

Life of the Grave
its Delights and Horrors
until Resurrection

Ahwāl al-Qubūr wa
Aḥwāl Ahlihā ilā an-Nushūr



IBN RAJAB AL-ḤANBALĪ

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كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ

الْمَوْتِ ثُمَّ إِلَيْنَا تُرْجَعُونَ

Every soul will taste of death. Then to
Us you will be returned. (29:57)

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Editor's Introduction



As I pen this introduction, we are still in Covid-19 lockdown, albeit an eased lockdown. This wretched pandemic has claimed many lives and is an apt reminder of the frailty of human existence. We human beings, who have learnt to fly in the sky like birds and swim in the bottom of the ocean like fish, have been forced on to our knees by a creation of Allah ﷻ which is smaller than the human eye can perceive. And yet we forget that this earthly existence is a means to an end and not an end in itself. There is no telling of what to come, life is frail; in fact, it is weaker than the web of a spider. Sayyidunā 'Alī ؑ says,

The world is ephemeral. It knows no permanence.

The world is like a web that a spider has spun.

Sufficient for you from this world, O seeker of provisions,

Is a little amount, I swear upon my life,

For everyone who is in it will surely die.

In the course of pondering over death, Hazrat Shaykh Zakariyyā Kandhlawī ؑ writes that the reason why the funeral prayer omits the *adhān* and *iqāmah* is because they have been called out at the dawn of life. When a child enters the world, the parents are required to call out the *adhān* in the right ear and the *iqāmah* in the left ear. Hazrat mentions that the entire life span of a person is like the moment between the *iqāmah* and the start of the prayer, i.e. very little time. This idea is very eloquently captured by a poet in the following couplets: