

**REINCARNATION IN BUDDHISM: AN ANALYSIS
FROM ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE**

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**DEPARTMENT OF 'AQIDAH AND ISLAMIC THOUGHT
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2014

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**SHEIKHA SAIDAH BINTE MOHAMAD
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**DEPARTMENT OF 'AQIDAH AND ISLAMIC THOUGHT
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ABSTRACT

Belief in the concept of reincarnation is a sign of true faith among the Buddhists. A Buddhist has to follow the Four Noble Truth and the Eightfold Path in order to achieve enlightenment which is *nirvana*. They believe in the rebirth of the soul from the last breath to the liberation of soul which entwines the journey of life from death to *karma*, to rebirth and finally achieving *nirvana*. Worshippers of Islam on the other hand have to follow the six Pillars of Faith, the five Pillars of Islam and *ihsān* which is to do good things in life. They believe in resurrection on the day of Judgement. On this day, Muslims after death will be awakened in the frontiers of *barzakh* and be judged and placed appropriately in either paradise or hell as promised in the holy Qur’ān. By collecting data using documentary method which applied to library materials, the researcher has found that there are still a number of Muslims who were influenced by the traditional beliefs of animism, Hinduism and Buddhism. This is because the Malays were Hindus and Buddhists long before they became Muslim. Even though at this time the Malays are Muslims, the traditional beliefs are still deeply rooted in them. The Malay Muslims influence is within the indigenous belief in spirits, ghosts and reincarnation. On top of that, their culture and traditional practices have also been influenced by Hinduism and Buddhism such as practices of *kenduri arwah*. Besides that, there are deviant Muslim sects who believe that the idea of reincarnation exists in Islam for instance Al-Arqām and Abū Bakar Bappu. This research aims to analyze the concept of reincarnation from Islamic perspective. Buddhists and Muslims emphasize on moralities, ethics and righteousness plus both believe in death. The major difference in their faith lies in the concept of the hereafter. Buddhism spreads the belief of rebirth, *karma* and *nirvana*. Muslims however believe that death occur only once. They will stay in *barzakh* until the day of Judgement. In contrary to the concept of *karma*, Islam offers the concept of

forgiveness and the purpose of suffering is only a test from Allah. Differences also arise in attaining goals as well as the concept of paradise and hell whereby Buddhists believe that it is primarily a transitory process of achieving *nirvana* while for Muslims, they are taught to worship Allah in order to enter paradise eternally. Even though Islam rejects the doctrine of reincarnation, the Malay Muslim society is still influenced by the traditional beliefs and practices whereby some of it is erroneous which can lead to polytheism (*shirk*), a cardinal sin in Islam. This is caused by lack of understanding on Islam as well as fanaticism and extremism towards ones clan. In conclusion, it is a duty for Muslims to make the Muslims realize that some of the customs and traditions of certain ethnics are against the teaching of Islam. Therefore, it is important to understand Islam so it would not be mix up with traditional beliefs which are contrary to the tenets of Islam.

ABSTRAK

Kepercayaan kepada konsep reinkarnasi itu adalah satu tanda keimanan yang benar di kalangan penganut agama Buddha. Penganut Buddha harus mengikut Empat Kebenaran Mulia dan Jalan Lapan Lapis Mulia untuk mencapai pencerahan iaitu nirvana. Mereka percaya kepada kelahiran semula dari nafas terakhir kepada kebebasan jiwa yang bermula dengan perjalanan hidup selepas kematian kepada karma, kepada kelahiran semula, kepada samsara dan akhirnya mencapai nirvana. Penganut Islam pula harus mengikut enam rukun iman, lima rukun Islam dan juga ihsan iaitu melakukan perkara-perkara yang baik dalam kehidupan. Mereka percaya kepada kebangkitan pada hari kiamat. Yang mana selepas kematian pada hari itu, penganut Muslim akan dibangkitkan di alam barzakh dan akan terima balasan yang sewajarnya sama ada ditempatkan di syurga atau neraka seperti yang dijanjikan dalam Al- Qur'ān. Dengan mengumpul data menggunakan metod dokumen iaitu bahan perpustakaan, pengkaji telah dapati bahawa beberapa penganut Islam yang terpengaruh dengan kepercayaan tradisional animisme, Hindu dan Buddha. Ini kerana pada zaman dahulu Orang Melayu adalah penganut agama Hindu dan Buddha sebelum kedatangan Islam. Walaupun sekarang mereka adalah penganut agama Islam, kepercayaan tradisi masih tertanam dalam diri mereka. Orang Melayu Islam terpengaruh dalam kepercayaan asli seperti kepercayaan kepada roh, hantu dan reinkarnasi. Selain itu, budaya dan amalan tradisi mereka juga telah dipengaruhi oleh Hindu dan Buddha seperti amalan kenduri arwah. Selain itu juga terdapat ajaran sesat seperti Al-Arqām dan Abū Bakar Bappu yang percaya bahawa konsep reinkarnasi wujud dalam Islam. Kajian ini adalah untuk menganalisis konsep reinkarnasi menurut perspektif Islam. Penganut Buddha dan Islam menekankan pada moral, etika dan kebaikan. Mereka juga percaya akan kematian. Perbezaan utama dalam kepercayaan mereka terletak pada konsep akhirat. Buddha percaya akan kelahiran semula, karma dan nirvana. Manakala umat Islam pula percaya bahawa kematian itu

berlaku sekali sahaja. Bertentangan dengan konsep karma, Islam menawarkan konsep pengampunan dan tujuan penderitaan adalah ujian dari Allah. Perbezaan juga timbul dalam mencapai matlamat serta konsep syurga dan neraka di mana penganut Buddha percaya bahawa ia adalah satu proses sementara untuk mencapai nirvana manakala bagi umat Islam, mereka diajar untuk menyembah Allah supaya dimasukkan ke syurga buat selama-lamanya. Walaupun Islam menolak doktrin reinkarnasi, masyarakat Melayu Islam masih dipengaruhi oleh kepercayaan dan amalan tradisi di mana sebahagian daripadanya adalah salah dan boleh membawa kepada syirik iaitu dosa besar. Ini adalah disebabkan oleh kurang kefahaman mengenai Islam serta mempunyai sifat fanatik dan pelampau terhadap puak yang tertentu. Kesimpulannya, ia adalah satu kewajipan bagi umat Islam untuk memberi kesedaran kepada umat Islam bahawa sebahagian dari adat dan tradisi sesuatu etnik adalah bertentangan dengan ajaran Islam. Oleh itu, adalah penting untuk memahami Islam supaya ia tidak dicampur aduk dengan kepercayaan tradisi yang bertentangan dengan prinsip-prinsip Islam.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTENTS	PAGE
TITLE	
ORIGINAL LITERARY WORK DECLARATION	
ABSTRACT (ENGLISH)	i
ABSTRAK (MALAY)	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
TRANSLITERATION SYSTEM	xi
LIST OF ABBREVIATION	xii
LIST OF APPENDIX	xiii
 CHAPTER ONE	
INTRODUCTION	
 1.1. Introduction	1
1.2. Background of the Study	1
1.3. Statement of the Problem	10
1.4. Objective of the Study	10
1.5. Importance of the Study	10
1.6. Definition of Terms	11
1.7. Scope of the Study	14
1.8. Literature Review	15
1.9. Research Methodology	22
1.9.1. Subject Method	23
1.9.2. Data Collection Method	24
1.9.2.1. Documentary Method	24
1.9.3. Data Analysis Method	24
1.9.3.1. Inductive Method	25
1.9.3.2. Deductive Method	25
1.9.3.3. Comparative Method	25
1.9.3.4. Historical Method	26

1.10. The Structure of the Writing	26
1.11. Conclusion	27

CHAPTER TWO

REINCARNATION IN BUDDHISM

2.1. Introduction	28
2.2. Buddhism	28
2.3. The Four Noble Truths	29
2.3.1. The Noble Truth of <i>Dukkha</i> or suffering (<i>Dukkha Sacca</i>)	29
2.3.2. The Noble Truth of the Origin of <i>Dukkha</i> (<i>Samudaya Sacca</i>)	30
2.3.3. The Noble Truths of the Cessation of <i>Dukkha</i> (<i>Nirodha Sacca</i>)	31
2.3.4. The Noble Truth of the Path leading to the Cessation of <i>Dukkha</i> (<i>Magga Sacca</i>)	31
2.4. The Soul (<i>Atman</i>)	32
2.4.1. The Theory of Mind Only	33
2.5. Buddhism on Death	35
2.5.1. Modes of Death	36
2.5.2. The Process of Dying	37
2.6. <i>Karma</i>	37
2.6.1. <i>Karma</i> and <i>Vipaka</i>	40
2.7. The Laws Of Cosmic World	40
2.7.1. <i>Utu Niyama</i>	41
2.7.2. <i>Bija Niyama</i>	41
2.7.3. <i>Karma Niyama</i>	41
2.7.4. <i>Dhamma Niyama</i>	42
2.7.5. <i>Citta Niyama</i>	42
2.8. Fourfold <i>Karma</i>	42
2.8.1. By Way Of Function	42
2.8.2. By Order Of Ripening	45
2.8.3. By Time Of Ripening	47
2.8.4. By Place Of Ripening	48
2.9. Dependent Origination (<i>Paticca Samuppada</i>)	51
2.9.1. Decay and Death (<i>Jara - Marana</i>)	51
2.9.2. Rebirth (<i>Jati</i>)	52

2.9.3. Becoming (<i>Bhava</i>)	52
2.9.4. Clinging (<i>Upadana</i>)	52
2.9.5. Craving (<i>Tanha</i>)	53
2.9.6. Feeling (<i>Vedana</i>)	53
2.9.7. Contact (<i>Phassa</i>)	53
2.9.8. Six Bases (<i>Salayatana</i>)	54
2.9.9. Mentality and Materiality (<i>Nama-rupa</i>)	54
2.9.10. Consciousness (<i>Vinnana</i>)	54
2.9.11. Volitional Activities (<i>Sankhara</i>)	55
2.9.12. Formula of Dependent Origination	55
2.10. Rebirth	56
2.10.1. Modes of Birth	59
2.10.2. How Rebirth Takes Place	59
2.11. Planes of Existence	60
2.11.1. Hell (<i>Niraya</i>)	61
2.11.2. Animals	63
2.11.3. Ghost beings (<i>Petas</i>)	64
2.11.4. Demigods (<i>Asuras</i>)	65
2.11.5. Humans	66
2.11.6. Gods (<i>Devas & Brahmas</i>)	67
2.12. <i>Samsara</i>	70
2.12.1. The Wheel of Life	72
2.13. <i>Nirvana</i>	73
2.13.1. The <i>Arhat</i>	76
2.13.2. <i>Bodhisattvas</i>	76
2.14. Conclusion	77

CHAPTER THREE

RESURRECTION IN ISLAM

3.1. Introduction	78
3.2. Islam	78
3.3. The Islamic Perspective on Death	79
3.4. Spirit/ Soul	83
3.5. The <i>Barzakh</i>	86

3.5.1. <i>Fitnah</i> (Trial) of the grave by the two angels	90
3.5.2. Torment and Bliss in the Grave	92
3.6. Death and Soul	93
3.7. The Importance of Coccyx on the Day of Judgement	94
3.8. The Day of Resurrection	95
3.9. The Book of Deeds	98
3.10. The Reckoning (<i>Hisāb</i>)	98
3.11. The Scales (<i>Mīzān</i>)	100
3.12. The Bridge (<i>Ṣirāt</i>)	101
3.13. The Intercession (<i>Syafā'ah</i>)	102
3.14. Paradise	103
3.14.1. The Levels of Paradise	105
3.14.2. Doors of <i>Jannah</i>	105
3.15. Hell	106
3.15.1. The Levels of Hell	108
3.16. Conclusion	109

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS FROM ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE

4.1. Introduction	110
4.2. Buddhism and Islam	110
4.3. The Soul (<i>Atman</i>)	112
4.4. Death	113
4.5. <i>Karma</i>	114
4.6. Dependent Origination	118
4.7. Rebirth	120
4.8. Planes of Existence	122
4.8.1. Heaven and Hell	122
4.9. <i>Samsara</i>	124
4.9.1. Desire (<i>Tanha</i>)	126
4.10. <i>Nirvana</i>	127
4.11. Malay Mystical Belief	131
4.12. Reincarnation in Deviant Muslim Sects' Belief	133
4.13. <i>Kenduri Arwah</i> in Islamic Perspective	137

4.14. Conclusion	139
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CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

5.1. Introduction	140
5.2. Conclusion	140
5.3. Recommendations	148
5.4. Table Conclusion	149

Bibliography	160
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Appendix A	168
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Appendix B	171
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TRANSLITERATION SYSTEM

Consonants

Jawi Alpha	Roman Alpha	Jawi Alpha	Roman Alpha
ء	’	ط	ṭ
ب	b	ظ	ẓ
ت	t	ع	‘
ث	th	غ	gh
ج	j	ف	f
ح	ḥ	ق	q
خ	kh	ك	k
د	d	ل	l
ذ	dh	م	m
ر	r	ن	n
ز	z	و	w
س	s	ه / هـ	h
ش	sh	ي	y
ص	ṣ	ة	h
ض	ḍ		

Vowels

1. Short Vowels

ا a

ي i

و u

2. Long Vowels

آ ā

إ ī

ū

3. Diphthongs

أ aw

إي ay

يى iyy

أو uww

Source: Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, (1988), *Pedoman Transliterasi Huruf Arab ke Huruf Rumi*. Kuala Lumpur : Dewan Bahasa dan Pusaka.

LIST OF ABBREVIATION

In this research, the researcher is using short forms or acronym. This is the list of short forms that been used as references.

<i>Ibid.</i>	<i>Ibidem</i> (same reference)
No.	Number
P.B.U.H	Peace Be Upon Him
Pg.	Page
W.D	Without Date
W.A	Without Author
Prof.	Professor
Dr.	Doctor

LIST OF APPENDIX

Appendix A

Table No.	Title
1	Fourfold <i>Karma</i>
2	Ten Unwholesome Courses of Action
3	Ten Wholesome Courses of Action
4	Bases of Meritorious Deeds

Appendix B

Picture no.	
1	A Symbol of <i>Dharma</i>
2	Statue of the Buddha
3	<i>Pontianak</i>
4	<i>Pocong</i>
5	Ashaari Mohammad
6	<i>Kenduri Arwah</i>

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction


In this chapter, the researcher will elaborate the methods on how this study will be done. This chapter will include the background of the study, statement of problem, purpose of the study, literature review and most important is why this topic is chosen. Therefore, readers will get a better understanding of the topic and how it will flow till the end.

1.2. Background of the Study

In order to make this topic clearer, the researcher describes the main issue of the study. Buddha denied the existence of the self or the soul (*anatta*) to maintain the justice of the universe, he accepted the notions of *karma* and rebirth, that thought and actions will effects in future lives. Buddhism believes that mankind have to experience a number of incarnations in human form, until such a time as the soul has obtained an appropriate level of enlightenment, through the process of a number of rebirths and experiences of life here on the earth. They will be reborn as a God, a man, a ghost, an animal, and an inhabitant of hell, according to their *karma*. They believe in *karma*, which in future people will experience the consequences of their past deeds. Good comes from good, and evil from evil.¹

¹ Narada Thera, *The Buddha-Dhamma* (New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 1999), 129.

Islam teaches the continued existence of the soul and a transformed physical existence after death. The Qur’ān speaks of two resurrections that take place after death. The first is in the *barzakh* and the second is at the final judgment.² Islam believes that everyone will die only once. In Islam, one soul belongs to one body and that very person will face his own punishment. Since the spirit and the body live the worldly life together and shares all its joys and pains, God will resurrect people bodily and spiritually. Both spirit and the body will receive torment and bliss in the grave and together will go either to paradise or hell.³ The question of *rūḥ*, soul and spirit are a complex and difficult one in Islam. In the following discussion, the researcher will not discuss deeply on *rūḥ* because it will remain one of Allah’s secrets and will be hidden from man till the day of Resurrection.


 وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ ۖ قُلِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي وَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا

Al-Isrā’ 17:85

Meaning: And they ask you (O Muhammad pbuh) concerning *Rūḥ*; Say “The *Rūḥ* is one of things, the knowledge of which is only with my Lord. And of knowledge, you (mankind) have been given only a little”.

The traditional beliefs of animism, Hinduism and Buddhism have influenced the Malay Muslim societies. To the extent, these traditional beliefs may ruin the creed (‘*aqidah*’) of Islam.⁴ This is because the Malay civilization had gone through various stages of beliefs; from the ancient understanding of animism to Hinduism, Buddhism thought and religion to the establishment of the idea of monotheism, through the acceptance of the

² .Hasan Bin Ali al-Saqaf, *Ṣaḥīḥ Syarah al-‘Aqīdah al-Ṭahāwīyyah* (Oman: Dar al-Imam al-Nawawi, 1998), 523.

³ ‘Ali Unal, *The Resurrection and The Afterlife* (Virginia: The Fountain, w.d), 203.

⁴ Syed Husin Ali, *The Malays: Their problems and future* (Selangor: The Other Press Sdn. Bhd., 2008), 58.

concept of Allah in Islamic tradition. Hinduism and Buddhism belief were widespread in this part of the world many centuries ago.⁵

There are integration of Hindu, Buddhism and Islamic components within the framework of the indigenous belief in spirits, ghosts, rituals and funeral. Malays were Hindus and Buddhist long before they became Muslims.⁶ Even though at this point the Malays are Muslims, the traditional beliefs are still deeply rooted in them. All these differences have influenced directly or indirectly on how they perceive the creation of the world and man, issues on mind and body and the concept of the soul. It is not that easy to separate between the worldview of the Malays and the influences that were introduced by other traditions.⁷ Although Malays are Muslims, the influence of traditional beliefs is still strong among them. These traditional beliefs, widespread among the Malays of today, are the continuation of the beliefs systems which existed before the spread of Islam in this region. It is difficult to deconstruct the old belief systems which are based on what is called animism, Hinduism and Buddhism traditions. At a glance, it is clear that animistic beliefs are in opposite direction from Islamic tenets. These can lead to the cardinal sin in Islam which is *shirk*. Even though the Muslim preachers propagate (*da'wah*) the true teaching of Islam to the Malay Muslim society, these traditional beliefs still continue to exist until today in Malay society.⁸

The Malays have their own cosmological and metaphysical interpretations of how and of what element a person had been created. Generally, they believe that a human consists of body and mind. According to their cosmology, the Malays believe that

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Mohamaed Nawab Bin Mohamed Osman, *Religio-Political Activism of Ulama in Malaysia* (Master thesis, National University of Singapore, Singapore, 2006), 13.

⁷ Lim Kim Hui, *Budi as the Malay Mind: A Philosophical Study of Malay Ways of Reasoning and Emotion in Peribahasa* (doctorate thesis, University of Hamburg, Hamburg, 2003), 42.

⁸ Syed Husin Ali, *The Malays: Their problems and future*, 58.

human were created through the mixture of four elements which is earth, fire, water and wind. These elements represent each organs of the human body. A human's body will perished when he or she passes away, but not his mind. Mind in the perspective of Malay metaphysics consists of non-material entities such as thinking, feeling, life, spirit or soul (*semangat*)⁹ and what have been left behind what have been left behind like good and bad deeds. Out of these various components, *semangat* is the most dominant and well-discussed topic. In this universe, the Malays believe that it is not only human and animals that are having *semangat* and powers, but plants and other objects also share these attributes. The core idea of the Malays seems to be an all pervading animism¹⁰, involving *semangat* in Man and Nature, which is soul. The entities throughout nature are endowed with souls, often thought to be souls of ancestors. They believe that the world around us is nature (objects, animals and plants). Since it possesses the *semangat* as well, therefore humans need to respect them as well. Normally there are two types of spirit/soul which is good soul (*semangat baik*) and bad soul (*semangat jahat*) from which good and bad values originated.¹¹

Spirits and ghosts are retentions of the old Malay animism. Animism is the beliefs in souls and in spiritual beings.¹² Ghosts are like spirit, but their origin is different. Usually ghosts are the souls of the dead.¹³ The researcher has seen that the term for ghosts also applies to spirits. The general term of ghosts is *hantu*.¹⁴ The Malay villagers did not make a clear cut distinction between ghosts and spirits but it is significant that on close

⁹ Henceforth, the researcher will use the term *semangat* to describe the Malay belief on spirit and soul.

¹⁰ Lim Kim Hui, *Budi as the Malay Mind: A Philosophical Study of Malay Ways of Reasoning and Emotion in Peribahasa*, 42. Animism is a belief in the existence of individual spirits that inhabit natural objects and phenomena.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 45.

