. Faatimah (radhi allahu anha) asked Abu Bakr (radhi allahu anhu) for her inheritance from her father (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) because she was convinced that he had died, and no one among the Sahaabah differed with her concerning that. Abu Bakr responded by saying that nothing could be inherited from the Prophets.

The Sahaabah unanimously agreed to choose Abu Bakr as the Khaleefah for the Muslims to succeed the Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) If the Prophet had been alive in a worldly sense, they would not have done that. So this indicates that there was consensus among them that he had indeed died.

When the tribulations increased during the time of ‘Uthmaan and ‘Ali (radhi allahu anhuma), they did not go to his grave to consult him or ask him for a way out of those tribulations and problems. If he had been alive in a worldly sense, they would not have overlooked that when they were in such great need of someone to save them from the trials that surrounded them.

The soul of the Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam)

With regard to the soul of the Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) it is in the highest part of Jannah because he is the best of creation. However his noble body is in his grave, un-decayed as he (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) said: **Indeed Allah has made it forbidden for the earth to consume the bodies of the Prophets** [Abu Dawood: 1047].

When we send salaams to the Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam), his soul connects with his body in order to respond to the salaam sent to him, while still being in the highest place of Paradise. The Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) said: **“There is no one who sends salaams upon me but Allah will restore to me my soul so that I may return his salaams.”** [Abu Dawood]

Also note that Allah returns the soul of the Prophet to enable him to return the salaam to us. If he (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) was alive, then there would be no need to return the soul.

Does the Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) hear our salaam?

Does the Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) know that we send salaam upon him? He (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) said; **“Indeed Allaah has appointed angels to roam the earth conveying to me the greetings from my Ummah** [Sahih, an-Nasaa`ee]. These angels inform him (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) the name of each one who says salaam upon him. Allah then returns the soul of the Prophet back to his body in order to return the salaam.

This hadith clarifies that the Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) does not hear our greetings of salaam, for if he could hear it directly, there would be no need of angels to convey it to him. It also follows that the Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) cannot hear other forms of conversation directed to him either. The dead cannot hear the calls of the living, as Allah says: **“but you cannot make hear those who are in graves”** [35:22] Thus it is absolutely foolish for one to attempt to converse with the Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) or others at their graves, and do to so is blatant shirk.

The Life of the Martyrs.

Likewise, the martyrs die with the death of this world; their wealth is inherited from and their wives can marry again, by consensus of the Muslims. As for the life that Allah has affirmed for the martyrs, their live is the life of Barzakh. And the Messenger of Allaah (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) explained that: **“...their souls are placed in the bellies of green birds which have lanterns suspended for them from the Throne of Allaah. They roam around in Paradise wherever they desire, then return to these lanterns”** [Sahih Muslim* 1887].

So although Allah says about the martyrs: **“Rather, they are alive”**, but about the reality of their life, He says **“but you perceive it not.”**

In summary, the Prophets and martyrs have died from the perspective of the worldly life, and as such, they cannot hear, see or know the events of the world. To call upon them is major shirk, as Allah said: **"Then do not call anyone besides Allah"** [Jinn: 72:18]. However, they are alive in the barzakh, enjoying the reward that Allah has prepared for them. The life of the Barzakh is different from this worldly life, As Allah says: **"you perceive it not"** [2:154].