

Is Death the End?

Relationship Between Death and Birth Revisited

Can We Consider the Relationship Between Death and Birth as Two Sides of the Same Coin?

Birth and death are two terms that appear to be opposites of each other. We usually use them in completely contrasting circumstances. But what is the relationship between these two words? Are birth and death really opposing concepts? In this article, we will discuss the relationship between death and birth.

Often, some words are used and repeated by people or social conventions in such a way that they get a fixed and permanent meaning. This is done to the extent that no one thinks about whether these words can have another meaning or not. In this way, that word becomes a cliché in the culture of the general public. This type of process limits our interpretation of phrases. Familiar examples include the two words 'death' and 'birth.'

In the simplest sense, birth means passing the fetal period and being born from the mother's womb and death means the end of life in this world, commonly referred to as losing one's life. Does birth really only have this one meaning? And does death really mean losing life? To get a more precise answer, let us review the previous lessons. We previously mentioned that the human being inherently desires infinity, and his insatiable desire for wealth, power, resources, and even eternal life is a sign of this. Seeking infinity is a powerful desire in us and indicates that there is no such thing as non-existence in the realm of existence. Non-existence is meaningless. In contrast to this strong desire, if death means non-existence and destruction, then

it is a horrible monster that can strike at any moment with ruthless cruelty and swallow the sweet dream of eternal human existence.

But is this really the meaning of death? Perhaps it is our perspective on death that is mistaken.

In Islamic philosophical literature, death is a means of transfer to eternal life in the hereafter, a phenomenon that provides us with the opportunity for continuing worldly life in a more advanced and broader setting. Now in this this case, do we still feel that the terrible monster of death is dragging us towards non-existence or feel the sweet feeling of eternity soothes our souls? Undoubtedly, what is in harmony with our *fitrah* and accepted by our heart is to acknowledge death as a means of transfer to the eternal life in the hereafter.

What Benefits Do We Get from Understanding the Relationship Between Death and Birth?

Perhaps the term "transfer" would show us the reality of death in the best way possible. It is just like the moments when a fetus is born from the mother's womb and enters this vast world, or in other words, he is transferred to this world. When the fetus leaves his mother's womb forever and is transferred to this world, his relationship with the placenta, which was the primary factor for his connection with the mother, disappears. Until just a few moments before birth, the placenta was the cause of fetus's survival and the factor connecting him to his surrounding world, but after birth, it becomes a useless and dead tissue. This marks the beginning of a newborn's life in this world.

As a matter of fact, the departure¹ of the fetus from the world of the mother's womb is done with the death of his placenta and the transfer of the fetus to the world. The placenta was the most important tool and the cause of the fetus's survival before entering this world, but now it loses its efficiency. When the connection between the fetus and the placenta is cut off, the placenta loses its life and returns to its material origin in this world. The fetus, who is the truth of an individual's existence, is born, and the placenta, which is a tool for living in the environment of the mother's womb, dies.

Despite this continuous process and the intertwined relationship between death and birth, do you think we cannot call these two magnificent truths of creation the two sides of the same coin? Or can we consider them like pieces of a puzzle which, by being together, give meaning to the human journey towards infinity?

The same thing happens when we are transferred to the hereafter. The body, which is our tool for living in the material world, can no longer function when transferred to the non-material world of the hereafter. The reality of our existence, which is our heart, human dimension, or soul is born into the hereafter. On the other hand, our body which was a carrier and a tool for our existence to make connection with the material world returns to its material origin. In fact, our body loses its life after severing its connection with the soul, and our immortal **soul** is born into the non-material world of the hereafter.

But how can this truth about the relationship between death and birth change our perspective on life? If one of your neighbors or friends moves into a new house, do you consider his absence from his previous house as his destruction? Certainly not!

¹. *Wafat*

If we understand *Wafat* and the relationship between death and birth as a kind of rebirth or transfer to a new stage of life and free our minds of delusional and false interpretations about death, we will no longer fear it. If we realize that the smooth or rough path of our journey towards eternal life in the living conditions of the hereafter depends on the thoughts, relationships, decisions, and behaviors that we had in this world, we will certainly make better use of the limited opportunity of worldly life. Therefore, the path of our transfer and birth to our eternal life will be beautiful and exciting.

In this lesson, we noted that we can have a different view of death and the relationship between death and birth. We introduced "transfer" as an appropriate term to define death and stated that the relationship between death and birth is just like two sides of the same coin. Although these concepts may seem contradictory at first glance, in fact, both of these terms refer to one concept. The human dimension of our being never experiences death and is only born into a different environment. We stated that death does not mean non-existence, but it is a path for us to pass from this world to eternal life of the hereafter, which is in harmony with our infinity-seeking *fitrah*.

If you have any information or questions about the relationship between death and birth, feel free to share them with us.