¹² Mohd Taib Osman, *Malay Folk Beliefs* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1989), 89. The researcher will use the word ghost (*hantu*) or spirit to describe the soul of the dead.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

examination, a distinction has to be observed in the people's attitude and behaviour towards the element of ghosts and spirits.¹⁵

The most famous ghost in Malay belief is the vampire ghost. *Pontianak* or *Mati anak* is the ghost of a stillborn child. Another type of vampire ghost is the *langsuyar* or *penganggalan*.¹⁶ It is believed that the *langsuyar* is the ghost of a woman who dies at childbirth, either before delivery or after the birth of a child, and before the forty days of uncleanness have expired. *Langsuyar* is a flying ghost of the nature of the white lady or banshee. To prevent this, a quantity of glass beads are put in the mouth of the corpse, a hen's egg is put under each arm-pit, and needles are placed in the palms of the hands. It is believed that if this is done the dead woman cannot become a *langsuyar*, as she cannot open her mouth to shriek or wave her arms as wings, or open and shut her hands to assist her flight. The fear of *langsuyar* is rooted in the belief that it seeks to suck the blood of women at childbirth. The *Pontianak* as has already been said is the stillborn child of the *langsuyar* and its embodiment is like that of its mother, a kind of night owl. It should also be mentioned that in some parts of the Malay Peninsula, the *Pontianak* is not conceived as the ghost of a stillborn baby but as the ghost of a woman dying at childbirth.¹⁷

The *Hantu Kubur* (Grave Ghosts) is the spirits of the dead, who are believed to prey upon the living whenever they get an opportunity. With them may be classed the ghost of murdered men.¹⁸ *Pocong* is a kind of ghost that appears as a dead body fully wrap in

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Walter William Skeat, *Malay magic being an introduction to the folklore and popular religion of the Malay Peninsula* (London: Macmillan and Co. Limited, 1900), 325.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 103.

white cloth. It is believed that this ghost came back to life to finish incomplete mission.¹⁹

There are many Malay ghost myths, bits and pieces of old animist beliefs that have been shaped by later Hindu, Buddhist and Muslim influences in the modern states of Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei.²⁰ There are still some elements of the old beliefs present in the current society but in a different form and manner. Ghosts are a trendy subject in modern Malaysian and Indonesian films and media.²¹

The most famous ghost in Malaysian films is *Pontianak*. One of best film that was nominated in 2004 was *Pontianak Harum Sundal Malam*. This film is about a restless spirit who seeks revenge upon those who killed her. She was pregnant when she was killed. Since then, the whole *kampung* (village) and the murderer were haunted by the ghost or *Pontianak*.²²

Horror but yet a comedy film called *Hantu Bonceng* was released in August 2011. In this film, a girl was killed on a motorbike accident. She returned as a ghost and haunted the person who got her killed. The spirit insisted him to give her remains back to her family as no one claim her body.²³

¹⁹ Gentayangan Lain and Pemburu Hantu, "Bab II Keberadaan Makhluk Gaib di Indonesia", Accessed at 13 March 2013, http://elib.unikom.ac.id/files/disk1/603/jbptunikompp-gdl-ekadandhiw-30118-9-unikom_e-i.pdf.

²⁰ Lim Kim Hui, *Budi as the Malay Mind: A Philosophical Study of Malay Ways of Reasoning and Emotion in Peribahasa*, 42.

²¹ Kenneth Paul Tan, "Pontianaks, Ghosts and the Possessed: Female Monstrosity and National Anxiety in Singapore Cinema," *Asian Studies Review* 34 (June 2010), 151.

²² Cinema Malaysia, "Pontianak Harum Sundal Malam", Accessed 1 July 2012, http://www.sinemamalaysia.com.my/film/info/?id=Pontianak_Harum_Sundal_Malam_74.

²³ Cinema Malaysia, "Hantu Bonceng", Accessed 1 July 2012, http://www.sinemamalaysia.com.my/film/Info/?id=Hantu_Bonceng_1054.

There are plenty of movies showing about restless spirits and another of such movie is called *Karak*. This film was about a group of college friends driving through *Karak* highway. Their car crashed down into the woods while trying to avoid something on the road. Everybody did not survive except for one. She does not know that her friends were killed in the accident until the day after the accident when she saw her friend's corpses. She soon begins to realize that she was all along talking to the spirits of her dead friends.²⁴

Amukan Pocong is yet another horror drama showed on Malaysia TV3. The drama portrays the world of restless spirits. In this film, the main character is a gambler addict whom went to the extent of seeing a Siamese medium just to get one lucky number for his gambling addiction. In return, he has to fulfill his promise of getting 13 virgin girls' blood for the spirit. Before reaching the targeted number, he was killed. As to finish his promise, the main character himself turned into a *Pocong* and continued his mission.²⁵

Deviant Muslim sect believes that the idea of reincarnation exists in Islam. They have been influenced by those who follow the theory of reincarnation. Believe in ancient customs and traditions are some of the factors that influenced the Malays to join the deviant sect. Sects such as Abū Bakar Bappu and Al-Arqām are one of several examples that believe in the inhabitant of dead souls in living bodies. According to their beliefs, these souls can be summoned anytime. The souls then possessed the bodies of their Sheikhs. This process assumes the Sheikhs acting as a medium to provide sort of a

²⁴Cinema Malaysia, "Karak", Accessed 1 July 2012, http://www.sinemamalaysia.com.my/film/Info/?id=Karak_1038.

²⁵TV3 Station Tv Malaysia, "Amukan Pocong", Accessed 1 July 2012, http://www.tv3.com.my/shows/entertainment/Amukan_Pocong_1331777199.html.

spiritual guidance for the followers. These groups also believe that their Sheikhs do not taste death as they will be reincarnated to be Al-Mahdī.²⁶

In Malaysia, there is one Islamic religious sect called Al-Arqām that was found by Ash'ari Mohammad. This deviant sect was banned by the Malaysian federal government in August 1994. It was banned because their religious teaching went astray. Ash'ari claimed that the prophets, the saints and the martyrs did not die. Though on the surface they seem to have died, but in reality they are actually still alive. They just disappeared and appeared as invincible now. Even Ash'ari declared that he can still meet them and asked for help.²⁷ Al- Arqām also believes that their Sheikh Taha Suhaimi mysteriously vanished when he was actually declared dead in 1994 and they believe that he will be reincarnated as al-Maḥdī at the end of time.²⁸

In Johor, there was a man named Abū Bakar Bappu. He was convinced that he had been infiltrated by the spirit of Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq. He even claimed to be Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq since the soul of Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq had transmitted to him.²⁹

These deviant teachings continue to challenge the Malay society in terms of upholding their faiths in their misconstrued beliefs of customs and traditions. This shows without a doubt that they can be swayed of their true path of Islamic teachings because of their obstinate perpetuation of their customs and traditions which have been shaped throughout times.³⁰

²⁶ Wan Mohd Azam Mohd Amin, *Ajaran Sesat* (Kuala Lumpur: IIUM Press, 2009), 10.

²⁷ Mohd Lazim Lawee, *Penyelewengan Jemaah Al-Arqam dan Usaha Pemurniannya* (Bangi: Penerbit Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 2004), 126.

²⁸ *Ibid*, 134.

²⁹ Muhammad 'Uthman El-Muhammady, "Masalah Tahdir al-Arwah" in *Noktah Hitam: Ajaran Sesat di Singapura*, ed. MUIS and PERDAUS (Singapura: MUIS, w.d.), 488.

³⁰ Engku Ahmad Zaki Engku Alwi, *Ajaran Sesat: Mengenali Jalan Yang Terpesong* (Selangor: Pts Publications & Distributors Sdn. Bhd., 2007), 135.

The Malay society today practices the feast for the deceased which is called *kenduri arwah*. Before the advent of Islam, *kenduri arwah* was known as a ceremony to adore the souls of the dead. It will be held by the deceased family on the first, the second and the third night then on the seventh night, followed by the fortieth night and next on the hundredth night after the death of a family member.³¹ According to their beliefs, the souls of the deceased will visit their family on those days to demand sympathy. Hence, the family of the deceased should do something to help or else the soul of the dead will continue to suffer. The spirit will leave with disappointment or it will come back to seek revenge on the family members. Various rituals will be carried out in this ceremony. Among them are worshipping the dead and also to held a feast.³² This *kenduri arwah* must be prepared by a *bomoh* or a *pawang* who are the experts in propitiating or exorcizing noxious spirits which can bring pestilences to the family members.³³ Culture and tradition based on animism, Hinduism and Buddhism have become the lifestyle of the Malay society since centuries ago.

Although the Malays have converted to Islam after the arrival of Islam in the archipelago, they are still practicing part of the Buddhist culture due to the strong grip in ancestral heritage which they believe must be observed and preserved.³⁴ If a family did not prepare a *kenduri arwah* for the deceased family member, the relatives and neighbours will pass judgment on the family. To them, the *kenduri arwah* is an obligation.

This shows that the Malay Muslims are still hold on to the teaching of Buddhism especially in the aspect of reincarnation. The main influenced that can be seen until

³¹ Zawawi Haji Ahmad, *Tafsir Surah Yasin Dari Perspektif Sains Dan Sejarah* (Malaysia: w.p., 2004), 2.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ Mohd Taib Osman, *Malay Folk Beliefs*, 54.

³⁴ Zawawi Haji Ahmad, *Tafsir Surah Yasin Dari Perspektif Sains Dan Sejarah*, 3.

today in the Malay Muslims customs and traditions is the belief of reincarnation, ghost and spirit, as well as *kenduri arwah*.

1.3. Statement of the Problem

The essential motive to this research is to find out the concept of reincarnation in Buddhism and analyze it from Islamic perspective. The researcher will attempt to get the answers of the following questions:

1.3.1. What is the concept of reincarnation in Buddhism?

1.3.2. What is the concept of resurrection in Islam?

1.3.3. What is the evaluation of the concept of reincarnation in Buddhism from Islamic perspective?

1.4. Objective of the Study

The purposes of this research are as follow:

1.4.1. To explain the concept of reincarnation in Buddhism.

1.4.2. To describe the concept of resurrection in Islam.

1.4.3. To evaluate the concept of reincarnation in Buddhism from Islamic perspective.

1.5. Importance of the study

Firstly this research is to prove to the society the truthfulness and rationality of Islamic belief in the afterlife. So the threat to misguided *aqidah* in Muslim society will decrease

if they can differentiate the truth and the false. By knowing the teaching of other religion; i.e. the teaching of Buddhism, it will make the practice of *da'wah* be easier.

Furthermore, this research will be able to make the Muslims realize that some of the customs and traditions of certain ethnic and races can lead to *shirk*. Therefore, it is important to understanding Islam so it would not be mix up with traditional beliefs which are contrary to the tenets of Islam.

1.6. Definition of Terms

1.6.1. Reincarnation

The doctrine of reincarnation, known also with other terms like, rebirth, transmigration of the soul, *metempsychosis* (passage from one body to another), concerns the rebirth of the soul or self in a series of physical or preternatural embodiments, which are customarily human or animal in nature but are in some instances divine, angelic, demonic, vegetative, or astrological.³⁵ The belief in rebirth in one form or another existed and is still found in tribal or non-literate cultures all over the world, which goes to prove that this belief arouse contemporaneously with the origins of human culture per se.³⁶

However in India and Greece, the doctrine of reincarnation has been most elaborately developed. This belief is shared by all the other major religions of India, Hinduism, Buddhism, Gains, Sikhs and Sufis. In ancient Greece, belief in reincarnation formed part of the philosophical teachings of Pythagorean, Empodocles, Plato, and Plotinus. In

³⁵ Long J.B., ed., "Reincarnation in Eliadem" in *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol. XII (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1987), 265.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 265-266.

modern times, religious teachers like Ramakrishna, Aurobindo or schools of thought, like Theosophy or various new "esoteric" "occultist" religious movements, like *New Age* or humanistic psychology: thinkers like C. G. Jung and Fritz Perls, hold onto belief in reincarnation.

1.6.2. Buddhism

Buddhism is a religion and philosophy encompassing a diversity of traditions, beliefs and practices, based on the teaching of Siddhartha Gautama or generally known as The Buddha (The Awakened One). Buddhism was found in 588 BC. It is 2500 years old. There are currently 376 million followers worldwide. The two main Buddhist sects are Theravada Buddhism and Mahayana Buddhism, but there are many more other sects which are minors.

The original *Pali* term for Buddhism is *Dhamma*, which literally means that which upholds or sustains (him who acts in conformity with its principles and thus prevents him from falling into woeful states). There is no proper English word equivalent that able to convey the meaning of the *Pali* term.

Buddhism does not belief in a personal God. It is not centered on the relationship between humanity and God. Buddhist also believes that nothing is fixed or permanent change is always possible. The path to enlightenment is through the practice and development of morality, Meditation and wisdom.³⁷

³⁷ Randheer Ahuja, *Religions of the World: A Comprehensive Encyclopedia of Beliefs and Practices* (New Delhi: Maxford Books, 2008), 99.

1.6.3. Reincarnation in Buddhism

According to Buddhism, when one's die, he is either reborn into another body or enters nirvana. Death is not the end of everything, but a gateway into another life. Life and death was considered by the Buddha as a cycle that was perpetuated by craving and attachment. In Buddhism, rebirth is part and parcel of the continuous process of change. Indeed, humans are not only reborn at the time of death; in fact they are born at every moment. Buddhism believes that the '*vipaka*' or reaction from the rebirth is from a good or a bad *karma*.³⁸

There is no exact word to describe the English terms of reincarnation and rebirth in the traditional languages of *Sanskrit* and *Pali*. Perhaps, the closest terms corresponding to the above terms are *punarbhava* in *Sanskrit* or *punabbhava* in *Pali*. The literal translation for these two words is 'becoming again'.³⁹

There are many forms of belief in reincarnation and there have been a wide variety of understandings of reincarnation presented over the centuries. The term reincarnation has been used generally to describe the afterlife in Hinduism and Buddhism traditions. Reincarnation is a belief in the transmigration of the soul of a person after death to another body. However, the Buddhist doctrine of afterlife should be differentiated from the transmigration and reincarnation because there is no concept of self or soul in Buddhism.

³⁸ Narada Thera, *The Buddha-Dhamma*, 131. The researcher will elaborate more on Buddhism belief in the next chapter.

³⁹ Alex Wayman, *Buddhist Insight: Essays Volume 7 of Buddhist traditions* (New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1984), 183.

Rebirth is the term used to refer to Buddhist concepts of reincarnation. Rebirth differs from reincarnation in certain aspects. First, since there is no concept of self in Buddhism, there is not a centre of identity based on the soul that continues from one life to the next. Instead, when one life ends the next life continues on from the stage reached by the previous life. In effect a new life is another chain in a long chain of lives that follow on one from another. Rebirth is often identified with reincarnation but it should not be confused with it. Phra Sunthorn Plamintr quoted in his book on the differences between reincarnation and rebirth;

“...Buddhism does not subscribe to the belief of an everlasting, unchanging entity which is supposed to reside in man or animal and is generally called ‘soul.’ To be reborn... does not imply that the soul leaves its old body and goes to take possession of a new one. The Buddha teaches the doctrine of no-soul...”⁴⁰

1.7. Scope of the Study

From the topic of analysis study on reincarnation, the researcher specifies the topic to a specific and focused study, which is the belief of reincarnation in Buddhism. This study will focus on reincarnation in Buddhism. Then the researcher will analyse the concept of reincarnation in Buddhism from Islamic perspective with reference to *Ahl Sunnah wa al- Jamā‘ah*.

Since the Malays are Muslims, the researcher will analyse the Malay traditional belief which have been influenced by the teaching of Buddhism such as the teaching reincarnation, the belief in ghost and spirits plus the *kenduri arwah*.

⁴⁰ Phra Sunthorn Plamintr, *Basic Buddhism Course* (Taiwan:The Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation, 1999), 96.

1.8. Literature Review

This topic has been discussed by scholars, either the classic or the modern scholars. But they have different ideas and perceptions. Every researcher has their own pros and cons and they cannot deny that. Therefore the researcher will try to widen the idea by researching this topic, reincarnation in Buddhism and analysis from Islamic perspective based on some main books and item.

Malcolm Huxter wrote in his book, *Death: A Buddhist Perspective*⁴¹, saying that The Buddha emphasized awareness and detachment in a present time context. The goal of Buddhist meditation is *Nirvana*. To achieve this goal, the Buddha taught about rebirth, *karma*, the conditionality of birth and death. Sangye Khadro⁴² said that denying death makes us tense, accepting it brings peace. It helps us become aware of what is really important in life such as being kind and loving to others. So that we will put our energy into those things and avoid doing what would cause us to feel fear and regret in the face of death. As the titles of these two books are on death, it only describes death and the preparation of it. It did not discuss the after death or the afterlife.

Sayadaw U Silananda⁴³ quoted that Buddhism denies the existence of a metaphysical entity which is usually called a self or soul (*Anatta*). According to Walpola Rahula⁴⁴, the idea of Atman or soul is an imaginary, false belief which has no corresponding reality, and it produces harmful thoughts of selfish desire, pride, egoism and other problems. It is the source of all the troubles in the world. These books focus on the

⁴¹ Malcolm Huxter, *Death: A Buddhist Perspective* (New South Wales: Buddha Dhamma Meditation Assoc, 2006), 2.

⁴² Sangye Khadro, *Preparing for death and helping the dying* (Singapore: Buddha Dharma Education Association Inc, 1999), 2.

⁴³ Sayadaw U Silananda, *No Inner Core* (Penang: Inward Path Publisher, w.d.), 16.

⁴⁴ Walpola Rahula, *What the Buddha Taught* (Kuala Lumpur: SAM Publishing Sdn. Bhd., w.d.), 51.

human soul, theory of the mind and the ego. The other aspect of Buddhism teachings were discuss in brief.

According to Narada⁴⁵, the Buddha spoke on generosity (*dana*), morality (*sila*), celestial states (*saga*), the evils of sensual pleasures (*kamadinava*), the blessings of renunciation (*nekkhammanisamsa*). When he found that his mind was pliable and was ready to appreciate the deeper teaching, He taught the Four Noble Truths. Michael Carrithers⁴⁶ stated that the four noble truths are the teaching most closely connected with the awakening chiefly concerns personal misery and personal liberation. This is the doctrine which covers under their spacious umbrella the central belief of Buddhism. This is the method of treatment for the suffering or *dukkha*. These books talked about everything on Buddhism teachings but did not focus much on one topic. Every topic in the books was discussed briefly.

Peter Della Santina⁴⁷ wrote in his book on *karma*. *Karma* should not be confused with fate. Fate is the notion that man's life is preplanned for him by some external power, and he has no control over his destiny. *Karma* on the other hand, can be changed because man is a conscious being, thus he can be aware of his *karma* and thus strive to change the course of events. Aggacitta Bhikkhu⁴⁸ quoted that all actions of body, speech, and mind are *karma*. But more precisely, *karma* is the volition or intention (*cetana*) behind the action. These *karmic* volitions have the inherent potential to bring about a corresponding kind of result, a *vipaka*. Harun Yahya⁴⁹ wrote in his book that Buddhism's belief in *karma* leaves no room for belief in the eternal afterlife, Paradise or

⁴⁵ Narada, *The Buddha and his Teachings*, (Kuala Lumpur: Buddhist Missionary Society, 1988), 104.

⁴⁶ Michael Carrithers, *Buddha: A very short introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 2001), 54 & 55.

⁴⁷ Peter Della Santina, *The tree of enlightenment* (California: Chico Dharma Study Foundation, 1997), 96& 97.

⁴⁸ Aggacitta Bhikkhu, *Dying to live: The role of Kamma in dying and rebirth* (Selangor: Sukhi Hotu Dhamma Publications, 1999), 34

⁴⁹ Harun Yahya, *Islam and Buddhism* (India: Islamic Book Service, 2003), 94-96.

Hell. This false and perverse position and the idea that an individual returns into the world after each death, continually conflicts with what God has revealed in the Al-Qur’ān. All these three books focus on *karma* only. It did not discuss much on rebirth and also other aspect of afterlife in Buddhism.

According to ‘Imran N. Hosein⁵⁰, for the Buddhist, the world is made up of suffering or *samsara*. Since suffering is ingrained in the very nature of the world, it would hardly be worthwhile to try to confront the suffering of the world. The purpose of life in Buddhism is to escape from suffering, to find salvation from suffering. ‘Abdullah Muṣṭafā Numsuk⁵¹ stated that to search real freedom and happiness, we must escape from *samsara*. To escape it we must cut its root by wipe out self-grasping from our mental continuum. To escape from *samsara* is to develop renunciation. These two comparative religion books discuss more on the comparison of those two religions. It did not really zoom on Buddhism belief. It only discuss in brief.

Aggacitta Bhikkhu⁵² thinks that as long as this *karmic* force exists there is rebirth, for beings are merely the visible appearance of this invisible *karmic* force. Death is nothing but the temporary end of this temporary phenomenon. It is not the complete annihilation of this so-called being. The organic life has come to an end, but the *karmic* force which until now still in motion has not been destroyed. As the *karmic* force remains entirely undisturbed by the disintegration of the fleeting body, the passing away of the present dying thought-moment only conditions a fresh consciousness in another birth.

⁵⁰ ‘Imran N. Hosein, *Islam And Buddhism In The Modern World* (New York: Masjid Dar al-Qur’an, 2001), 122.

⁵¹ ‘Abdullah Muṣṭafā Numsuk, *Al-Budhīyah Tārīkhīhā wa Aqā’idahā wa ‘Alāqah As-Ṣūfiyyah bihā* (Riyadh: Dār Al-Aḍwa’ As-Salaf, 1999), 225.

⁵² Aggacitta Bhikkhu, *Dying to live: The role of Kamma in dying and rebirth*, 51.

According to Daisaku Ikeda⁵³, we continuously undergo the natural cycle of birth and death. At death, our life merges back into the life of the universe. Birth and death are immanent in eternal life. The fundamental purpose of death is to allow us to be reborn in the next phase of our eternal life cycle. The researcher notice that these books did not explain on why the term rebirth is been use and not reincarnation. The researcher also noticed that there is no *Pali* or Sanskrit word for reincarnation that have been used on these books.

