

Secrets of NAFS - ROOH and WAFaat- MAUT revealed

By: Khurshid Imam

A. Introduction

“*Kullun nafs in zayqatul maut*” – Every soul has to taste death (Quran, Surah Anbiya 21 Ayah 35)

Above is the popular mistranslation.

This is a widespread misconception that soul will die. Basic problem is that the Arabic word “*Nafs*” has been mistranslated in English translation of Quran as “Soul”. In other words, English translation of Quran uses the word “Soul” for translating both “*Ruh*” and “*Nafs*”. A human being is composed of 3 entities (at least) – body, *Ruh* and *Nafs*. Unfortunately, we don’t have any English word for the Arabic word “*Nafs*”.

Now, you would be wondering why I am taking you into complex world of lexicon. Wait: See the magic.

B. Secret of Wafaat and Maut (death) revealed

Wafaat and *maut* (death) are not identical terms. Quran has maintained difference between these two words. To be short and precise, let us see what Allah has told about *wafaat*.

اللَّهُ يَتَوَفَّى الْأَنْفُسَ حِينَ مَوْتِهَا وَالَّتِي لَمْ تَمُتْ فِي مَنَامِهَا فَيُمْسِكُ الَّتِي قَضَىٰ عَلَيْهَا الْمَوْتَ وَيُرْسِلُ الْأُخْرَىٰ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

Allahu yatawaffa alanfusa heena mawtiha.....

Ibn Kaseer Translation says - "It is Allah Who takes away the souls at the time of their death, and those that die not during their sleep. He keeps those (souls) for which He has ordained death and sends the rest for a term appointed. Verily, in this are signs for a people who think deeply". Quran, Surah Zumur 39:42

Please concentrate on Arabic words; above translation may not give you the exact content of this ayah. Re-reading the above ayah -

"It is Allah Who causes wafaat (or give wafaat) to anfusa (plural of nafs is mentioned) at the time of their maut (death), and those that die (maut) not during their sleep. He keeps those (nafs) for which He has ordained maut (death) and sends the rest for a term appointed. Verily, in this are signs for a people who think deeply"

The miracle and secret of this ayah will be revealed - but the condition is **we need to think deeply** - as described at the end of this ayah **لآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ**.

Also, take a look at this ayah:

..... وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَتَوَفَّاكُم بِاللَّيْلِ... Wahuwa allatheh **yatawaffakum** biallayli....

It is He, Who causes WAFaat by night (referring to the sleep).... (Quran, Surah An'am 6:60)

Pondering over these two ayah -

1. At the time of death and during sleep, a *nafs* (or an individual being) undergoes *wafaat*. Allah takes *nafs* of a person when he dies and when he sleeps.

2. When a person dies then *nafs* is held back (not returned) by Allah. When a person is sleeping then *nafs* is returned upon his waking up.

3. So, *maut* or death is a TYPE of *wafaat*. Death is always a *wafaat* but all *wafaat* need not be death. From some *wafaat* return to life is possible, for example Quran 39:42; 6:60 talks about SLEEP as one such case of *wafaat*.

4. *Wafaat* is super set of *maut* (death). For example: Every Banglorean is an Indian but every Indian need not be a Banglorean. **Similarly, every death (*maut*) is *wafaat* but NOT every *wafaat* is death (*maut*).** There are *wafaat* in which a person does not die for example - Sleep.

5. No wonder, this miraculous difference of *maut* and *wafaat* is reflected splendidly in the context of Prophet Jesus's (Peace be upon him) departure from this world. Quran uses the word *wafaat* for his departure and NOT the word *maut*. In Quran 3:55 Allah has used word - *mutawaffeeka*, a derivative of *wafaat* for Prophet Jesus's departure. Nowhere Quran says that Jesus underwent *maut*, rather it says he underwent *wafaat*.

For details on this topic read: [JESUS - DEAD or ALIVE?](#)

C. ROOH and NAFS: What is the difference?

Rooh and *Nafs* can be compared to Electricity and Electric machines respectively.

1. The purpose of electricity is to provide "life" to the machine. Similarly, *ROOH* is the entity which is mainly responsible for the life of a living being. Further research can be done in the future in this field.

2. *Rooh* is a neutral entity; it's neither good nor bad. Electricity is neither good nor bad. How a machine will behave depends on its internal and external properties. For example, with the same electricity a washing machine washes clothes, refrigerator preserves food, television relays video programs. Similarly, *nafs* will behave differently in different people and it is this *nafs* due to which a person will do good deed or bad deed. *Nafs* reflects the **choice** of a human being - what he chooses to do. He can do good things as well as bad things.

3. The moment electricity is taken away from a machine, it becomes dysfunctional and out of use. Similarly, when *rooh* is out of body, the person dies (*maut*). Death takes place to *NAFS* and not *rooh*.

4. *Rooh* is a singular entity. Never ever in Quran plural of *rooh* is used while *nafs* is different for different people, hence, its plural exists. Quran mentions several times the plural of *nafs*.

5. In the life hereafter punishment and reward is for the *nafs* and **not** *rooh*. People of paradise and hell will be given different types of bodies; the entity which will remain the same in this worldly life and in the life hereafter will be *nafs*. This *Nafs* is supposed to undergo punishment or reward and this *nafs* will have the certainty that it's the same one that was in the worldly life and is now in the *akhirah*.