Peter Harvey⁵⁴ mentioned in his book, rebirth can be as a human, but also as an animal such as land animal, fish, bird or even insect. Less pleasant than animal rebirth is that of frustrated ghostly beings (*petas*), and hell beings. Along with human rebirth, the 26 forms of heavenly rebirths are seen as comprising the good rebirths. One can be born as Gods and holy beings. According to Charles S. Prebish and Damien Keown⁵⁵, there are different modes of existence, some more pleasant than others. The sources commonly speak of six domains or realms into which an individual can be reborn. Some of these realms are visible to us here and now while others are not. As the wheel of *samsara* moves around, beings migrate through the various realms of rebirth in accordance with their karma. Chan Khoon San⁵⁶ said that in Buddhism, beings are born in hell due to their accumulation of weighty bad karma. They are beings who are born in *deva* or Gods realms which are heaven for the Buddhist. However, the hell and heaven beings do not stayed there eternally. The first two books only focus on rebirth and there is a lacking of other aspect in Buddhism such as karma and nirvana. The other book talks about karma but only discuss on nirvana in brief.

⁵³ Daisaku Ikeda, *Unlocking the Mysteries of Birth and Death: Buddhism in the Contemporary World* (London: Macdonald & Co publishers Ltd., 1988), 102 & 103.

⁵⁴ Peter Harvey, *Buddhism* (London: Continuum, 2001), 72 & 73.

⁵⁵ Charles S. Prebish and Damien Keown, *Introducing Buddhism* (New York: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, 2006), 14 & 15.

⁵⁶ Chan Khoon San, *Buddhism Course* (Kuala Lumpur: Majujaya Indah Sdn. Bhd., 2006), 97 & 104.

Geshe Kelsang Gyatso⁵⁷ thinks that *Nirvana* is a permanent inner peace attained through the complete abandonment of illusions. When through training in the paths to liberation our mind is completely released from illusions, the ultimate nature of our mind becomes a *nirvana*. From that moment on, we are free from *samsara* and all its sufferings, and become a person who has destroyed the inner enemies of attachment, hatred, and self-grasping ignorance. According to L. De La Vallee Poussin⁵⁸, Nirvana is the ultimate end of a man, the state of a Saint after death. It is either annihilation, or immortality, or a deliverance in which we have no right to predicate anything. The Buddhist knows that existence is suffering. And they think there is an exit, a Nirvana. Nirvana is looked upon as deliverance, just as a man who is in goal wants only to be free from the miseries of life. The researcher can only use these two books as reference on nirvana. It is because it discuss verbosely on nirvana and not on other aspect of Buddhism.

According to Abū Ja‘far al-Ṭaḥāwī⁵⁹, Muslim needs to have faith on resurrection (*ba‘th*), the day of Judgement (*yaum al-qiyamah*), the reckoning (*Ḥisāb*) the book of deeds, the scales (*mīzān*), the bridge (*ṣirāt*), heaven and hell (*jannah wa nār*). This faith is one of the fundamental pillars in Islam and without it; the faith of a Muslim is incomplete. In ‘*Aqīdah Islam* by Sayyid Sābiq⁶⁰, the belief in the afterlife, or the Judgement day is one of the pillars in Islam and it is one of the most important elements alongside with the belief in Allah. By having faith that the day of resurrection will occur, Muslim will be more aware of life by having purpose and goal in it. According to Muhammad ‘Alī, before the day of Judgment, there will be a state between death and resurrection which is called *barzakh* which literally means a thing that intervenes

⁵⁷ Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, *Introduction to Buddhism* (London: Tharpa Publications, 1992), 63-65.

⁵⁸ L. De La Vallee Poussin, *The Way to Nirvana* (Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1982), 114 & 132.

⁵⁹ Hasan Bin Ali al-Saqaf, *Sahih Syarah al-Aqidah Al-Tahawiyah*, 523.

⁶⁰ Sayyid Sābiq, *Akidah Islam: Al-‘Aqāid al-Islāmiyah*, trans. H. Moh. Abdai Rathomy (Kuala Lumpur: Pustaka Jiwa Sdn. Bhd., 2003), 552.

between two worlds. Muslim must accept that *barzakh* exist and man will face trial in it. Both spirit and the body will receive torment and bliss in the grave and together will go either to paradise or hell.⁶¹ These books focus on the Islamic '*Aqīdah*' which is the fundamental of Islam. It discussed every aspect of Islam in brief. Therefore it did not discuss verbosely on the afterlife.

According to Amiruddin Faatih⁶², the spirit or soul remains one of Allah's secrets and will be hidden from man till the day of Resurrection. The actual knowledge of *rūh* is only known by Allah. In the book, '*Roh*' by Muhammad Sayyid Ahmad al-Musayyar⁶³ which discussed all about soul and spirit of man from all kinds of views such as Islamic scholars, Greek and Islamic philosophers, *ahli kalām* as well as about reincarnation. He quoted that man can study on *rūh* but they have only a little amount of knowledge to really understand it because the true understanding of *rūh* is only known by Allah s.w.t. Muhammad Ibn Abī Bakar also known as Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah⁶⁴ understood that death affects the body alone, and that the spirit and soul does not die. It stays alive in bliss torment until it returns to body to resurrect body and soul on the Day of Resurrection. These books entirely talks about *rūh*. It did not discuss verbosely on the connection of *rūh* and the afterlife.

According to Lim Kim Hui⁶⁵ in his thesis, the general understanding of good and bad *semangat* among the Malay folks was further developed into the notion of *budi* and *badi* respectively. *Budi* is said to correspond to the good whereas *badi* is said to signify the

⁶¹ Maulana Muhammad 'Ali, *The Religion of Islam: A comprehensive discussion of the sources, principles and practices of Islam* (Kuala Lumpur: Pustaka Perkim, w.d.), 267.

⁶² Amiruddin Faatih, *Penciptaan Roh, Jin & Malaikat, Mukjizat, Karamah dan Sihir* (Selangor: Al-Hidayah Publication, 2010), 8.

⁶³ Muhammad Sayyid Ahmad Al-Musayyar, *Roh: menurut Perbahasan Ulama Kalam dan Ahli Falsafah* trans. Muhammad Ramzi Omar (Malaysia: Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia, 2003), 242-243.

⁶⁴ Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyyah, *Rūh: Masalah Roh* trans. Jamaluddin Kafie (Johor Bahru: Pena Mas, 1980), 42-43.

⁶⁵ Lim Kim Hui, *Budi as the Malay Mind: A Philosophical Study of Malay Ways of Reasoning and Emotion in Peribahasa* (doctorate thesis, University of Hamburg, Hamburg, 2003), 46.

bad. The Malays had gone through four stages of religious experiences (Animism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam), which had later enriched and influenced their metaphysical thinking. Mohd Taib Osman⁶⁶ wrote in his book, the Hindu and Buddhism influence overlaid the basic and fundamental Malay belief in the *Hantu* spirits of the country and the reference to the Hindu Buddha deities borrowed from the Hindus and Buddhas were applied as potent and impressive acquisition. The researcher does not find any discussion on *kenduri arwah* in these books due to the in-depth of discussion on *hantu* or spirits.

According to Engku Ahmad Zaki Engku Alwi⁶⁷, ancient and traditional beliefs are one of the causes that can lead to the spread of deviationist in Malay Archipelago particularly in Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore. Wan Mohd Azam Mohd Amin⁶⁸ stated that the deviationists in Malaysia mostly due to the strong grip of ancient traditional beliefs which were from the teaching of Hinduism and Buddhism such as the concept of *taḥḍīr al-arwāḥ* and *raj'ah*. *Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura* (MUIS) in collaboration with *Perdaus* published a book called *Noktah Hitam: Ajaran Sesat di Singapura*⁶⁹, mentions that strong mystical belief can lead to deviation teachings. Malays have been adhering to the mystical belief and also the unseen. This deep-rooted belief can be easily taken advantage by various parties who have various interests for their own personal benefits. These books stated the names of the deviant sects group and only converse it in brief. It did not discuss thoroughly on the particular group.

Nevertheless, all these books help the researcher in doing her dissertation on reincarnation in Buddhism from Islamic perspective. By reading these books, the

⁶⁶ Mohd Taib Osman, *Malay Folk Beliefs*, 77.

⁶⁷ Engku Ahmad Zaki Engku Alwi, *Ajaran Sesat: Mengenali Jalan Yang Terpesong*, 127.

⁶⁸ Wan Mohd Azam Mohd Amin, *Ajaran Sesat*, 6-9.

⁶⁹ Unknown Author, *Noktah Hitam: Ajaran Sesat di Singapura*. (Singapore: Muis, w.d.), 75.

researcher understands more on Buddhism and it does widen her knowledge to analyze it from Islamic perspective.

The researcher finds that there has been no study in this particular topic. For example, a comparative study book by ‘Imran N. Hosein, *Islam and Buddhism in the Modern World* which is a very good book but did it only focus more on the modern world and the sect of Buddhism.

Lastly, the comparative religion book, *Al-Budḥiyyah Tārikhīhā wa Aqā'idahā wa 'Alāqah As-Ṣūfīyyah bihā* by ‘Abdullah Muṣṭafā Numsuk which is also a very interesting book but the researcher finds that the book is too focus on Sufism and does not discuss more on Islam.

From these two books, the researcher finds that there is only discussion on Islamic view and the link with Sufism. But there is no discussion on certain deviant Muslim who believes in Reincarnation or the Malay society who is still influence by the teaching of Buddhism. Therefore, the researcher decided to include these issues as well as the Islamic view on Buddhism and also the influence of Buddhism in Muslim societies such as the Malays. This research has its own significance in the corpus of knowledge and also in the comparative study.

1.9. Research Methodology

Research is a method of collecting and analyzing data. It is also a systematic effort in finding answers from a specific question which had mentioned on a certain problem that is easy to detect.

Methodology is very important in order to explain how to carry out a research regarding the problems that will be searched for the objective and in what way the research will flow smoothly as planned.

Research that will be used is generally library research. In order to complete this research, three appropriate methods will be used;

A) Subject Method

B) Data Collection Method

1. Documentary Method

C) Data Analysis Method

1. Inductive Method
2. Deductive Method
3. Comparative Method
4. History Method

1.9.1. Subject Method

The researcher had chosen reincarnation based on Buddhism as the subject method. This research is mainly focused on the similarities of Buddhist reincarnation in Islamic view. Therefore researcher will relate this issue with what Muslims believe and at the same time, to find out the concept of reincarnation in Buddhism.

1.9.2. Data Collection Method

There are some methods needed in this study which the researcher will be using them to make this research flows systematically; documentary method and library research method.

1.9.2.1. Documentary Method

This method is a process of collecting data to give information on a certain subject which are related to writing materials such as articles, books, journals, letters, magazines, newspaper, pamphlets and others. The researcher also applied materials from documentary videos from History Channel and YouTube.

Mostly the researcher obtains reading materials from Academy of Islamic studies library, Lee Kong Chian Reference in Singapore, Main Library University of Malaya, National Library Board Singapore and Zaaba library.

1.9.3. Data Analysis Method

After the data collection is complete, researcher will move to another step which is analyzing information gathered. There are few kinds of methods in this chapter. The purpose is to find out the answer in easy way besides getting wide information. The methods are inductive method, deductive method, comparative method, history method.

1.9.3.1. Inductive Method

This data stands for a process analyzing general evidence to specific evidence. It is used to analyze data from the information related to this study which is about reincarnation in Buddhism from Islamic point of view. It is to make sense of a specific issue from taking benefit from the general one. For example, background of the study and definition of terms in chapter one used this method to make it easier to understand.

1.9.3.2. Deductive Method

This data stands for a process analyzing specific evidence to general evidence. It is used to analyze data related to the reincarnation in Buddhism in chapter two. This method opposes the inductive method on getting the figure by general issue to specific issue or the other way round. This method is used to prove the statement about the similarities between Buddhism's and Islamic belief.

This method will show the Islamic views on reincarnation in Buddhism and also to wrap up the facts and findings in chapter three as well as chapter four and five to conclude.

1.9.3.3. Comparative Method

This study strongly depends on the comparative method to get the final answer or result. It is a process of making conclusion by achieving the comparative data which has been analyze from the collective data that was collected earlier. This method is fully used in

chapter four regarding the comparison of reincarnation in Buddhism and Islamic view on reincarnation.

Generally, this method is used in every chapter from the beginning till the end of chapter five. In chapter four, the researcher will use this method to compare it with Islamic perspective on reincarnation. In order to conclude every chapter, researcher needs to use this method as the conclusion or summary.

1.9.3.4. Historical Method

This method is being use to analyse history data in this research. The researcher needs to analyse history of the Buddha, Islam, Malay and the link between both religions. From the history, the researcher will come to know of the influence of Buddhism in Islamic world. The researcher will use this application method in explaining the facts in background of study and also in chapter four.

1.10. The Structure of the Writing

This research is about reincarnation in Buddhism from Islamic perspective. That is Buddhism believe in reincarnation of soul. In this research, there are five chapters.

In chapter one, the researcher discuss about the methods on how this study was done. This research includes the background of the study, statement of problem, objective of the study, scope of the study, research methodology, definition of terms, limitations of the study and literature review.

Next In chapter two, the researcher explains and discusses everything about reincarnation according to the teaching of Buddhism. Starting from the last breath to the liberation of soul. The journey of life from death to *karma* to their realms of rebirth to *samsara* and finally the ultimate goal *nirvana*.

In chapter three, the researcher discusses and explains the resurrection in Islam which consists of death, the human soul, the *barzakh*, the day of Judgement and lastly heaven and hell. The researcher needs to explain the resurrection in Islam because is to compare the differences between the afterlife in Buddhism and Islam so there would not be a misunderstanding among the Malay Muslims due to the lack of knowledge on the afterlife in Islam.

In chapter four, the researcher evaluates the concept of reincarnation in Islamic perspective as well as the Malay Muslim traditional beliefs which have been influenced by the teaching of Buddhism.

Finally, the last chapter, the researcher comes out with a conclusion of the whole study and also recommendations of this study.

1.11. Conclusion

This chapter is the outline of the study that will be done thoroughly in order to meet the objectives of this study.

CHAPTER TWO

REINCARNATION IN BUDDHISM

2.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher is going to explain and discuss reincarnation according to the teaching of Buddhism.

2.2. Buddhism

It was found in 588 BC by Siddhartha Gautama Buddha, commonly known as the Buddha (The Enlighten One and The Awakened One). Buddhism is a religion and philosophy with a complex history and system of beliefs and practices.¹

According to the Theravada tradition, the Buddha was born on the full moon day of *Wesakha* (late April-May) in 623 BC. Gautama came from a royal family. He led an extravagant life through early adulthood, revelling in the privileges of his social caste. But when he became bored of the indulgences of royal life, Gautama wandered into the world in search of understanding.²

At the age of 35, he sat in meditation under a *Bodhi* tree in the town of *Bodh Gaya* in one posture experiencing the bliss of liberation. He vowed not to rise before achieving enlightenment. After many days, he finally destroyed the fetters of his mind, thereby liberating himself from the cycle of suffering and rebirth, and arose as a fully enlightened being (*samyaksambuddha*). Soon afterwards, he attracted a group of

¹ Chan Khoon San, *Buddhism Course* (Kuala Lumpur: Majujaya Indah Sdn. Bhd., 2006), 23.

² “The Life of The Buddha”, BBC Documentary, 2009, video.

followers and introduced a monastic order. Now, as the Buddha, he spent the rest of his life teaching the path of awakening he had discovered, travelling throughout the north eastern part of the Indian subcontinent, and died at the age of 80 (483 BCE) in *Kushinagar*, India.³

2.3. The Four Noble Truths

The heart and core of the Buddha's teaching lies in the Four Noble truths when he attained Supreme Enlightenment under the *Bodhi* tree in *Bodhgaya*, which later he expounded in his very first sermon. These Truths constitute the essence of the Dhamma (Teaching), spreading through every aspect and every part of it. The Four Noble Truths are⁴:

The Noble Truth of *Dukkha* or Suffering (*Dukkha Sacca*)

The Noble Truth of the origin of *Dukkha* (*Samudaya Sacca*)

The Noble Truths of the Cessation of *Dukkha* (*Nirodha Sacca*)

The Noble Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of *Dukkha* (*Magga Sacca*)

2.3.1. The Noble Truth of *Dukkha* or Suffering (*Dukkha Sacca*)

The world is full of suffering. All are subject to birth (*jati*), and consequently to decay (*jara*), disease (*vyadhi*), and finally to death (*marana*). No one is exempt from these four inevitable causes of suffering. In fact, life that is not free from desire and passion is always involved with distress.⁵

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Chan Khoon San, *Buddhism Course*, 37.

⁵ Narada, *The Buddha and his Teachings* (Kuala Lumpur: Buddhist Missionary Society, 1988), 321.

All aspects of experience in the mind and body are one of the critical descriptions of this process, a description in which the impersonal, dynamic and interdependent nature of the process is already understood. This term is the five aggregates. The first aggregate is materiality such as physical objects, the body and senses. The other four aggregates are feeling, perceptions, impulses and consciousness. Within the process of aggregates included all that pertains to an individual and his experience. Feeling is but one face of this process, a face available to insight meditation.⁶

2.3.2. The Noble Truth of the Origin of *Dukkha* (*Samudaya Sacca*)

According to the Buddha, the Noble Truth of the origin of Suffering is *Tanha* which is craving or attachment that leads from birth to birth, which accompanied by pleasure and greed. *Tanha* is the thirst for sensual craving, thirst for external existence and craving for non- existence.⁷

This craving is a powerful mental force dormant in all, and it is the root cause of the ills of life. It is this craving, unpleasant or subtle that leads to repeated births in *Samsara* and makes one cling to all forms of life.

Both suffering and craving can only be eradicated by following the Middle Way, enunciated by the Buddha himself, and attaining the supreme Bliss of Nirvana.⁸

⁶ Michael Carrithers, *Buddha: A very short introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 2001), 59.

⁷ Chan Khoon San, *Buddhism Course*, 45.

⁸ Narada, *The Buddha and his Teachings*, 322.

2.3.3. The Noble Truths of the Cessation of *Dukkha* (*Nirodha Sacca*)

The Noble Truth of the Cessation of *Dukkha* is that there is liberation, freedom from suffering, from the continuity of *dukkha*. It is the complete fading away and extinction of this craving and thirst, giving it up, renouncing it, emancipation from it, and detachment from it. It is also known as Nirvana, the ultimate goal of Buddhist.⁹

2.3.4. The Noble Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of *Dukkha* (*Magga Sacca*)

The Truth has to be realised by developing the Noble Eightfold Path which is the Fourth Noble Truth. This is known as the Middle Path because it avoids two extremes; One extreme being the search for happiness through the pleasures of the senses which is base, common, vulgar, unholy and unprofitable; The other being the search for happiness through self-mortification in different forms of asceticism, which is painful, unworthy and unprofitable. The Buddha Himself had tried these two extremes and found it useless so He discovered the Middle Path, which leads to peace, to discernment, to Enlightenment then to Nirvana.¹⁰

The stages of this Noble Eightfold Path are Right Understanding, Right Thoughts, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration.

The Buddhist should keep these Truths clearly in mind, for the world is filled with suffering and if anyone wants to escape from suffering, he must break the ties of

⁹ Walpola Rahula, *What the Buddha Taught* (Kuala Lumpur: SAM Publishing Sdn. Bhd., w.d.), 35.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 45.

worldly passion which is the only cause of suffering. The way of life which is free from all worldly passion and suffering can only be known through Enlightenment, and Enlightenment can only be achieved through the discipline of the Noble Eightfold Path.¹¹

2.4. The Soul (*Atman*)

In general, it is suggested by Soul, Self Ego or to use the Sanskrit expression *Atman*, is that in man there is a permanent, everlasting and absolute entity, which is the unchanging substance behind the changing phenomenal world. According to some religions, each individual has such a separate soul which is created by God, and which, finally after death, lives eternally either in hell or heaven, its destiny depending on the judgement of its creator. According to others, it goes through many lives till it is completely purified and finally unites with God or Brahman, Universal Soul or *Atman*, from which it is originated. This soul of self in man is the thinker of thoughts, feeler of sensations, and receiver of rewards and punishments for all its actions good and bad. Such a conception is called the idea of self.¹²

Buddhism denies the existence of a Soul, Self or *Atman*. According to the teaching of Buddha, the idea of self is an imaginary, false belief which has no corresponding reality and it produces harmful thoughts of selfish desire, craving, hatred, ill-will, egoism and other defilements. It is the sources of all the troubles in the world from personal conflicts to wars between nations. This false view can be traced all the evil in the world.¹³

¹¹ Yehan Numata, *The Teaching of Buddha* (Tokyo: Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai, 1966), 76.

¹² Walpola Rahula, *What the Buddha Taught*, 51.

¹³ *Ibid.*

The Buddha's teaching does not support this ignorance, weakness, fear and desire, but aims at making man enlightened by removing and destroying them, striking at their very root. According to Buddhism, their ideas of God and Soul are false and empty.

Buddhism believes in the theory of momentary (*kshanikavada*). They believe that nothing is permanent; nothing endures for more than a moment. The soul is also not a permanent substance. It is nothing other than a stream of consciousness. This emphasis on the momentary nature of everything equips Buddhism with a kind of metaphysical weapon by the help of which it becomes able to preach in an effective manner its theory of non attachment with the worldly objects because it is the cause of suffering. Even in the absence of a permanent soul, man is in a sense immortal. He does not completely perish with the physical death. The last thought-moment of his present life transmigrates with all its tendencies and dispositions to the next life and forms its first thought or moment.¹⁴

2.4.1. The Theory of Mind Only

Buddhism emphasizes the mobility and the insubstantiality of mind, thought, and consciousness, which explains that man looks upon his mind, thought and consciousness as a Self, because from the beginning of age, he is accustomed to cherish his mind, thought and consciousness as his self.¹⁵

Both delusion and enlightenment originate within the mind, and every existence of phenomenon arises from the functions of the mind. The activities of the mind have no

¹⁴ Kedar Nath Tiwari, *Comparative religion* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1983), 48.

¹⁵ Louis de La Vallee Poussin, *The way to Nirvana: six lectures on ancient Buddhism as a discipline of Salvation* (Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1982), 48.

limit; they form the surrounding of life. An impure mind surrounds itself with impure things and a pure mind surrounds itself with pure things.¹⁶

The mind that creates its surrounding is never free from memories, fears or grieves, not only in the past but in the present and the future, because they have arisen from ignorance and greed. It is from ignorance and greed that the world of delusion is born, and all the vast complexity of coordinating causes and conditions exists within the mind and nowhere else.

Both life and death arise from the mind and exist within the mind. Hence, when the mind that concerns itself with life and death passes on, the world of life and death passes with it. The world of life and death is created by the mind, is ruled by the mind; the mind is the master of every situation. The world of suffering is the cause by the deluded mortal mind.¹⁷

Buddhism believes that rebirth is not transmigration. There is no passage of an individual from this to another. When a man dies, the physical organism dissolves, and comes to an end. Consciousness is only an intermittent series of psychic pulse, associated with a living organism, beating out through one brief span of life. Although there is no migration, no future life of a soul, there is rebirth, owing to the efficient force of the acts which the dead man has accomplished and which inevitability bear fruit. There is no migration of the soul, but there is migration of the character. A good man dies and he is dead forever; but his goodness does not perish, and causes another good and happy man to be born.¹⁸

¹⁶ Yehan Numata, *The Teaching of Buddha*, 96.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 98.

¹⁸ Louis de La Vallee Poussin, *The way to Nirvana: six lectures on ancient Buddhism as a discipline of Salvation*, 48-49.

2.5. Buddhism on Death

To the average man death is not a pleasant subject or talk for discussion. It is something miserable and cruel. Death is a suitable topic to talk at a funeral house only. For most people at some moment or another, the spectacle of death must have given rise to the deepest of thoughts and hundreds of question.

The Buddha emphasized awareness and detachment in a present time context. The goal of Buddhist meditation is *Nirvana*. To help realize this he taught about rebirth, *karma*, the conditionality of birth and death is said to be a sensitive and important time.¹⁹

According to the Buddhist way of thinking, death, far from being a subject to be shunned and avoided, is the key that unlocks the seeming mystery of life. It is by understanding death that they understand life; for death is part of the process of life in a larger sense. In another sense, life and death are two ends of the same process and if people understand one end of the process, they also understand the other end. Thus, by understanding the purpose of death, they also understand the purpose of life.²⁰

The Buddhist believed that life is eternal. It is said that to undergo successive rebirth, so that death is thought to be not so much the cessation of an existence as the beginning of a new one.

To facilitate a beneficial death, conditions should be conducive. The living can skilfully prepare for this moment, as well as assist others to make their last moment a wholesome one.

¹⁹ Chan Khoon San, *Buddhism Course*, 23.

²⁰ Daisaku Ikeda, *Unlocking the Mysteries of Birth and Death: Buddhism in the Contemporary World* (London: Macdonald & Co publishers Ltd., 1988), 84-85.

One of the principal things the Buddha discovered and pointed out to us is the truth of impermanence: that things change and pass away. There are two aspects of impermanence: gross and subtle. Gross impermanence refers to the fact that all produced things-which includes humans and other living beings, all the phenomena in nature, and all man-made things, will not last forever, but will go out of existence at some point. As the Buddha said:

What is born will die,
What has been gathered will be dispersed,
What has been accumulated will be exhausted,
What has been built up will collapse,
And what has been high will be brought low.²¹

People may fear that accepting and thinking about death will make them morbid, or spoil their enjoyment of life's pleasures. But surprisingly, the opposite is true. Denying death makes humans tense, accepting it brings peace. It helps them become aware of what is really important in life such as being kind and loving to others. So that they will put our energy into those things and avoid doing what would cause us to feel fear and regret in the face of death.

2.5.1. Modes of Death

Death can occur due to the following four causes. Firstly, exhaustion of the force of the reproductive *karma* that gave rise to the birth in question. Secondly is expiration of the lifespan. Next, simultaneous exhaustion of both reproductive *karma* and expiration of lifespan and lastly is action of a stronger *karma* that suddenly cuts off the power of the reproductive *karma* before expiry of the life-term.

²¹ Sangye Khadro, *Preparing for death and helping the dying* (Singapore: Buddha Dharma Education Association Inc, 1999), 2.

The first three types of death are called timely death while the last one is called untimely death. An oil lamp for instance, may get extinguished owing to any one of the following four causes that is the exhaustion of the wick or the oil or simultaneous exhaustion of both wick and oil or some extraneous cause like a gust of wind.²²

2.5.2. The Process of Dying

When Buddhists pass through the portal of death, the gateway between this life and the next, both their physical conditions and their psychological states are profoundly affected. The way in which they do so also has a vital impact on the conditions into which their life is reborn. Existence during death is therefore considered in Buddhism as quite distinct from existence during life, implying that the phase of death is completely different from that of living.²³

From the Buddhist perspective, their ability to successfully pass through the dying process depends upon their steady efforts during life to achieve good causes and to strengthen the foundation of goodness in the depths of our lives. The accumulation of good *karma* serves to protect them from experiencing agony at the same time of death by offsetting their *karmic* liabilities with assets.²⁴

2.6. Karma

The word *karma* is a Sanskrit word from the root '*Kri*' means literally action or deed, but in the Buddha's teaching it refers exclusively to volitional action. From a technical

²² Chan Khoon San, *Buddhism Course*, 90.

²³ Daisaku Ikeda, *Unlocking the Mysteries of Birth and Death: Buddhism in the Contemporary World*, 89-90.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 90-91.

standpoint, *karma* denotes wholesome or unwholesome volition or intention (*cetana*), volition being the factor responsible for action.²⁵

According to Buddhism, *karma* or action arises from *trsna* (attachment, craving, passion). Thus while actions born of *trsna* are productive of consequences, detached, passionless actions, when desire has been suppressed (*trsna nirodha*) are disinfected or unfruitful.²⁶

All their decisions, choices and desires are *karmas* made in the mind. More *karma* is made when one talks after having decided. Good and bad *karma* are distinguished by the roots of the actions. The Buddha propounded that moral *karma* is essentially mental in its nature, that *punya* (merit) and *papa* (demerit) depend on the intent of the doer and not on an act devoid of intent, good or evil. Mind is the fore-runner of all states; all are made of mind.²⁷

Karma should not be confused with fate. Fate is the notion that man's life is preplanned for him by some external power, and he has no control over his destiny. *Karma* on the other hand, can be changed because man is a conscious being he can be aware of his *karma* and thus strive to change the course of events. Immediately, we have a clear indication that the real meaning of *karma* is not faith instead it is action and as such, it is dynamic. Hence the Buddha declares:

"It is volition, monks, that I call *karma*, for having willed, one performs an action through body, speech or mind."²⁸

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 77.

²⁶ Yuvraj Krishan, *The Doctrine of Karma: Its Origin and Development in Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jaina traditions* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Pte. Ltd., 1997), 61.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 62.

²⁸ Jacky Sach, *The Everything Buddhism Book* (Massachusetts: Adams Media Corporation, 2003), 81.

The principle of *karma* is nothing completely foreign to people, nothing that they do not instinctively know to some extent already. It is the law that every action has some effect. Moreover, their actions affect the quality of their mind; each of their actions has an impact on their mind, and thus the quality of their mind has a direct influence on the quality of life. It is in the very nature of things that certain actions should produce certain results. Hence the birth and the death of a man is no more the result of random power than the rise and fall of a tree.²⁹

All actions of body, speech, and mind are *karma*. But more precisely, *karma* is the volition or intention (*cetana*) behind the action. These *karmic* volitions have the inherent potential to bring about a corresponding kind of result, a *vipaka*. The volitions are like seeds, the results they bring forth are like fruits. In colloquial usage, by *karma* people often meant the whole accumulated potential of all present and past volitions which have not yet produced their results. Every action produces an effect and it is a cause first and effect afterwards.³⁰

Everything that comes to human is right. When anything pleasant comes to them and makes them happy, they may be sure that their *karma* has come to show them what have done is right. When anything unpleasant comes to them, hurts them, their *karma* has come to show them their mistake.

Buddhist must never forget that *karma* will either give rewards or punishes them. Therefore they speak of *Karma* as the law of cause and effect.³¹

²⁹ David J. Kalupahana, *Buddhist Philosophy* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1976), 47-48.

³⁰ Venerable Mahasi Sayadaw, accessed 3 July 2009, <http://www.buddhanet.net/e-learning/karma.htm>.

³¹ ‘Abdullah Muṣṭafā Numṣuk, *Al-Budḥiyah Tārīkhīhā wa Aqā'idahā wa 'Alāqah As-Ṣūfiyyah bihā*, (Riyadh: Dār Al-Aḍwa' As-Salaf, 1999), 190.

2.6.1. *Karma and Vipaka*

Karma is action and *Vipaka* is the fruit or result of its reaction. Every volitional action is inevitably accompanied by its due effect. Like potential seed is *karma*. Fruit arising from the tree is the *Vipaka*, the effect or result. As *karma* may be good or bad, so the *vipaka* may be good or bad. Both *karma* and *vipaka* is mental.³²

Vipaka can be experienced as happiness or bliss, unhappiness or misery according to the nature of the *karma* seed. As soon as the effects of *karma* which cause birth in a particular plane of existence are exhausted, the being is reborn in other planes, higher or lower, depending upon the quality of the residual *karmas*. The human plane represents the norm from which a being falls or to which he raises or from which he goes above or to which he falls back upon. Evil deeds or fruition bring about evil such as disaster, injury or loss whereas good actions lead to happy birth; this is the fruit of maturing *karmas*.³³

2.7. The Laws of Cosmic World

Although Buddhism teaches that *karma* is the chief cause of the inequalities in the world yet it does not teach fatalism or the doctrine of destiny, for it does not hold the view that everything is due to past actions. The law of cause and effect is only one of the five orders (*Niyamas*) which are laws in themselves and operate in the universe. These five orders embrace everything in the world and every mental or physical

³² Narada, *The Buddha and his Teachings*, 351.

³³ Yuvraj Krishan, *The Doctrine of Karma: Its Origin and Development in Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jaina traditions*, 71.

phenomenon could be explained by them. They being laws in themselves require no lawgiver and *karma* as such is only one of them.³⁴

2.7.1. *Utu Niyama*

Physical inorganic order such as seasonal phenomena of winds and rains. The unerring order of seasons, characteristic seasonal changes and events, causes of winds and rains, nature of heat. All belong to this group.³⁵

2.7.2. *Bija Niyama*

Order of germs and seeds (physical organic order), such as rice produced from rice-seed, sugary taste from sugar-cane or honey, peculiar characteristics of certain fruits. The scientific theory of cells and genes and the physical similarity of twins may be ascribed to this order.³⁶

2.7.3. *Karma Niyama*

Order of act and result for example desirable and undesirable acts produce corresponding good and bad results. As surely as water seeks its own level so does *karma*, given opportunity, produced expected result, not in the form of a reward or punishment but as an innate sequence. This sequence of deed and effect is as natural and necessary as the way of the sun and the moon.³⁷

³⁴ Chan Khoon San, *Buddhism Course*, 75.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ Venerable Mahasi Sayadaw, accessed 3 July 2009, <http://www.buddhanet.net/e-learning/karma.htm>.

2.7.4. Dhamma Niyama

Order of the custom for example the natural phenomena occurring at the beginning of a *Bodhisattva* in his last birth. Gravitation and other similar laws of nature. The natural reason for being good and so forth may be included in this group.³⁸

2.7.5. Citta Niyama

Order or mind or psychic law such as processes of consciousness, arising and perishing of consciousness, constituents of consciousness, power of mind including telepathy, telaesthesia, retro-cognition, premonition, clairvoyance, clairsaudience, thought-reading and such other psychic phenomena which are inexplicable to modern science.³⁹

2.8. Fourfold Karma

Karma is classified fourfold according to its function, priority of effect, time of taking effect and the plane where the effects take place.⁴⁰

2.8.1. By Way of Function

Karmas perform different functions, of which four are mentioned here. Any *karma*, under different circumstances, can perform any several of these functions.

³⁸ Narada Thera, *The Buddha-Dhamma* (New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 1999), 128.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ Aggacitta Bhikkhu, *Dying to live: The role of Kamma in dying and rebirth* (Selangor: Sukhi Hotu Dhamma Publications, 1999), 35-41.

2.8.1.1. Productive *Karma*

Wholesome or unwholesome volition which produces result of consciousness and *karma* born matter, both at the moment of rebirth-linking and during the course of existence. At the moment of conception, productive *karma* generates the rebirth-linking consciousness and the *karma* born types of matter constituting the physical body of the new being. During the course of existence, it produces other ensuing consciousness and *karma* born matter, such as the sense faculties, gender and the heart base. Only a *karma* that has attained the status of a full course of action can perform the function of producing rebirth-linking, but all wholesome and unwholesome *karma* without exception can produce results during the course of existence.⁴¹

2.8.1.2. Supportive *Karma*

Karma which does not gain an opportunity to produce its own result, but which, when some other *karma* is exercising a productive function, supports it, either by enabling it to produce its pleasant or painful results over an extended time without obstacle, or by reinforcing the results produced function of wholesome *karma* one is reborn as a human being, supportive *karma* may contribute to the extension of one's life-span and ensure that one is healthy and well provided with the necessities of life. When an unwholesome *karma* has exercised its productive function by causing a painful disease, other unwholesome *karma* may support it by preventing medicines from working effectively, thus prolonging the disease.⁴²

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Ibid.*

2.8.1.3. Obstructive *Karma*

Karma which cannot produce its own result but nevertheless obstructs and frustrates some other *karma*, countering its efficacy or shortening the duration of its pleasant or painful results. Even though a productive *karma* may be strong at the time it is accumulated, and obstructive *karma* directly opposed to it may counteract it so that it becomes impaired when producing its results. For example, a wholesome *karma* tending may be obstructed by an obstructive *karma* so that it generates rebirth in a lower plane. A *karma* tending to produce rebirth among low families; *karma* tending to produce beauty may produce a plain appearance.

In the opposite way, an unwholesome *karma* tending to produce rebirth in the great hells may be counteracted by an obstructive wholesome *karma* and produce rebirth in the minor hell or among the departed ones.⁴³

2.8.1.4. Destructive *Karma*

Wholesome or unwholesome *karma* which replaces another weaker *karma*, prevents it from developing, and produces instead its own result. For example, somebody born as a human being may, through his or her productive *karma*, have been originally destined for a long-span, but a destructive *karma* may arise and bring about a premature death. At the time of death, at first a sign of a bad destination may appear by the power of an evil *karma*, heralding a bad rebirth, but then a good *karma* may emerge, expel the bad *karma* and having caused the sign of a good destination to appear, produce rebirth in a

⁴³ *Ibid.*

heavenly world. On the other hand, a bad *karma* may suddenly arise, cut off the productive potential of a good *karma* and generate rebirth in a sorrowful realm.⁴⁴

2.8.2. By Order of Ripening

This section concerns the order of preference among different *karmas* in taking on the role of generating rebirth-linking in the next existence. According to the *Adhidhamma*, weighty *karma* gets foremost priority in producing rebirth, followed by near-death *karma*, habitual *karma* and reserve *karma*.

2.8.2.1. Weighty *Karma*

Weighty *karma* is *karma* of such powerful moral weight that it cannot be replaced by any other *karma* as the determinant of rebirth. On the unwholesome side, weighty *karma* means the *karmic* potential generated by any one of the following:

- Maliciously creating a schism in the *Sangha*.
- The wounding of a Buddha.
- The murder of an *arahant*.
- Matricide.
- Parricide.
- A fixed wrong view that denies the basis for morality.

On the wholesome side, weighty *karma* means the attainment of the *jhanas* and maintaining the *jhana* attainment until death, after which, it will generate rebirth in a

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

Brahma world appropriate to the *jhana* attainment. If one attains *jhana* in a two weeks retreat, and then goes back to the world without maintaining it, then the *jhana* attainment will not qualify as weighty *karma* during death or if one were to develop the *jhana* and later were to commit one the heinous crimes mentioned above, the good *karma* would be obliterated by the evil deed, and the latter would generate rebirth into a woeful state.⁴⁵

2.8.2.2. Near-Death Karma

The next priority is taken by near death *karma*, a strong *karma* remembered or performed shortly before death for example immediately prior to the last cognitive process. If a person of bad character remembers a good deed he or she has done, or performs a good deed just before dying, he or she may receive a fortunate rebirth.⁴⁶

2.8.2.3. Habitual Karma

In the absence of weighty *karma* and near-death *karma*, habitual *karma* generally assumes the rebirth-generating function. Habitual *karma* is the deed that one habitually performs.⁴⁷

2.8.2.4. Reserve Karma

Finally, in the absence of weighty *karma*, near-death *karma* and habitual *karma*, reserve *karma* plays the role of generating rebirth. The word "reserve" here is actually a contextual description of the Pali word *katatta* which literally means "because it was or

⁴⁵ Chan Khoon San, *Buddhism Course*, 81.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

has been done". This type of *karma* actually refers to all deeds that have been done in the present lifetime which are not included in the weighty, near-death or habitual *karma*, as well as other deeds that were done in past lifetimes.⁴⁸

2.8.3. By Time of Ripening

There are moral and immoral actions that produce their effects in this very life or in a subsequent life or in any life in the course of one's wandering in *samsara*.

2.8.3.1. Immediately Effective *Karma*

The first *karmic citta*, being the weakest of all, constitutes immediately effective *karma* which will give its appropriate effect in the present existence, or will otherwise become defunct.⁴⁹

2.8.3.2. Subsequently Effective *Karma*

The seventh *karmic citta*, which is the weakest but is one in the series, constitutes subsequently effective *karma* which will bear appropriate fruit in the immediate next life, or will otherwise become defunct.⁵⁰

2.8.3.3. Indefinitely Effective *Karma*

The second to the sixth *karmic cittas*, constitutes indefinitely effective *karma* which will give its appropriate effects whenever circumstances permit, starting from the second

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 82.

⁴⁹ Narada Thera, *The Buddha-Dhamma*, 143.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

next existence (after the present one) until the being gains total liberation from *samsara*. Not even liberated person or Buddha are exempt from the effects of this *karma* for example Venerable *Moggalana*, with all his psychic powers, could not escape being slaughtered and cut up into pieces by a band of thugs because he had brutally beaten up and murdered his blind old parents in a past existence.⁵¹

2.8.3.4. Defunct *Karma*

This term does not designate a special class of *karma*, but applies to *karma* that, although due to ripen in either the present existence or the next existence, did not meet conditions conducive to its maturation. In the case of *arahants* and Buddha, all their accumulated *karma* from the past which was due to ripen in future lives became defunct with their final death.⁵²

2.8.4. By Place of Ripening

Place of ripening refers to the four planes of existence according to Theravada Buddhist scriptures:

- The woeful plane.
- The sensuous blissful plane.
- The fine material-sphere plane.
- The immaterial-sphere plane.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² *Ibid.*

Though a distinction is made between the woeful plane and the sensuous blissful plane, both planes are actually subdivisions of sense-sphere plane.⁵³

2.8.4.1. Unwholesome *Karma*

Can be created by beings in any plane of existence, but the *brahmas* of the fine-material sphere and immaterial-sphere planes as well as *anagamis* and *arahants* in any plane are incapable of committing any unwholesome *karma* associated with lust or anger. Generally, unwholesome *karma* has the potential to produce rebirth-linking in the woeful plane, but during the course of existence, it gives effect anywhere in the sense-sphere plane or the fine-material world, according to circumstances.

These are ten unwholesome courses of action classified according to the doors through which the *karma* is generally performed.⁵⁴

2.8.4.2. Sense-Sphere Wholesome *Karma*

Can be performed by beings except *Buddha* and *Arahants* in any plane of existence. It has the potential to produce rebirth-linking in the sensuous blissful plane, but during the course of existence, it can give effect anywhere in the sensuous world or the fine-material world, according to circumstances.

By way of the door of action, ten courses of wholesome *karma* are counted: the three of body are abstinence from the three unwholesome bodily deeds, the four of speech are

⁵³ Chan Khoon San, *Buddhism Course*, 82.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

abstinence from the four unwholesome verbal deeds, and the three of mind are non-covetousness, non-ill will, and right view.

Similarly, wholesome *karma* of the sense-sphere is threefold as giving (*dana*), virtue (*sila*) and meditation (*bhavana*), or tenfold as the ten bases of meritorious deeds.⁵⁵

2.8.4.3. Fine-Material Sphere Wholesome *Karma*

It is purely mental action. It consists of meditation that has reached absorption and is fivefold by distinction of *jhana*-factors. Each wholesome *jhana citta* has the potential to generate rebirth in the fine-material realm that corresponds with its own level.⁵⁶

2.8.4.4. Immaterial Sphere Wholesome *Karma*

It is also purely mental action. It consists of meditation that has reached absorption and is fourfold by distinction of the object. Immaterial-sphere wholesome *jhana citta* has the potential to produce as its result only its corresponding resultant *citta*, which fulfills only three functions of rebirth, *bhavanga* and death in the immaterial realm to which it pertains.

All life beings are experiencing the results of their past wholesome and unwholesome *karma*, in an incessant, intricate, interplay of *karmic* function, while they except *arahants* and Buddha are continually creating new wholesome and unwholesome *karma* during conscious life.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

2.9. Dependent Origination (*Paticca Samuppada*)

Paticca means ‘because of’ or ‘dependent upon’. *Samuppada* means ‘arising’ or ‘origination’. *Paticca Samuppada* therefore means Dependent Arising or Dependent Origination. *Paticca Samuppada* is only a discourse on *samsara* or the process of birth and death and not a theory of the evolution of the world. It deals with the causes of rebirth and suffering, but it does not in the least attempt to show the absolute origin of life.⁵⁸

Ignorance is the first link or cause of the wheel of life. The first cause out of which in the course of time, all conscious and physical life had evolved. It was to show through which causes and conditions, suffering comes it being, now and hereafter. It is only through knowing the origin or cause of suffering, that suffering can be removed.⁵⁹

2.9.1. Decay and Death (*Jara - Marana*)

Old age and death are the inevitable results of birth. They are the primary effect of rebirth. As a consequence of rebirth, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair may also arise. They are secondary effects and may or may not arise depending on conditions. They are absent in *brahma-loka* and may also be unknown to the embryo which dies in the womb.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Narada Thera, *The Buddha-Dhamma* 191.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 192.

⁶⁰ Chan Khoon San, *Buddhism Course*, 67.

2.9.2. Rebirth (*Jati*)

Depending on becoming creates birth (*jati*) in a subsequent life. The process of becoming is of two kinds that is *karma* process (*karma-bhava*) being the active side of existence and rebirth process (*upatti-bhava*), being the passive *karma* resultant side of existence. Hence becoming means *karma-bhava*, the *karma* process that conditions rebirth.⁶¹

2.9.3. Becoming (*Bhava*)

The process of becoming depends on clinging (*upadana*). All beings except the *Arahant* cling to existence and sensual pleasures. Clinging cannot condition the rebirth process directly. It can only condition new *karma* processes of becoming. When one is clinging to something, he will act in a way to hold on to the object. By doing so, new *karma*-processes of becoming are performed.⁶²

2.9.4. Clinging (*Upadana*)

Clinging depends on craving (*tanha*). *Tanha* is essentially the desire to get an object while the strong attachment or clinging, which develops after getting the object is *upadana*. Clinging is fourfold namely, Sensuality, Wrong views, Adherence to rites and rituals and the theory of a soul. Thus the causal relation that craving conditions clinging is well justified.⁶³

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 67.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 68.

⁶³ Narada, *The Buddha and his Teachings*, 428- 429.

2.9.5. Craving (*Tanha*)

Craving depends on feeling. It is either pleasant feeling or painful feeling. Both create craving even the painful one. Craving for the pain to go away and be replaced by pleasant or neutral feeling. Neutral feeling is neither pleasant nor unpleasant. It is not an absence of feeling but a kind of subtle pleasure that implies only the absence of unbearable pain.⁶⁴

2.9.6. Feeling (*Vedana*)

Feeling depends on contact (*Phassa*). Whenever the six sense objects (visible object, sound, taste, smell, touch, thought) impinge on the six sense organs (eye, ear, tongue, nose, body, mind) there arise the six types of consciousness (seeing, hearing, etc.). The conjunction of the three is contact (*phassa*) and this gives rise to feeling (*vedana*). *Phassa* and *vedana* arise simultaneously in the same consciousness. However, *phassa* is regarded as the cause and *vedana* is the result. The impact on the sense organs leads to feeling that may be pleasant, unpleasant or indifferent depending on the nature of the sense object.⁶⁵

2.9.7. Contact (*Phassa*)

Contact depends on the six bases (*salayatana*), namely, eye and visual object, ear and sound, nose and odour, tongue and taste, body and tactile object, mind and mind-object,

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 428.

⁶⁵ Chan Khoon San, *Buddhism Course*, 69.

without which there would not be any consciousness of the external objects and mental contact.⁶⁶

2.9.8. Six Bases (*Salayatana*)

The six bases are the inevitable consequences of mentality and materiality (*nama-rupa*). The six bases are a name for the five pairs of physical sense organs and sense objects and one pair of mind and mind-object. The five physical sense bases are obtained from materiality while the mind base consists of mentality.⁶⁷

2.9.9. Mentality and Materiality (*Nama-rupa*)

Mentality and materiality depend on consciousness (*vinna*). The arising of a being consisting of mentality and matter depends on the rebirth consciousness. If this consciousness were not to arise, mentality and materiality would not arise in the womb, egg or in beings of spontaneous birth.⁶⁸

2.9.10. Consciousness (*Vinna*)

Consciousness depends on volitional activities (*sankhara*). Consciousness means those classes of consciousness that are the result of volitional or intentional actions done in a former existence. *Karma* will cause the arising of the rebirth consciousness, together with the new mentality and matter in beings who have not exterminated all the defilements.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ Narada, *The Buddha and his Teachings*, 425.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 423.

⁶⁹ Chan Khoon San, *Buddhism Course*, 70.

2.9.11. Volitional Activities (*Sankhara*)

Volitional activities depend upon ignorance (*avijja*). According to the *Suttanta* method, ignorance is unknowing of the Four Noble Truths. Volitional activities are those moral and immoral thoughts, words and deeds, which are rooted in ignorance. They provide the karmic cause for rebirth, thereby prolonging the cycle of birth and death or *samsara*. *Sankhara* is about the same as *karma-bhava* in the sense that both condition the rebirth process. The only difference is that *sankhara* pertains to the past while *karma-bhava* pertains to the present. When the Four Noble Truths are fully comprehended, Ignorance is completely eradicated.⁷⁰

2.9.12. Formula of Dependent Origination

1. Dependent on ignorance, arises volitional activities.
2. Dependent on volitional activities, arises consciousness.
3. Dependent on consciousness, arises mentality and matter.
4. Dependent on mentality and matter, arises the six sense bases.
5. Dependent on the six sense bases, arises contact.
6. Dependent on contact, arises feeling.
7. Dependent on feeling, arises craving.
8. Dependent on craving, arises clinging.
9. Dependent on clinging, arises becoming.
10. Dependent on becoming, arises birth.
11. Dependent on birth, arises decay, death, suffering, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 71.

This is how the Noble Truth of the extinction of suffering is explained by the formula of dependent origination. When a person fully comprehends the Four Noble Truth, he becomes an *Arahant*. For the *Arahant* who has completely eradicated ignorance, the chain of dependent origination or the wheel of existence will be broken and hence there is no more rebirth and suffering.⁷¹

2.10. Rebirth

Firstly the researcher will explain on why the term rebirth has been used and not the term of reincarnation or transmigration of the soul. The Buddhist doctrine of rebirth should be differentiated from transmigration and reincarnation, because Buddhism denies the existence of a transmigrating permanent soul, created by God. There is nothing that comes out of one body and enters another. Events take place according to the Law of Dependent Origination. Everything comes into existence depending on an instance previous to it and everything must also give rise to an instance, depending on itself.⁷²

Like all other religions, Buddhism also believes that human life does not end with the physical death. They believe in rebirth that is when the death of a man has to assume another body in accordance with his deeds in the past life. In Buddhism there is a significantly individualistic concept of rebirth, according to which the effects of one person are concentrated in a subsequent existent. There is more than one birth; otherwise there would not be the round of existence, nor any need for the Four Noble

⁷¹ Narada Thera, *The Buddha-Dhamma*, 193.

⁷² Chan Khoon San, *Buddhism Course* (Kuala Lumpur: Majujaya Indah Sdn. Bhd., 2006), 88.

Truths and the Eightfold Path, which have as their objective the cessation of the misery encountered in countless rebirths.⁷³

As long as this *karmic* force exists there is rebirth, for beings are merely the visible appearance of this invisible *karmic* force. Death is nothing but the temporary end of this temporary phenomenon. It is not the complete annihilation of this so-called being. The organic life has come to an end, but the *karmic* force which until now still in motion, it has not been destroyed. As the *karmic* force remains entirely undisturbed by the disintegration of the fleeting body, the passing away of the present dying thought-moment only conditions a fresh consciousness in another birth.⁷⁴

According to the Buddha's teaching, the potential of *karma*, the impulse of craving, does not simply disappear at death. The scriptures explained that the stream of mind-moments, driven forward by craving, continues in a new form, and thus a new life comes into being. In the ultimate sense, their present life is a series of mind-moments rapidly arising and passing away, based on a single physical organism. After death this series of mind-moments continues, finding support in a new physical organism. The last moment of life is followed by rebirth in a new existence.⁷⁵

In Buddhism, it was Buddha himself who taught about rebirth. On the night of his enlightenment, Buddha acquired three varieties of knowledge and the first of these was the detailed knowledge of his past life. He was able to recollect the conditions in which he had been born in his past lives. He was able to remember what his names had been, what his occupations had been and so on. Besides Buddha's testimony, his prominent

⁷³ Bruce R. Reichenbach, *The Law of Karma: A Philosophical Study* (London: Macmillan Academic and Professional LTD., 1990), 130.

⁷⁴ Aggacitta Bhikkhu, *Dying to live: The role of Kamma in dying and rebirth*, 51.

⁷⁵ Narada Thera, accessed 10 July 2009, <http://www.buddhanet.net/nutshell07.htm>.

disciples were also able to recollect their past lives. Ananda, for instance, acquired to recollect his past life soon after his ordination. Similarly, throughout the history of Buddhism, saints, scholars and meditators have been able to recollect their past lives.⁷⁶

In Buddhism, rebirth is part and parcel of the continuous process of change. Indeed, humans are not only reborn at the time of death; they are born at every moment. This, like other important teachings of Buddhism, is verifiable by reference to their own experience.

According to Buddhism, they are born from the matrix of action (*kammayoni*). Parents merely provide tiny cell, as such being precedes being. At the moment of conception, it is past *karma* that conditions the initial consciousness that vitalizes the fetus. It is this invisible *karmic* energy, generated from the past birth that produces mental phenomena and the phenomenon of life in an already existing physical phenomenon, to complete the trio that forms a man.⁷⁷

For humans to be able to be born here, he must die somewhere. The birth of a being, which strictly means the arising of the five aggregates or psycho-physical phenomena in this present life, corresponds to the death of a being in a past life, just as in conventional terms, the arising of the sun in one place means the setting of the sun in another place.

This enigmatic statement may be better understood by imagining life as a wave and not as a straight line. Birth and death are only two phases of the same process. Birth precedes death, and death on the other hand, precedes birth. The constant succession of

⁷⁶ Chan Khoon San, *Buddhism Course*, 23.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 89.

birth and death in connection with each individual life change forms what is technically known as *samsara* that is recurrent wandering.⁷⁸

2.10.1. Modes of Birth

Buddhism states there are four modes of birth that is egg-born beings, womb-born beings, moisture-born beings and beings having spontaneous births.

This broad classification embraces all living beings. Creatures such as birds, reptiles, and fish belong to the egg-born. The womb-born creatures comprise all humans, mammals and some earth-bound deities. Embryos, using moisture as material for their growth, like certain lowly forms of animal life such as insects belong to the third class. Beings having spontaneous birth are generally invisible to the human eye. Conditioned by the past *karma*, they appear suddenly, independently of parents. Brahmas, *devas*, *petas*, *asuras* and hell-beings belong to this class.⁷⁹

2.10.2. How Rebirth Takes Place

The Buddha said that a germ of life is planted only when three conditions are met. Mother and father must unite, it is the ovum is ripe and the being to be born is present. For a being to be born here, a being with craving for Becoming must die somewhere. It should not be taken to mean that a being to be born or soul is waiting for the egg and sperm to unite and then enter it. Parents only provide the cellular material in the rebirth

⁷⁸ Narada Thera, *The Buddha-Dhamma*, 184.

⁷⁹ Narada, *The Buddha and his Teachings*, 435.

process. This does not mean that all beings require parents for their birth because there are beings that are reborn spontaneously depending on their *karma*.⁸⁰

Death according to Buddhism is the cessation of the psycho-physical life of any one individual existence. It is the passing away of vitality (*ayu*) that is psychic and physical life (*jivitindriya*), heat (*usma*) and consciousness (*vinna*). Death is not the complete annihilation of a being, for though a particular life span ended, the force which previously actuated it is not destroyed.⁸¹

The instant death occurs, a new mental process called the rebirth-consciousness (*patisandhi citta*) conditioned by the Reproductive *karma* (*karma-bhava*) simultaneously will arise with three *karma*-produced material groups constituting the body, sex and base. The Rebirth consciousness and the three *karma*-produced material groups are collectively termed “the being to be born”. This term is used only in this particular connection, and must not be mistaken for a permanent soul waiting to enter a suitable womb to be reborn.⁸²

2.11. Planes of Existence

Buddhism teaches that there are various realms, spheres or dimensions of existence. There are altogether thirty-one planes of existence in which beings manifest themselves according to their karmic energy. These six realms can be divided into two groups, one that is relatively fortunate and the other, unfortunate. The first group includes the realm of the gods, the realm of the demigods, and the realm of human beings. Rebirth in these fortunate realms is the result of wholesome *karma*. The second group includes the realm

⁸⁰ Chan Khoon San, *Buddhism Course*, 88.

⁸¹ Narada, *The Buddha and his Teachings*, 450.

⁸² Narada Thera, *The Buddha-Dhamma*, 209-210.

of the animals, the realm of the hungry ghosts, and the hell realms. Rebirth in these realms of woe is the result of unwholesome *karma*.⁸³

2.11.1. Hell (*Niraya*)

Let us look at each of these realms individually and starting from the lowest realm that is the realm of the hell beings (*Niraya*). *Niraya* is a woeful state where beings atone for their evil *karma*. In Buddhism, beings are born in hell due to their accumulation of weighty bad *karma*. There they undergo unlimited suffering that is hard to endure and dreadful, terrible and heart-rending. The Buddha said that the suffering of one stabbed incessantly by three hundred spears compared to the suffering in hell is like a small stone compared to the Himalayas. However, the hell beings do not suffer eternally unlike what is taught in other religions. Upon the exhaustion of their bad *karma*, beings may be reborn in good states as a result of their past good *karma*. There are various hells in Buddhism, and they are mainly eight hot hells and eight cold hells. In the hells, beings suffer incalculable and indescribable pain. The cause of rebirth in hell is continuous, habitual violent actions or habitual killing, cruelty and so onward, actions that are bear of ill-will. Beings born in the hells suffer the pain of hell until their unwholesome *karma* is exhausted. This is important because they must note that in Buddhism no one suffers eternal damnation. When their unwholesome *karma* is exhausted, beings in hell are reborn in a more fortunate realm of existence.⁸⁴

⁸³ Peter Della Santina, *The tree of enlightenment* (California: Chico Dharma Study Foundation, 1997), 110-114.

⁸⁴ Jacky Sach, *The Everything Buddhism Book*, 99.

2.11.1.1. Eight Hot Hells⁸⁵

1. *Sanjiva* is where beings are cut into pieces and killed for many thousands of years and they revive there again and again to undergo this torture. Hence, it is called the Revival Hell.
2. *Kalasutta* known as the black thread hell is where they are split like wood with burning saws along a mark made by a black thread.
3. *Sanghata*, the crushing hell is where they are crushed to death over and over again by iron rollers.
4. *Roruva* or the screaming hell is where there is terrible screaming by beings constantly consumed by flames and smoke entering their bodies through the nine orifices.
5. *Maharoruva* is where the screams are greater because of the awfulness of the fire torture by being baked in a huge mass of fire. It is known as the great screaming hell.
6. *Tapana* or the roasting hell is where beings are pierced with giant red hot skewers and roasted over a fire, firmly held and unable to move.
7. *Mahatapana*, the extreme roasting hell is where beings are forced by fiery weapons to climb up a burning mountain until they fall down only to be strung up again on fiery iron bars and unable to move while being roasted.
8. *Avici* is the lowest and greatest hell. The heat is so terrible that it is said that even the bones melt there. Since there is no intermission of suffering here, it is called hell without intermission.

⁸⁵ Chan Khoon San, *Buddhism Course*, 98.

2.11.1.2. Cold Hells

Each great hell is surrounded on each of its four sides by five minor hells bringing the total number of hells to 168. The terrible sufferings of beings in these minor hells are described in the *Devaduta Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikaya*. Yet in all cases, the beings do not die but undergo the torture repeatedly as long as the evil *kamma* has not yet exhausted itself. The minor hells are *Milhakupa* or excrement pit hell, *kukkula* or hot embers hell, forest of *Simbali* trees, forest of Sword-leaf trees and terrible river *Vetarani*.⁸⁶

2.11.2. Animals

In the next realm which is the realm of animals (*Tiracchana*). *Tiracchana* means going horizontally and suitably describes the animal mode of movement. The living beings suffer from a variety of unhappy circumstances. They suffer from the fear and pain that is the result of constantly killing and eating one another. They suffer from the human beings who kill them for food or for their hides, horns or teeth. Even if they are not killed, domestic animals are forced to work for man and are driven on by hooks and whips. All of this is a source of suffering. The principal cause of rebirth as an animal is ignorance. In other words, the blind, heedless pursuit of one's animal-like desires, the preoccupation with eating, sleeping and sexual desire, and the disregard of developing one's mind to the practice of virtue and so fourth lead one to be reborn as an animal.⁸⁷

For instance that habitual killing is the cause of rebirth in hell, or that greed is the cause of rebirth in the realm of the hungry ghosts, or that ignorance is the cause of rebirth in

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 99.

⁸⁷ Charles S. Prebish and Damien Keown, *Introducing Buddhism* (New York: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, 2006), 17.

the realm of animals, it does not mean that a specific hateful, greedy or ignorant action will result in rebirth amongst the appropriate class of beings-the hells, the realms of hungry ghosts or the realm of animals. What it does mean is that there is a relationship between hatred and rebirth in the hells, and between greed and rebirth in the realm of hungry ghost, and between ignorance and rebirth in the realm of the animals. If unimpeded, if unbalanced by other virtuous actions, such actions if habitual are likely to result in rebirth in these three states of woe.⁸⁸

2.11.3. Ghost Beings (*Petas*)

The next realm is the realm of the hungry ghosts (*Petas*). *Petas* are ghostly beings absolutely devoid of happiness. Beings in this realm suffer chiefly from hunger and thirst, and from heat and cold. They are completely bereft of the objects of their desire. It is said that when the hungry ghosts distinguish a mountain of rice or a river of fresh water only a ribbon of blue slate. Similarly, it is said that in the summer even the moon is hot, while in the winter even the sun is cold for them. The foremost cause of rebirth as a hungry ghost is greed. In appearance they are generally described as extremely thin and have large heads with eyes and cheeks sunken, their faces darkened by long dishevelled hair. Their bodies have only skin, bones and tendons remaining, skeletons visible and rib-spaces sunken.⁸⁹

These vivid descriptions evidently highlight the extreme suffering experienced by *petas* as a result of their unwholesome *karma*. According to *Milinda-panha*, there are four classes of *Petas*. Firstly is *Vantasikas* who feed on what have been vomited by others. Secondly is *Khuppipasinos* who suffer from being continually tormented by extreme

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ Peter Della Santina, *The tree of enlightenment* (California: Chico Dharma Study Foundation, 1997), 112.

hunger and thirst for a long period of time. Followed by *Nijjhamatanhikas* who are consumed by thirst, being tormented by a continual burning feeling within their bodies. Lastly *Paradattupa-jivi* who depend on what others offer for them. They remember their living relatives and see what they do. Only this class of *Petas* can receive and share in the merits when offerings are made on their behalf.⁹⁰

As with the hells, the beings in this realm are not condemned to external existence in the form of hungry ghosts, for when their unwholesome *karma* is exhausted, they will be reborn in a higher realm.

2.11.4. Demigods (*Asuras*)

The *Asuras* are more powerful physically and are more intelligent mentally than human beings. Yet they suffer because of jealousy and conflict. The *Asuras* were typically depicted as warrior demons. They are angry, hot tempered creatures who are prone to jealousy, rage and war. Mythologically, it is said that the *Asuras* and the gods share a celestial tree. While the gods enjoy the fruits of this celestial tree, the *Asuras* are custodians of the roots of the tree. The *Asuras* are envious of the gods and constantly attempt to take the fruits of the tree from the gods. As a result of this, they fight with the gods, and are defeated by the gods and suffer greatly as consequences. Because of this constant jealousy, envy and conflict, existence amongst the *Asuras* is unhappy and unfortunate. As with the other realms, there is a cause of rebirth amongst the demigods. On the positive side, the cause is generosity. On the negative side, the causes are anger, envy and jealousy.⁹¹

⁹⁰ Chan Khoon San, *Buddhism Course*, 101.

⁹¹ Peter Della Santina, *The tree of enlightenment*, Pg 113.

2.11.5. Humans

Next to the four unhappy states are the seven happy states that is *Sugati*. They are *Manussa*. The realm of human beings. The human realm (*Manushya*) is the most favoured of the six realms because as a human being one has the motivation and the opportunity to practise the Dharma and to achieve enlightenment. One has this motivation and opportunity because the conditions are conducive to practising the path are present. In the human realm, one experiences both happiness and suffering. The suffering in this realm, though terrible, is not as great as the suffering in the three realms of woe. The pleasures and happiness experienced in the human realm is not so great as the pleasures and happiness experienced in the heavens. As a result, human beings are neither blinded by the intense happiness experienced by the beings in the heavens, nor distracted by the unbearable suffering that beings in the hells experience. Unlike the animals, human beings possess sufficient intelligence to recognize the necessity to look for means to achieve the total end of suffering.⁹²

Depending upon human's actions and intentions, human can fall back down to hell realm, becoming an animal or god or other or escape entirely into *nirvana* and end the cycle of rebirth. The possibility of achieving a human birth after one has fallen into one of the lower realms is extremely slim. However, tiny positive moves on the part of the three lower realm forms can have a cumulative effect of pushing a being into one of the higher realms and human form.⁹³

⁹² Charles S. Prebish and Damien Keown, *Introducing Buddhism*, 18.

⁹³ Peter Della Santina, *The tree of enlightenment*, 115.

2.11.6. Gods (*Devas & Brahmas*)

The last six are the realms of the Gods or *Devas*. It is the happiest amongst all the realms. As a result of having done wholesome actions, of having observed the moral precepts and having practised meditation, living beings are reborn amongst the gods where they enjoy sensual pleasure or spiritual pleasure, or tranquillity depending upon the level within the realm of the gods in which they are born. Nonetheless, the realm of the gods is not to be desired because the happiness of the gods is impermanent. No matter how much they may enjoy their existence as a god, when the force of their *karma* is exhausted, when the merits of their good conduct and the power of their experience in meditation are exhausted, the gods fall from heaven and are reborn in another realm. At this moment, at the moment of their death, it is said that the gods suffer even more mental anguish than the physical pain suffered by beings in the other realms. The negative factor associated with birth in the realm of the gods is pride.⁹⁴

The Gods of the sensuous plane are called *Devas* while the gods of the higher non-sensuous planes are called *Brahmas*. There are two types of *Brahma* Gods, namely those who possess form (*rupa*) and those who are formless (*arupa*).⁹⁵

2.11.6.1. The Six Sensuous Heavens (*Devaloka*)

There are six *deva* realms and they are situated above the earth. Except for the first two lower heavens, the rest are too far away to have any close connection with the earth.

⁹⁴ Jacky Sach, *The Everything Buddhism Book*, 95.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 104.

1. *Catumaharajika*: the lowest of the heavenly realms. It is the realms of the four kings who are the guardian deities of the four quarters of the firmament reside with the followers.
2. *Tavatimsa*: The realm of the thirty-three *Devas*. The *Deva Sakka* is the chief of this realm.
3. *Yama*: The realm of the *Yama Devas*. That which destroys pain is *Yama*.
4. *Tusita*: The realm of Delight. The Bodhisattas who have perfected the requisites of Buddhahood reside in this plane until the opportune moment comes for them to appear in the human realm to attain Buddhahood.
5. *Nimmarati*: The realm of Gods who enjoy their own creation.
6. *Paranimmita-Vasavati*: The realm of the Gods who make others creation serve their own ends.⁹⁶

2.11.6.2. The Sixteen Form Realms (*Rupa Brahma*)

1. Three planes of the first *Jhana*: The lowest is called *Brahma parisajja* or *Brahma's* retinue and the second is called *Brahma purohitta* or *Brahma's* ministers. The highest of these three planes is *Maha-Brahma* or Great *Brahmas*.
2. Three planes of the second *Jhana*: In order of mastery of the second *Jhana*, the brahmas of the second *Jhanic* planes are *Parittabha*, the gods of minor luster; *Appamanabha*, the gods of infinite luster; and *Abhassara*, the gods of radiant luster.
3. The planes of the third *Jhana*: In order of mastery of the third *Jhana*, the brahmas of the third *Jhanic* planes are *Parittasubha*, the gods of minor aura; *Appamana-subha*, the gods of infinite aura and *Subha-kinha*, the gods of steady

⁹⁶ Narada Thera, *The Buddha-Dhamma*, 200.

aura.

4. Seven planes of the fourth *Jhana*: The planes of the fourth *Jhana* are *Vehapphala*, the gods of great reward; *Asanna-satta*, the unconscious beings; and the five planes of *Suddhavasa*, the puree abodes where *Anagamins* or Non-Returners are reborn.⁹⁷

2.11.6.3. The Four Formless Realms (*Arupa Brahma*)

Beings that practice tranquility meditation by passing beyond all form perceptions and attain *Arupa Jhana* or formless states of absorption are reborn in the formless realms possessing mind only and no material quality at all. The four formless realms, according to their *Arupa Jhanas* are *Akasananca-bhumi* that is realm of infinite space, *Vinnanancayatana-bhumi* is the realm of infinite consciousness, *Akincannayatana-bhumi* is realm of nothingness and *N'evanna-nasannayatana-bhumi*, realm of neither perception nor non-perception.⁹⁸

So from here, we have an affliction or defilement associated with the five realms - hell beings, hungry ghosts, animals, demigods and the gods, and they are ill-will, desire, ignorance, jealousy and pride. Birth in any of these five realms is undesirable. Birth in the three lower realms is undesirable for obvious reasons, because of the intense suffering and because of the total ignorance of the beings that inhabit these realms. Even rebirth in the realms of the demigods and the gods too is undesirable. This is because, although one experiences a certain degree of happiness and power, existence amongst the demigods and gods is impermanent. Besides, because of the distractions and pleasures in these realms, beings there never think of looking for a way out of the

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 201-202.

⁹⁸ Chan Khoon San, *Buddhism Course*, 105-106.

cycle of birth and death. This is why it is said that among all the realms, the most fortunate, opportune and favored is the human realm.⁹⁹

2.12. *Samsara*

Samsara means the "round of rebirth," or more literally, "the wandering around continually," an expression which conveys the sense of aimlessness and futility, of being trapped. *Samsara* is the beginning-less process of birth and death, occurring on different levels of mental and material reality. To use the classical terminology, the Buddhists would say that *samsara* extends over manifold worlds (*loka*) and involves rebirth into various planes of existence (*bhumi*).¹⁰⁰

Wherever the Buddhists are born in *samsara*, even in the highest god realm, there is no freedom from suffering. Certainly the human realm is not free from suffering. Moreover, if they succeed in taking rebirth in the fortunate realms it is only like taking a short holiday. Afterwards they once again have to descend to the lower realms, where they experience extreme suffering for inconceivably a long period. The search for freedom and happiness, they must escape from *samsara*. To escape it they must cut its root by wiping out self-grasping from our mental continuum. This depends upon training in higher wisdom, which depends upon training in higher concentration, which depends upon training in higher moral discipline. These three trainings are called 'higher trainings' because they are motivated by renunciation. Therefore to escape from *samsara* is to develop renunciation.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ Peter Della Santina, *The tree of enlightenment*, 114.

¹⁰⁰ ‘Abdullah Muṣṭafā Numsuk, *Al-Budhiyah Tārikhīhā wa Aqā'idahā wa 'Alāqah As-Ṣūfiyyah bihā*, 218.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 225.

The first training is in higher moral discipline. In general, moral discipline is a virtuous mental determination to abandon any fault, or a bodily or verbal action motivated by such a determination. They practise moral discipline whenever we will put this determination into practice. If our practice of moral discipline is not motivated by renunciation, it will cause us to attain higher rebirth within *samsara*, such as rebirth as a human or a god, but if it is motivated by renunciation, it will lead to the attainment of liberation from *samsara*.¹⁰²

Secondly is the training in higher concentration. There are many levels of concentration. To attain a direct realization of emptiness, the ultimate nature of reality, we need the concentration of tranquil abiding. Tranquil abiding is a concentration that possesses a special type of suppleness attained by progressing through nine levels of concentration called the 'nine mental abiding'. When we have attained tranquil abiding our mind is very stable, clear, and powerful, and so it is very easy for us to attain Dharma realizations.¹⁰³

Lastly is the training in higher wisdom. In general, wisdom is a virtuous mind that functions mainly to dispel doubt and confusion by understanding its object thoroughly. Among the many different types of wisdom, the wisdom that realizes emptiness, the ultimate nature of phenomena is supreme. Whenever we meditate on emptiness with the motivation of renunciation, we are training in higher wisdom. If we train in higher wisdom, eventually our mind will be released from all delusions, including self-grasping ignorance and we shall attain liberation from *samsara*.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, *Introduction to Buddhism* (London: Tharpa Publications, 1992), 63-65.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 65.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 66.

2.12.1. The Wheel of Life

The cycle of *samsara* is often depicted as the wheel of life. The wheel of life illustrates for us the cause of all suffering and evil. The *Bhavacakra* or the wheel of life is represented as being held by the jaws, hands, and feet of a fearsome figure who turns the wheel. The exact identity of the figure varies. A common choice for the figure is *Yama*, the god of death or Kala the lord of time. This figure is also known as the "Face of Glory" or *Kirtimukha*.

There is always a figure or symbol in the upper left and the upper right. The exact figure or symbol varies; common example includes the moon, a Buddha, or a *bodhisattva*. In the picture of the *Tibetan Bhavacakra* in *Sera, Lhasa* the clouds take the shapes of certain Buddhist symbols i.e. *svastika*.¹⁰⁵

At the very center of the wheel, at the inner hub of the wheel, are three animals, the cock, the snake and the pig. These three animals represent the three poisons. The three poisons are greed, hatred and ignorance. The cock represents greed, the snake represents hatred and the pig represents ignorance. Circling the center of the wheel is a narrow path that is cut in two. The right side of the path represents the dark path. If a person takes the dark path, he has chosen to live with the three poisons of greed, hatred and ignorance. The left side of the path is the white path. If he chooses the white path, the path will lead to rebirth and eventually liberation.¹⁰⁶

The outer rim of the wheel of life contains the twelve independent causes and effects. This section of the wheel is divided into twelve pictures. Each picture represents the

¹⁰⁵ Jacky Sach, *The Everything Buddhism Book*, 84.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 85

dependent, conditioned, and relative phenomena that make up life. These pictures symbolize that a life cycle is made up of twelve conditioned phenomena that form a circle of repeating, dependent causes and effects.¹⁰⁷

Ignorance leads to volitional action which is on how humans shape their own *karma*. Actions give rise to their consciousness, which in turn gives rise to name and form which is human's physical and spiritual energy. Name and forms leads to the five senses and thought which in turn give rise to their impression or contact. Their contact leads to emotions, which leads to craving and desire. Desire leads to attachment which is the desire to take something and keep it, and attachment leads to becoming. Becoming leads to birth and birth leads to death, which leads to rebirth and ignorance. This is the pictorial staging of *samsara*. Humans are trapped in *samsara* until they can reach enlightened mind and freedom.¹⁰⁸

2.13. *Nirvana*

It is very important to have a clear understanding of *nirvana*, as it constitutes the goal of life in Buddhism, the nature of which is contained in the third noble truth. It is a state of perfect peace and tranquillity, which in a sense is a state of eternal bliss, because *nirvana* is a state of eternity. Only *nirvana* is eternal, all else is momentary.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 86.

¹⁰⁸ Narada Thera, *The Buddha-Dhamma*, 194.

¹⁰⁹ Kedar Nath Tiwari, *Comparative religion*, 59.

The Pali word *Nibbana* is formed of *Ni* and *Vana*. *Ni* is a negative particle and *vana* means lusting or craving. “It is called *Nibbana*, in that it is a departure from the craving which is called *vana*, lusting.” Literally, *Nibbana* means non-attachment.¹¹⁰

As long as one is bound up by cravings one accumulates fresh *kammic* forces which must materialise in one form or other in the eternal cycle of birth and death. When all forms of craving are exterminated, *kammic* forces ceases to operate and one attains *nirvana*, escaping the cycle of birth and death. The Buddhist conception of salvation is escaping from the recurring cycle of life and death that implies more than escape merely from sin and hell.¹¹¹

Nirvana is the letting go of the three poisons that is the craving of greed, hatred and ignorance. *Nirvana* extinguishes the three poisons. *Nirvana* is the cessation of suffering and it can be achieve if one wants to try to attain it. The *Dhammapada*, the collected sayings of the Buddha, in chapter 14: The Awakened One, says:

But who to the Buddha, *Dharma*,
And *Sangha* as refuge has gone,
Sees with full insight
The four Noble Truths;
Misery, the arising of misery,
And the transcending of misery
The noble Eightfold path
Leading to the allaying of misery
This indeed, is a refuge secure.
This is the highest refuge.
Having come to this refuge,
One is released from all misery.¹¹²

¹¹⁰ ‘Abdullah Muştafâ Numsuk, *Al-Budhiyah Tārikhihā wa Aqā'idahā wa 'Alāqah As-Şūfiyyah bihā*, 250.

¹¹¹ Buddhism in a nutshell, accessed 10 november 2009, <http://www.religion-spirituality.org/buddhism/nutshell10-nibbana.php>.

¹¹² Jacky Sach, *The Everything Buddhism Book*, 187.

Nirvana is a permanent inner peace attained through the complete abandonment of illusions. Through training in the paths to liberation, their mind is completely released from illusions, thus the ultimate nature of our mind becomes a *nirvana*. From that moment on, they are free from *samsara* and all its sufferings, and we have become a foe destroyer, a person who has destroyed the inner enemies of attachment, hatred, and self-grasping ignorance.¹¹³

Nirvana is the cessation of rebirth. Desire with action consequent upon desire is the cause of rebirth. The path leading to deliverance from rebirth must therefore be a path leading to deliverance from desire. In order to avoid rebirth, it is necessary to eradicate desires such as desire for pleasure, desire for existence, desire for non-existence of hatred of existence. The only way to achieve it is to become a saint or *arhat*, free from sorrows, hopes and fears.¹¹⁴

It was attainable in present life, and the Buddha himself and many of his early disciples were said to have attained it, and thenceforward they lived in peace. Their actions were performed without desire or ‘clinging’ which will produce no consequences and will lead to a re-combination of a renewed existence.

People should first understand that *samsaric* rebirth is the nature of suffering and develop renunciation for it. Then we should abandon the delusions and negative actions that are the source, or origin, of *samsaric* rebirth and all its sufferings, and make our human life meaningful by attaining *nirvana*. To attain this permanent cessation of suffering humans should practise the paths to *nirvana* as mentioned above in

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 188.

¹¹⁴ Louis de La Vallee Poussin, *The way to Nirvana: six lectures on ancient Buddhism as a discipline of Salvation*, 139.

samsara.¹¹⁵

2.13.1. The Arhat

Arhat means ‘worthy one’ in Sanskrit. The *arhat* enters enlightened mind and escapes the pain and suffering of eternal rebirth, never to be reborn in any form again. Delusions and desires are gone. During life, the *arhat* will experience the state of *Nirvana*, entering and re-entering over time. Practice must be maintained even for the *arhat*, so the *arhat* will continue to walk the steps of the Eightfold Path throughout his or her life.¹¹⁶

2.13.2. Bodhisattvas

The *Bodhisattvas* postponed eternal enlightenment in order to stay in the realm of *samsara* and help others to attain enlightenment. Through the development of *bodhicitta*, wisdom heart, the *bodhisattva* learns what is best to help the students. It is the *Mahayana* belief that *nirvana* and *samsara* are the same, even though the *bodhisattvas* are reborn, they retain their enlightened status. Therefore, *nirvana* can be found within *samsara* and hence, the enlightenment and life are the same. Enlightenment can be found in each moment. If the moment is experienced fully, there is no suffering, no desire, just the moment, and therefore the moment is *nirvana*. It is this way that meditation was seen as experiencing *nirvana*. The *Theravada* Buddhists believed in the system of the *arhat*, while the *Mahayana* Buddhists believed in the *bodhisattvas*. A Buddha has achieved full enlightenment. A Buddha has a skilful means to free human beings to awaken them. *Bodhisattvas* aspire to become Buddhas. A

¹¹⁵ Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, *Introduction to Buddhism*, 51-52.

¹¹⁶ Jacky Sach, *The Everything Buddhism Book*, 192.

Bodhisattva believes the path to Buddhahood is through the postponement of his or her own final enlightenment (*paranirvana*) until all the requisite qualities are perfected that would make the *bodhisattva* a Buddha.¹¹⁷

2.14. Conclusion

This chapter explains the reincarnation in Buddhism which meets the first objective of this research. This research focus on the afterlife of Buddhism from death to karma to dependent origination to their realms of their rebirth to *samsara* and finally *nirvana*. The term reincarnation has been used generally to describe the afterlife in Hinduism and Buddhism traditions. However, the researcher finds that the Buddhists believe in the concept of rebirth instead of reincarnation.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 192-193.

CHAPTER THREE

RESURRECTION IN ISLAM

3.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher explains about resurrection in Islam. This is because to compare the differences between the afterlife in Buddhism and Islam so there would not be a misunderstanding among the Malay Muslims due to the lack of knowledge on the afterlife in Islam.

3.2. Islam

The Arabic word Islam is derived from the verb *aslama*, which means “to submit, surrender” and the verb *aslama* is stemmed from the root word *salm* or *silm*, which means “peace, security”. Islam is, thus a religion that commands its followers to submit and surrender to the will of God. Through His final messenger, Muhammad, God sent his sent his revelations in order to be taught, preached, lived and put it into practice. The basic fundamentals of Islam that was revealed to Prophet Muhammad can be divided generally into three aspects – *Īmān*, *Islām* and *Iḥsān*.¹ To reach perfection in the afterlife of Islam is to follow these three aspects of fundamentals of Islam.

On *Īmān*, which are known to be the six pillar of faith, means one must have faith in One and only God, the angels, the holy books, the prophets, the hereafter and predestination. In having faith in the hereafter, one must believe that individuals must

¹ Sayyid Sābiq, *Akidah Islam: Al-‘Aqāid al-Islāmiyah*, trans. H. Moh. Abdai Rathomy (Kuala Lumpur: Pustaka Jiwa Sdn. Bhd., 2003), 1.

be accountable for his or her actions, God's authority over human destiny and the life after death.²

Islām encompasses the foundation of the Muslim life which are the *Shahādah* (the declaration of there is no God but Allah and Muhammad is His messenger), the five daily prayers, *Zakāh* (almsgiving), fasting the month of *Ramaḍān* (the ninth month of the Islamic calendar) and the Ḥajj, which is the Pilgrimage to Mecca for those who are able. These are known as the five pillars of Islam.

As for *iḥsān*, as the prophet mentioned that it is “to worship God as if you are seeing Him and although you do not see Him, He sees you”. Many scholars rendered this as the refinement of heart by fulfilling good values such as patience, justice and eradicating bad values like arrogance and hypocrisy.³

3.3. The Islamic Perspective on Death

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ وَإِنَّمَا تُوَفَّوْنَ أَجُورَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ فَمَنْ زُحِرَ
عَنِ النَّارِ وَأُدْخِلَ الْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ ﴿١٨٥﴾

‘Alī-‘Imrān 3:185

Meaning: Every self will taste death. You will be paid your wages in full on the day of resurrection. Anyone who is distanced from the fire and admitted to the garden has triumphed. The life of the world is just the enjoyment of delusion.

From this verse, Muslims learn that every soul will die without exception. Death is a certain end for people in the past as well for those currently alive. No one can avoid this impending end.

² *Ibid.*, 2-3.

³ *Ibid.*, 2.

According to Ismā‘īl Ibn Kathīr in his *Tafsīr al- Qur’ān al- ‘Aẓīm*, Allah alone will never die, while the *jinn*, mankind and angels, including those who carry Allah's Throne, shall die. The Irresistible One and Only, will alone remain forever. This *ayah* comforts all creation, since every soul that exists on the earth shall die. When the term of this life comes to an end and the sons of Adam no longer have any new generations, thus this world ends, Allah will command that the Day of Resurrection commence. Allah will then recompense the creation for their deeds, whether minor or major. Surely, Allah will not deal unjustly with anyone, even the weight of an atom.⁴

Muslims believe that the present life is a trial in preparation for the next realm of existence. Islam sees death not as end to life but rather as the beginning of the world to come. Muslims recognize that all creatures will die and believe that God determines our time and place of death.

Death does not occur by chance. As is the case with all other incidents, it happens by God's decree. Just as the birth date of a man is predestined, so also is the date of his death right down to the very last second. Man rushes towards that last moment, rapidly leaving behind every hour, every minute granted to him. The death of everyone, its location and time, as well as the way one dies are all predetermined.⁵

People are compelled to return to God after death, but they can also choose to return to him during their life in this world. Through becoming Allah’s servants, they follow the road that leads to nearness. They may reach God before they leave the world or at death, they may simply find that they are situated relatively close to the Real. Hence, they will

⁴ Ismā‘īl Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr* (Riyadh: Dar-us-Salam, 2000), 935

⁵ Abū ‘Abd Allah Muḥammad Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Tafsīr al-Kabīr* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1981), 9:130.

be more integrated and whole than those people who turned away and went about with what they thought was their own business.

The word return should alert human beings to the fact that people are returning means that they have already been there. Typically, this discussion of where people come from fits under the heading origin (*mabda'*). Both origin and return are derived from al-Qur'ān terminology⁶:

قُلْ أَمَرَ رَبِّي بِالْقِسْطِ وَأَقِيمُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ عِندَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَادْعُوهُ مُخْلِصِينَ
لَهُ الدِّينَ كَمَا بَدَأَكُمْ تَعُودُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾

Al-A'rāf 7:29

Meaning: Say: My Lord has enjoined justice, and set upright your faces at every time of prayer and call on Him, being sincere to Him in obedience; as He brought you forth in the beginning, so shall you also return.

A believer is aware of the temporary nature of the life of this world. He knows that our Lord, Who gave him all the blessings he has enjoyed in this world, will take his soul whenever He wills and call him to account for his deeds. However, since he has spent his entire life to earn God's good pleasure, he does not worry about his death.⁷

The knowledge of the reality of death helps people understand it and prepare themselves for its coming. Death is simply a transition state from one world to another, as birth is.

⁶ 'Abd Allāh Ibn Abbās, *Tanwīr Miqbās min Tafsīr Ibn Abbās* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 1992), 165.

⁷ Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, *Ar-Rūh: The Soul's journey after death*, Trans. Muhammad Ibn Abi Bakar, (London: Dar at-Taḳwa, 1987), 6.

Allah has assigned angels responsible for taking their souls out of their bodies. In the Qur'ān Allah mentioned the Archangel name *Azra'il*.⁸

The Qur'ān says that it is a person who has to taste death and not his physical existence separate from his soul. It is a person who ceases to exist when death occurs. Death is the termination of an individual comprehensive being, capable of believing and disbelieving, and not simply a living organism. Even though later orthodox Islam came to accept the mind- body dualism, the Qur'ān by using the term *nafs*, seems to be rejecting the idea that some entity, like the soul, leaves the body at the time of death. Life does not end with death. In the same way that a person does not cease to exist in sleep, so also he does not cease to exist in death. And in the same way that a person comes back to life when waking from sleep, so also will he be revived at the great awakening on the Day of Judgement. Hence, Islam views death merely as a stage in human existence. Physical death should not be feared as an evil. One should, however, worries about the agonies of spiritual death caused by living a life of moral corruption.⁹

Muhammad Ibn Abī Bakar also known as Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah said that the death of the soul which is mentioned in the Qur'ān *Sūrah 'Alī-'Imrān* verse 185 means that the separation of the souls from their bodies.¹⁰

Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Qurṭubī conveys the view of Ahmad Ibn 'Umar about death saying that death is not an absolute nonexistence. It is shifting from one condition to another. Supporting this is the condition of the martyrs, who after being killed and dead; they are

⁸ Muhammad bin Ahmad al-Qurtubi, *Al-Tazkirah fī 'aḥwāl al-Mautā wa 'umūr al-Akhirah* (Ṭanṭā: Dār al-Ṣaḥābah, 1994), 163.

⁹ Muhammad Imran, *Preparation for the Hereafter* (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Asyraf, 1977), 39-40.

¹⁰ Hasan Ayoub, *Death and Eternal Life* (Cairo: Islamic Inc. Publishing and Distribution, 1997), 24.

alive with their lord, rejoicing in the bounty that God has given them. If this is the case with the martyrs, the prophets would receive better condition.¹¹

This world is a place where man is being trained. God charged man with many responsibilities in this world and informed him about the limits he has set for him. Provided that man observes these limits, complies with His orders and avoids prohibited acts, he will attain personal maturity and a better state of wisdom and awareness. With such attributes, a believer turns only to God and seeks help only from Him.¹²

Man has to be guided by the Qur'ān and the *Ḥadīth* and live by its principles, knowing that he will give an account of all his deeds in the hereafter. Otherwise, failure to prepare oneself for the eternal life, missing the one and only opportunity granted for this purpose, and deserving hell for all eternity will be a painful situation indeed.

3.4. Spirit/ Soul

Humans should be aware that there are the *rūḥ* (spirit), the *jasad* (body) and the *nafs* (body and spirit or soul). In fact there is no cut difference between soul and spirit in English. *Nafs* means merging the *jasad* (body) with the *rūḥ* (spirit). The human being comes into existence compounded of divine breath and clay, or spirit and body. The soul represents the meeting place between spirit and body.¹³ The relationship of *nafs* and *rūḥ*, soul and spirit is a complex and difficult one in Islamic usage. In the following discussion, the researcher will use the terms spirit and soul reflecting to the usage of *rūḥ*

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² Osman Nuri Topbas, *Islam Spirit and Form* (Istanbul: Erkam Publication, 2003), 81.

¹³ Al-Sheikh Muhammad Mutwali Al-Sha'rawii, *The End of The World: How and When? A concise Islam Perspective* (Syria: Dept. of English, Faculty of Arts, University of Aleppo, 2003), 14.

and *nafs* in the Arabic text. The majority of traditionalists and scholars seem to prefer to use of that which remains after death as spirit.

فَإِذَا سَوَّيْتُهُ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِي فَقَعُوا لَهُ سَاجِدِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

Al- Hġjr 15:29

Meaning: And when I have proportioned him and breathed into him of My [created] soul, then fall down to him in prostration.

In *Tafsġr Ibn Kathġr*, Abġ al-Qġsim Al-Suhaylġ mentioned the dispute among the scholars over whether the *rġh* is the same as the *nafs*, or something different. He states that the *rġh* which the angel breathes into the fetus is the *nafs*, provided that it joins the body and acquires certain qualities because of it, whether good or bad. So then it is either a soul in complete rest and satisfaction or inclined to evil. Thus we should understand the connection between *nafs* and *rġh*; the *rġh* is not called *nafs* except when it joins the body and is affected by it. So in conclusion we may say: the *rġh* is the origin and essence, and the *nafs* consists of the *rġh* and its connection to the body. So they are the same in one sense but not in another.¹⁴

Religious obligations and duties of Allah s.w.t. do not fall on the spirit alone, or on a dead body, but it falls on the *nafs* that is the body and spirit together. Paradise or Hell in the hereafter is for the soul. For this reason we see that the verses in the Qur’ġn which talk about the Hereafter do not mention the spirit alone or the body alone, but they mention the *nafs* (body and spirit).¹⁵ Allah the almighty states in the Qur’ġn.

¹⁴ Ismġ’ġl Ibn Kathġr, *Tafsġr Ibn Kathġr*, 2887.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 14.

وَمَا كَانَ لِنَبِيٍّ أَنْ يَغُلَّ وَمَنْ يَغْلُلْ يَأْتِ بِمَا غَلَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ ثُمَّ تُوَفَّى كُلُّ نَفْسٍ

مَا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿١٦١﴾

‘Alī-‘Imrān 3:161

Meaning: Then every *nafs* (person) shall be paid in full what he has earned, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly.

Spirit is the divine secret which gives life to matter, substance or material. It is the will of Allah for humans to live.¹⁶

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ قُلِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي وَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿١٧٨﴾

Al-Isrā’ 17:85

Meaning: And they ask you (O Muhammad pbuh) concerning *Rūḥ*; Say “The *Rūḥ* is one of things, the knowledge of which is only with my Lord. And of knowledge, you (mankind) have been given only a little”.

This means that the spirit or soul will remain one of Allah’s secrets and will be hidden from man till the day of Resurrection.

According to Imām Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī, the meaning of *rūḥ* that has been stated above is just a brief explanation. It is not a definition of the actuality which is unknown to the human mind. It is because the actual knowledge of *rūḥ* is only known by Allah.¹⁷

‘Abdullah Bin Buraidah understands that the *ayah* about *rūḥ* is God’s matter, which means that Allah did not explain about the actual knowledge of *rūḥ* to anyone, neither to His angels nor His messenger.¹⁸

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 16.

¹⁷ Amiruddin Faatih, *Penciptaan Roh, Jin & Malaikat, Mukjizat, Karamah dan Sihir* (Selangor: Al-Hidayah Publication, 2010), 8.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 9.

According to Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad Bin Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, *rūḥ* has two kinds of elements. Firstly, *rūḥ* is a form of fine vapour that becomes complete because it is suitable with human nature. The completeness of *rūḥ* will provide potency to the human senses and its motions. It will vanish with death. Secondly, *rūḥ* is an essence which was given by God and it is linked to Him.¹⁹

فَإِذَا سَوَّيْتُهُ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِي فَقَعُوا لَهُ سَاجِدِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾
Al-Ḥijr 15:29

Meaning: When it is properly shaped and I have blown My Spirit into it, you should then bow down in prostration.

3.5. The *Barzakh*

Man have to believe that real life in which all the unseen issues are disclosed, begging with the journey of death including the grasp of the soul, thereafter enjoying bliss or suffering from torment.

The state between death and resurrection is called *barzakh* which literally means a thing that intervenes between two things or an obstacle or a hindrance. The word *barzakh* has been used in this latter sense in two places in the holy Qur’ān when a barrier between two seas is spoken of as *barzakh*.²⁰

* وَهُوَ الَّذِي مَرَجَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ هَذَا عَذْبٌ فُرَاتٌ وَهَذَا مِلْحٌ أُجَاجٌ وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَهُمَا بَرْزَخًا وَحِجْرًا مَحْجُورًا ﴿٢٥﴾
Al-Furqān 25:53

¹⁹ Abū Ḥāmid Muhammad bin Muhammad al-Ghazālī, *Iḥyā’ Ulumuddīn* (Cairo: Dar al-Sha’b, w.d.), 477-478.

²⁰ Maulana Muhammad ‘Ali, *The Religion of Islam: A comprehensive discussion of the sources, principles and practices of Islam* (Kuala Lumpur: Pustaka Perkim, w.d.), 267.

Meaning: And it is He Who has let free the two seas (kinds of water), one palatable and sweet, and the other salt and bitter, and He has set a barrier and a complete partition between them.

As signifying the state between death and resurrection. This intervening state is also known by the name of *qubr*, which means grave, but has also been used in the wider sense of the state which follows death. Thus the three states, death, the grave and resurrection is spoken of, where the grave undoubtedly stands for *barzakh*. The raising to life on the day of resurrection is spoken of as the raising of those who are in their graves, as in where all people are meant, whether actually buried or not. The state of *qubr* is therefore the same state as that of *barzakh*, the state in which every man is placed after death, and before the resurrection.²¹

This is speaking about the situation in the hereafter when, we are told, every soul shall experience its own reality and come to intimately understand it's true condition and where it stands in relation to the nature, purpose, and greater realities of existence.

People remain in their graves until the end of this world, and only God knows when that will be. In any case, existence in the grave is not the same as existence in our world, so things do not follow the same rules. Time loses its solidity and externality. The period in the grave will seem very short for some people and incredibly long for others, even if they all died on the same day.²²

It has been determined from numerous traditions that the soul returns to the body at the time of questioning in the grave.

²¹ Muhammad 'Imran, *Preparation for the Hereafter*, 41-42.

²² Abū Ḥāmid Muhammad bin Muhammad al-Ghazālī, *Iḥyā' Ulumuddīn*, 470.

Since the spirit and the body live the worldly life together and shares all its joys and pains, God will resurrect people bodily and spiritually. The *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah* agree that *barzakh* exist and man will face trial in it. Both spirit and the body will receive torment and bliss in the grave and together will go either to paradise or hell. Allah will build bodies in forms specific to the Hereafter, where everything will be alive.²³

وَمَا هَذِهِ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا لَهُوٌّ وَلَعِبٌ وَإِنَّ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ لَهِيَ الْحَيَوَانُ لَوْ

كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦٤﴾

Al-‘Ankabūt 29:64

Meaning: This life of the world is but a pastime and a game, but the home of the Hereafter, that is life if they but knew.

There are many *Ḥadīth Ṣaḥīḥ* related to this subject. From Asmā’ Bint Abī Bakr al-Ṣiddīq, the Prophet p.b.u.h said:

“There is not anything that I have not seen before but I have seen now at this place of mine, even the Garden and the Fire. It has been revealed to me that you will be tried in your graves with a trial, like, or near to, the trial of the *Dajjāl*. Every one of you will have someone who comes to him and asks him, ‘what do you know about this man?’ A believer, or one who has certainty (*muqīn*) will say, ‘He is Muḥammad, the Messenger of Allah, who came to us with clear proofs and guidance, and we answered and believed and followed.’ The believer will repeat this three times. He will then be told, ‘Sleep in a good state. We know now that you were certain about him (Muḥammad).’ A hypocrite, however, or one who has doubts will say, ‘I do not know, I heard everybody saying something and I said it’.”²⁴

According to Taqī ad-Dīn Ahmad Ibn Taymiyyah, the *Ḥadīth* proves the return of the soul to the body at the time of questioning in *Barzakh*. The grave torment and bliss are

²³ ‘Ali Unal, *The Resurrection and the Afterlife* (Virginia: The Fountain, w.d.), 203.

²⁴ Narrated by Al-Bukhārī and Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Vol. 1. No. 1373.

for the soul and body together. Nevertheless, the soul is pleased or tortured alone and the body is pleased or tortured alone.²⁵

According to Muhammad Ibn Abī Bakar also known as Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, the dead will be in either bliss or torment. This affects the soul and body together. At the same time the soul becomes after leaving the body either in bliss or torment. Sometimes it returns to the body and enjoys together the bliss and torment. When the day of resurrection takes place, souls return to their bodies and move together from their grave to face Allah.²⁶

Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad Bin Muḥammad al-Ghazālī assails the philosophers in his book, *Tahāfut al-Falāsifah* along with his explanations that their dogmas of the afterlife are false. They cannot establish the spirituality of the soul, nor prove its immortality; and, finally, that their denial of the resurrection of the bodies in the life hereafter is philosophically unwarranted. This point is completely opposed to what the biggest part of humanists in the Islamic world believes. Bodily Resurrection is one of the basic tenets of Islam and to deny it is to deny a very basic principle of Islam. Death of the body does not cause the death of the soul, because the latter does not subsist in body. Rather the attachment of soul to body during its lifetime is astonishing indeed, for the soul is not in the body, just as accidents are not in a substance. The soul is not an accident. It is a self-subsisting substance. Every such being is intelligence; it has self knowledge and self consciousness. Man during his lifetime is capable of turning away from the worldly desires and struggling for the attainment of piety. Therefore the connection with things of the hereafter grows stronger. By concentrating on the absolute reality, he loses his self consciousness. One who gets rid of his senses, does not stand in

²⁵ Hasan Ayoub, *Death and Eternal Life*, 25.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

need of his body or mind for spiritual subsistence, for it is the body which functions as the source of preoccupations. The attachment of soul implies governance of body and its functions. The ability of man is the control of the body. Thus, it is possible for the soul to exist after the death of body and the resurrection or attachment of soul to dead bodies in the hereafter is promising.²⁷

For the majority of Muslims, the punishment of the grave has been a reality, affirmed in the doctrine of the *Ahl al-Sunna wa al-Jamā'ah* and specified in *Ḥadīth*.

3.5.1. *Fitnah*(Trial) of the Grave by the Two Angels

The Qur'ān speaks of two resurrections that take place after death. The first is in the *barzakh* and the second is at the final judgment. A person's life is likened to a book with each thought, word, and action, they are writing on the pages of their soul, and the state of their soul is impacted by what they busy themselves with in this world. After death, they go through the questioning in the grave by the two angels called *Nakīr* and *Munkar* and then experience a second life in the *barzakh*. The questioning is nothing other than the exposure of the reality of the state of their soul. They are asked

1. Who is your Lord?
2. What is your faith?
3. Who is your Prophet?

²⁷ 'Abdul Qayyum Shafaq Hazarvi, *The Mysteries of the Human Soul* (Lahore: Sh, Muhammad Ashraf, 1981), 41-45.

The believer will say: "My Lord is Allah, Islam is my religion, and my Prophet is Muhammad". The doubter will say "I do not know". He will then be beaten and tortured.²⁸

This is not an after death quiz or a memory test. Rather, it is an examination of how near the substance of their soul is to the substance of the Qur'ān, to the heart of the Prophet. How closely does their reality correspond to the reality identified in the Qur'ān. Their level of heart's attachment to Allah and the Prophets. Those who died as believers in God and the prophet p.b.u.h and Islam can answer these questions. Those who died as unbelievers cannot answer it. The person's deeds are also questioned.

In the *barzakh*, it is said that the contents of "who you are" are turned inside out and humans experience the contents of their own self. Just as in a dream fears and anxieties can take concrete form and shape, so in the *barzakh* they experience as concrete, manifest realities the deeds they did and the substance of their soul. It is sometimes referred to as the imaginable world since the realities of the soul will manifest as images and forms, creating an encompassing world of concretized images. However, the reality of the *barzakh*, it being higher than this world in the hierarchy of creation, is that it has a more intense reality than this world and their experience in that world will be correspondingly more intense. The soul will dwell in a universe that is nothing but a representation, a living image of its own internal architecture, a reflection, a mirror of its true stature.²⁹

²⁸ Muhammad Na'im Yasin, *The Book of Emaan* (London: Al-Firdous Ltd, 1997), 109.

²⁹ Abū Ḥāmid Muhammad bin Muhammad al-Ghazālī, *Iḥyā' Ulumuddīn*, 479.

3.5.2. Torment and Bliss in the Grave

In addition to the *fiṭnah* of the grave, Muslims should also believe in what the Prophet said about the bliss and torment to be experienced in the grave. This matter is detailed in both the Qur’ān and the *Sunnah*. Allah says:

فَوَقَّهٖ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِ مَا مَكَرُوا^ط وَحَاقَ بِآلِ فِرْعَوْنَ سُوءُ الْعَذَابِ ﴿٤٥﴾ النَّارُ
يُعْرَضُونَ عَلَيْهَا غُدُوًّا وَعَشِيًّا^ط وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ أَدْخِلُوا آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ أَشَدَّ
الْعَذَابِ ﴿٤٦﴾

Ghāfir 40:45&46

Meaning: So Allah saved him from the evils that they plotted (against him), while an evil torment encompassed Pharaoh’s people. The Fire, they are exposed to it, morning and afternoon, and one the Day when the hour will be established (it will be said to the angels): “Cause Pharaoh’s people to enter the severest Torment!”

Allah promised Pharaoh’s people two types of torment. The first is the fire they are exposed to it morning and afternoon, while the second is on the day when the Hour will be established. The conjunction ‘and’ in the above verse indicated that the first torment is not the same as the second. As the second takes place in the afterlife. The first must occur at a time between death and the Last day is in the grave.³⁰

The intermediate world is the realm where spirits feel the breath of the bliss of Paradise or the punishment of Hell. If they led virtuous lives, their good deeds will appear to them as amiable fellows. Windows will be opened onto heavenly scenes and as stated in *Ḥadīth*, the grave will be like a garden of Paradise. However, those with unpardoned sins will have to undergo some sort of suffering in the intermediate world until their sins

³⁰ Muhammad Na’im Yasin, *The Book of Emaan*, 111.

are purged and they are worthy of Paradise. Unbelievers and sinful people will meet their evil deeds in the form of bad fellows and vermin. They will see scenes of Hell, and the grave will be like one of Hell's pits.³¹

Therefore, the *barzakh* can take on the aspect of a garden of paradise or that of a nightmare come to life (or a mix of the two), depending on the contents and state and ruling characteristics of one's.

Since it is a place where one experiences nothing other than their own reality, their own true self, this is why, at the second resurrection (the judgement), the Qur'ān states that each soul knows its own place. There is no argument because everyone is cognizant of his or her own reality and of the totality of the effect of all that they have done, since they have experienced it firsthand.

3.6. Death and Soul

Death affects the body alone, and that the spirit and soul does not die. It stays alive in bliss torment until it returns to body to resurrect body and soul on the Day of Resurrection. Yet, we should disregard the views saying that death affecting both body and soul. The death of the soul is a separation of the souls from their bodies, which is reunited at the command of God on the Day of Resurrection. Soul exists in itself, is not impressed upon body, and is neither connected with nor disconnected from it. These properties are found in a body, and the soul is not a body.³²

³¹ 'Ali Unal, *The Resurrection and The Afterlife*, 200-201.

³² Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, *Rūh: Masalah Roh* trans. Jamaluddin Kafie (Johor Bahru: Pena Mas, 1980), 42-43.

Ancient and modern ‘*Ulamā*’ differ as to the place at which the souls settle after death until the rise of the final Judgement. Some people maintain that the souls of the believers are with God in paradise, whether they are martyrs or non-martyrs, unless held by a heinousness or debt, and pardoned and forgiven by Allah who receive them with mercy.³³

Other group of ‘*Ulamā*’ including Abū Muhammad ‘Alī Ibn Ḥazm maintains that the soul’s abode is settling at the places they were in before the creation of their bodies.

Muhammad Ibn Abī Bakar also known as Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah said that souls are too different as to their abodes in the *Barzakh*. Among these souls are those that settle in the height of heaven with higher beings, which are the souls of the Prophets. The souls of the martyrs are in Paradise, and they are saluted in their graves. Meanwhile, the unbeliever’s soul which is destined to be in *sijjīn* (a sealed book), is clung to the grave and the body therein, and in the Hereafter, the soul is taken to the fire of Hell.³⁴

3.7. The Importance of Coccyx on the Day of Judgement

The Coccyx (‘*ajb al-ḍanab*’) is the last bone at the base of the spinal column. It was mentioned in many *Ḥadīth* that this bone is the origin of humans and the seed from which they will be resurrected on the Day of Judgment and that this part doesn’t decay in the earth.³⁵ From Abū Hurairah, the Prophet p.b.u.h said:

³³ *Ibid.*, 47.

³⁴ Hasan Ayoub, *Death and Eternal Life*, 33-36.

³⁵ ‘Ali Unal, *The Resurrection and The Afterlife*, 200.

'Between the two sounds of the trumpet, there will be forty." Somebody asked Abū Hurairah, "Forty days?" But he refused to reply. Then he asked, "Forty months?" He refused to reply. Then he asked, "Forty years?" Again, he refused to reply. Abū Hurairah added. "Then (after this period) Allah will send water from the sky and then the dead bodies will grow like vegetation grows, There is nothing of the human body that does not decay except one bone; that is the little bone at the end of the coccyx of which the human body will be recreated on the Day of Resurrection".³⁶

After burial, the spirit is kept waiting in the intermediate world. Although the body decomposes after its death, the coccyx will remain until the last Judgement. The coccyx determined a person's genes therefore it is this coccyx from which man will be brought back to life on the Day of Resurrection. Hence, the spirit continues its relations with the body through it, as it is a foundation upon which God will resurrect each individual. God will make this part and its contents suitable for eternal life during the final destruction and rebuilding of the universe.³⁷

3.8. The Day of Resurrection

Faith in the hereafter is one of the most pillars of faith. Belief in the Hereafter is a sign of true faith and as such is very important. The sort of faith in the hereafter as defined by the Qur'ān provides strong evidence for the sincerity and truthfulness of a believer. The Muslims unanimously agree on the affirmation of the day of resurrection.³⁸ In the third verse of the second *sūrah*, it is stated:

الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ ﴿٢﴾

Al-Baqarah 2:3

Meaning: Believers are those who have faith in the unseen.

³⁶ Narrated by Al-'Amash, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Vol. 6. No. 457.

³⁷ 'Ali Unal, *The Resurrection and The Afterlife*, 200.

³⁸ Hasan Bin Ali al-Saqaf, *Ṣaḥīḥ Syarah al-'Aqīdah al-Ṭahāwiyyah* (Oman: Dar al-Imam al-Nawawi, 1998), 523.

This concept of the unseen also includes rising from the dead after death, the day of resurrection, paradise and hell, in brief, everything related to the hereafter.

In the Qur'ān, it is stated that apart from all the created beings, the universe will also confront death. It is not only man who is mortal, all animals and plants die. Even the planets and stars die. Death is the destiny common to all that has been created.³⁹

The day of resurrection begins when the trumpet is blown. This is the sign of total destruction of the world and of the entire universe and the beginning of the end. This is the point of no return. This is the sound declaring that the life of the world has come to an end for all and the real life has begun. At this moment, people recognize that they are face to face with a horrible disaster. It is obvious that the world and life is about to cease to exist. No thoughts can occupy the minds of people other than escaping and rescuing themselves. On that day, everyone is concerned only about himself.⁴⁰

On that day, the earth is changed into a different earth and the heavens likewise, mankind shall stand before God. This is the point at which people will rise from the dead, gather and wait to give an account of their deeds. This is also the place where they will learn where they are heading for. The time has come for people to be raised from the dead and presented to God. Then the trumpet will be blown for a second time.⁴¹

وَتُفِخُ فِي الصُّورِ فَإِذَا هُمْ مِنَ الْأَجْدَاثِ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَنْسِلُونَ ﴿٥١﴾ قَالُوا يَنْوِيلُنَا
مَنْ بَعَثَنَا مِن مَّرْقَدِنَا ۚ هَٰذَا مَا وَعَدَ الرَّحْمَنُ وَصَدَقَ الْمُرْسَلُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾

Yasin 36:51-52

³⁹ ‘Abd Allāh Ibn Abbās, *Tanwīr Miqbās min Tafsīr Ibn Abbās*, 81.

⁴⁰ Sidheeque M. A. Veliankode, *Doomsday: Portents & Prophecies* (Toronto: Al-Attique Publishers Inc, 1998) 484.

⁴¹ Hasan Bin Ali al-Saqaf, *Ṣaḥīḥ Syarah al-‘Aqīdah al-Ṭahāwīyyah*, 24.

Meaning: And the trumpet shall be blown, then behold, they are pouring out of the tombs unto their Lord. They say, “Alas for us! Who aroused us from our sleeping place? This is what the Merciful promised, and the envoys spoke truly!”

This event is most commonly called *qiyāmah* (resurrection), the Arabic term meaning literally ‘the standing up’. It is also called by such names as ‘the mustering’ (*hashr*) and ‘the uprising’ (*ba‘th*). The events that take place at the resurrection last only for a single day, but some accounts tell us that this day will be equivalent to fifty thousand years of our reckoning.⁴²

The Qur’ān describes the Day of Judgement as a day of happiness for the believers and a day of panic and fear for those who rejected God. Allah will sort the people into groups, review their records and either bless them with His mercy or punish them. No matter what they do in the course of their lives, they will eventually stand before God. The ultimate aim of this life is to be His servant. The most important time, on the other hand, is the day of resurrection, when we shall be giving an account of our lives.⁴³

All the people from the first man on earth to the last disbeliever who will ever live in the world will be there. Muslims believe that the gathering (*hashr*) will take place after people are resurrected and have risen from their graves. After people are resurrected, Allah will command the angels to drive all humanity to a predetermined place where they will be gathered to await their Judgements. They will be in the state in which they first came into this life, barefoot, naked and uncircumcised.⁴⁴

⁴² Sayyid Sābiq, *Akidah Islam: Al-‘Aqāid al-Islāmiyah*, 557-559.

⁴³ Sidheeque M. A. Veliankode, *Doomsday: Portents & Prophecies*, 481-482.

⁴⁴ Muhammad Na’im Yasin, *The Book of Emaan*, 133-134.

3.9. The Book of Deeds

Every person on earth will have a book that contains a record of everything he or she said or did during his or her lifetime. Muslims are required to believe that on the last day people will be recompensed for all what they gained in this world, good and evil.⁴⁵

The Qur'an explains the reaction people will have when reading their own book:

وَوُضِعَ الْكِتَابُ فَتَرَى الْمُجْرِمِينَ مُشْفِقِينَ مِمَّا فِيهِ وَيَقُولُونَ يَوَيْلَتَنَا مَا لَ هَذَا
الْكِتَابِ لَا يُغَادِرُ صَغِيرَةً وَلَا كَبِيرَةً إِلَّا أَحْصَاهَا^{٤٦} وَوَجَدُوا مَا عَمِلُوا حَاضِرًا^{٤٧}
وَلَا يَظْلِمُ رَبُّكَ أَحَدًا ﴿٤٨﴾

Al-Kahf 18:49

Meaning: And the book will be placed before you, and you will see the sinful in great terror, because of what is recorded therein. They will say, 'Oh, woe to us! What book is this? It leaves out nothing, great or small, but takes account of it'. They will find all that they did, place before them. And not one will your Lord treat with injustice."

A notion's book of deeds throws light on what is meant by the individual's book of deeds. The book of deeds means nothing but the effect of the deeds done by the individual or the nation. It is not meant that there will be a book using the word materially, written with pen and ink. This book of deeds, the inner self, which is hidden from the human eye, will become an open book on the day of resurrection.⁴⁶

3.10. The Reckoning (*Ḥisāb*)

Recompense takes place following a fair trial in which people will be presented to their Lord. Evidence and arguments for and against them will be put forward; they will be

⁴⁵ Sayyid Sābiq, *Akidah Islam: Al-'Aqā'id al-Islāmiyah*, 610.

⁴⁶ Maulana Muhammad 'Ali, *The Religion of Islam: A comprehensive discussion of the sources, principles and practices of Islam*, 286-287.

presented with the records of their deeds and will read their records. Muslims are informed of those events in the Qur'ān and *Sunnah*. Every Muslim must believe that each human being will be presented to Allah and judged directly by Him without any intermediaries.⁴⁷

On the day of Judgement the record will be revealed to each person individually, the results of the reckoning obviously predetermined by one's being ordered to take his book in either on his right hand or the left hand. If he is of the people to be saved, he will receive his record with the right hand. Allah will forgive his sins and let him enter Paradise without discussing his account or tormenting him in the Hell fire.⁴⁸

As for those whose transgressions were many, they will receive their records on their left hand. They will be brought to account and questioned about every great and small action. Allah says in the Qur'ān:

يَأْتِيهَا الْإِنْسُنُ إِنَّكَ كَادِحٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ كَدًّا فَمُلْقِيهِ ۖ فَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ
بِيمِينِهِ ۖ فَسَوْفَ يُحَاسَبُ حِسَابًا يَسِيرًا ۖ وَيَنْقَلِبُ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ مَسْرُورًا ۖ
وَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ وَرَاءَ ظَهْرِهِ ۖ فَسَوْفَ يَدْعُوا ثُبُورًا ۖ وَيَصْلَىٰ سَعِيرًا ۖ
إِنَّهُ كَانَ فِي أَهْلِهِ مَسْرُورًا ۖ إِنَّهُ ظَنَّ أَن لَّنْ نَّحُورَ ۖ بَلَىٰ إِنَّ رَبَّهُ كَانَ
بِهِ بَصِيرًا

Al-'Insiyāq 84:6-15

Meaning: O man! surely you must strive (to attain) to your Lord, a hard striving until you meet Him. Then as to him who is given his book in his right hand, He shall be reckoned with by an easy reckoning, And he shall go back to his people joyful. And as to him who is given his book behind his back, He shall call for perdition, And enter into burning fire. Surely he was (erstwhile) joyful among his

⁴⁷ Hasan Bin Ali al-Saqaf, *Ṣaḥīḥ Syarah al-'Aqīdah al-Ṭahāwīyyah*, 526-527.

⁴⁸ Sayyid Sābiq, *Akīdah Islam: Al-'Aqā'id al-Islāmiyah*, 612.

followers. Surely he thought that he would never return. Yea! surely his Lord does ever see him.

Before having the chance to overcome the bewilderment caused by resurrection, the human being becomes stuck with fear and grief. This is because he will give an account of his deeds in the presence of God. All of his deeds, he had engaged in throughout his life and all his thoughts will be disclosed. No minor detail is forgotten.⁴⁹

3.11. The Scales (*Mīzān*)

Muslims must believe in what Allah and his Messenger have told them about people's good and evil deeds being weighed on the day of Judgement with a scale, to demonstrate the Justice of Allah.⁵⁰

Wazn is simply the knowing of the measure of a thing. It is true that the measure of material things is judged by a pair of scales or by some other implement, but the deeds of a man need no scales for their measurement. *Wazn* or *mīzān* in connection with the deeds of men is meant that the doing of justice in the reckoning of men. Hence the word used for measure or balance are the same words with *mīzān* and *wazn*.⁵¹

The *Ḥadīth* tell us that it is a real scale, with two plates, and that Allah transforms people's deeds into objects with weights whereupon the good deeds will be placed on one side and the evil ones on the other. The angels scribe record people's activities

⁴⁹ Harun Yahya, *The Day of Judgment*, 23.

⁵⁰ Hasan Bin Ali al-Saqaf, *Ṣaḥīḥ Syarah al-'Aqīdah al-Ṭahāwiyyah*, 536.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

during their life in this world will place their scrolls in the scales. Hopefully, the good deeds will outweigh the evil deeds.⁵² According to the Qur'ān:

وَنَضَعُ الْمَوَازِينَ الْقِسْطَ لِيَوْمِ الْقِيَمَةِ فَلَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْئًا وَإِنْ كَانَ
مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِنْ خَرْدَلٍ أَتَيْنَا بِهَا وَكَفَى بِنَا حَاسِبِينَ ﴿٢١﴾

Al-'Anbiyā 21:47

Meaning: And We will set up a just balance on the day of resurrection, so no soul shall be dealt with unjustly in the least; and though there be the weight of a grain of mustard seed, (yet) will We bring it, and sufficient are We to take account.

The deeds recorded in the books are measured by just balances. Every deed engaged in this life, even of a minor nature is placed in this balance. The indicator of this balance determines whether one will be sent to eternal torment or to eternal bliss and salvation. If the balance is well weighed down with good deeds, the person being judged is sent to paradise. If not, he will be destined for hell.⁵³

3.12. The Bridge (Şirāt)

Islam teaches that after the reckoning and weighing, people will cross a bridge called *As-Şirāt* (the Path). This bridge is described as a bridge stretching over hell, sharper than a sword and thinned than a strand of hair.⁵⁴

Everybody will pass over the bridge; Prophets and honourable worshippers, believers and disbelievers, those who face the reckoning and those who do not. Those who adhered to the straight path of Allah will walk straight across the bridge on the last day.

⁵² Muhammad Na'im Yasin, *The Book of Emaan*, 146.

⁵³ Maulana Muhammad 'Ali, *The Religion of Islam: A comprehensive discussion of the sources, principles and practices of Islam*, 289.

⁵⁴ Hasan Bin Ali al-Saqaf, *Şahih Syarah al-'Aqidah al-Ṭahāwīyyah*, 539.

The ease with which people cross that bridge depends on the amount of good deeds they performed in this life. Some pass like meteorites, others like the wind or as fast as the eye can blink, while those with the fewest good deeds take one step and stumble the next and the fire will touch their sides. When they have all passed along, they will be held on a little bridge between it and Paradise. There, they will retaliate against one another for injustices that passed between them in this life. Once this settling of personal accounts ceases, they will all be allowed into paradise.⁵⁵ The Qur'ān says:

وَإِنْ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا كَانَ عَلَى رَبِّكَ حَتْمًا مَقْضِيًّا ﴿٧١﴾

Maryam 19:71

Meaning: There is not one of you but will pass over it (Hell); this is with you Lord, a Decree which must be accomplished.

3.13. The Intercession (*Shafā'ah*)

The meaning of intercession is to pray to Allah for the goodness of mankind in the hereafter. This intercession includes the group of people whose prayers are granted. Among those intercession is the great intercession which is *Syafā'ah 'Uzmah* and it is specifically for the prophet Muhammad p.b.u.h. He owns a great intercession that was not given to any other prophets. He will use that intercession on the Day of Judgment in order to enable people to be saved from the horror of *maḥshar* by finishing their reckoning. That privilege and high rank of intercession given to our Prophet is called *Maqām al-Maḥmūd* which is the Station of Praise and Glory. Apart from the great intercession of our Prophet related to humanity, there will be his special intercession for his *ummah*.

⁵⁵ Muhammad Na'im Yasin, *The Book of Emaan*, 147.

يَوْمَئِذٍ لَا تَنْفَعُ الشَّفَعَةُ إِلَّا مَنْ أَذِنَ لَهُ الرَّحْمَنُ وَرَضِيَ لَهُ قَوْلًا ﴿١٠٩﴾

Taha 20:109

Meaning: On that day shall no intercession avail except of him whom the Beneficent Allah allows and whose word He is pleased with.

3.14. Paradise

In addition to all of the above, Muslims believe in the existence of Paradise and Hell, that they are two of Allah's creations which He has as a reward and punishment, and that they existed before mankind were created, exist today and will exist for eternity.⁵⁶

Allah promises paradise to those who come to His presence as believers. Surely, Allah does not fail to keep His promise. People, whose faith is assured, know that their Creator will keep His promise and that they will be accepted in paradise provided that they live as true believers in this world.

جَنَّاتٍ عَدْنٍ الَّتِي وَعَدَ الرَّحْمَنُ عِبَادَهُ بِالْغَيْبِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ وَعْدُهُ مَأْتِيًا ﴿٦١﴾

Maryam19:61

Meaning: Paradise of Eternity, those which (Allah) Most Gracious has promised to His slaves in the Unseen: for His promise must (necessarily) come to pass

Jannah is derived from *jānn* which signifies the concealing of a thing so that it is not perceived by the senses, and *jannah* in ordinary usage, means a garden, because its ground is covered by trees. But the use of this name for the abode of bliss has a deeper significance since of Paradise it is plainly stated that its blessings are such as cannot be

⁵⁶ Hasan Bin Ali al-Saqaf, *Ṣaḥīḥ Syarah al- 'Aqīdah al-Ṭahāwīyyah*, 578.

perceived by the physical senses.⁵⁷

The moment of entering paradise is the most important time for the faithful who believe and do good deeds. All throughout their lives, they strove for it, prayed for it and performed right actions to obtain it. In the presence of Allah, it is surely the best place to stay and the real place to attain: paradise, the place specially prepared for believers. An excellent vista of lakes, rivers, and lush greenery is the sort of paradise imagined by the ordinary person. However, this image of paradise needs to be clarified because it does not accurately reflect the Qur'ān point of view. It is certainly true that paradise has significant natural beauty and yet, such a pleasant atmosphere only portrays its appealing and artistic aspects. That is why in the Qur'ān there are references to splendid mansions, shady gardens, and flowing rivers. However limiting paradise to physical magnificence will definitely prove to be inadequate to the reality.⁵⁸

The people of the Garden will be happy and peaceful. The Qur'ān also describes that they will experience pure joy and no sense of wickedness.⁵⁹ A believer who has the benefit of such a favour and is grateful to his Creator derives his main pleasure from knowing that it is the benevolence of Allah. The satisfaction can be found only from the fact that Allah protects him, loves him and that his Creator shows His Mercy to him. Therefore, one's heart only takes pleasure from paradise. He is created to be a servant of Allah and therefore he takes only pleasure from His benevolence.

⁵⁷ Maulana Muhammad 'Ali, *The Religion of Islam: A comprehensive discussion of the sources, principles and practices of Islam*, 291.

⁵⁸ Muhammad bin Ahmad al-Qurtubi, *Al-Tazkirah fī 'aḥwāl al-Mautā wa 'umūr al-Akhirah*, 242.

⁵⁹ Sayyid Sābiq, *Akidah Islam: Al-'Aqāid al-Islāmiyah*, 655-666.

3.14.1. The Levels of Paradise

The Qur'ān indicated that some people will be higher than others. There will be different levels, and people will be assigned to these levels based on the strength of their faith and the purity of their hearts.

1. *Firdaws*: The Highest Gardens of the Paradise.
2. *Jannah al-'adn*: Gardens of Everlasting Bliss.
3. *Jannah al-na'īm*: The Gardens of Delight.
4. *Jannah al-ma'wā*: Garden of Abode.
5. *Dār al-salām*: Home of Peace.
6. *Dār al-maqāmah*: The Home.
7. *al-Maqām al-amīn*: The House of Security.
8. *Jannah al-khuld*: The Eternal Gardens.⁶⁰

3.14.2. Doors of *Jannah*

There are eight doors of *Jannah*. Their names are as following.

1. *Bāb al-Ṣalāh*: Those Muslims who were punctual in observing their *Ṣalāh* will be granted entry through this door.
2. *Bāb al-Jihād*: Those Muslims who participated in *Jihād* will be granted entry through this door.
3. *Bāb al-Ṣadaqah*: Those Muslims who frequently gave *Ṣadaqah* will be admitted into *Jannah* through this door.
4. *Bāb al-Rayyān*: The Muslims who constantly observed the fast will be granted entry through this door.

⁶⁰ Sayyid Sābiq, *Akidah Islam: Al-'Aqāid al-Islāmiyah*, 653.

5. *Bāb al-Hājj*: Those Muslims who observe their annual pilgrimage will be admitted through this door.
6. *Bāb al-Kāzimin al-Ghaiz Wa al-‘Āfina ‘An al-Nās*: This door is reserved for those Muslims who suppress their anger and pardon others frequently.
7. *Bāb al-Aimān*: This door is reserved for the entry of such Muslims who by virtue of their faith are saved from reckoning and chastisement.
8. *Bāb al-Zikr*: Those Muslims who excessively remembered Allah will be admitted through this door.

3.15. Hell

Just as those who believe and do good deeds are rewarded for their efforts, those who reject God and rebel against His laws will face punishment in the Hereafter. Hell is the place, where disbelievers will remain for all eternity is specially created to give pain to the human body and soul. That is solely because the disbelievers are guilty of great wrong and Allah's justice entails punishment upon them.⁶¹

Being ungrateful and rebellious to Allah is the greatest wrong action that can be committed in the whole universe. Therefore, in the hereafter there is grievous punishment for such a deadly wrong. This is what hell serves for; man is created to be a servant of Allah. If he denies the main purpose of his creation, then he surely receives what he deserves.⁶² Allah states the following in one of the verses:

وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ^{٦٢} إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي

⁶¹ Hasan Bin Ali al-Saqaf, *Ṣaḥīḥ Syarah al-‘Aqīdah al-Ṭahāwīyyah*, 578.

⁶² Sheikh Mahmood H Rashid, *Zero Hour* (Kuala Lumpur: S. Abdul Majeed & Co., 1994), 102.

Meaning: ...those who are too arrogant to serve Me will surely find themselves in Hell – in humiliation!

Since the majority of people will be sent to hell at the end and punishment in it is timeless and eternal, then the main aim, the basic goal of humanity should be to avoid hell. The biggest threat to man is hell and nothing can be more important than saving one's soul from it.⁶³

In fact, hell is more real than this world. The world will cease to exist after some time, but hell will remain for all eternity. Allah has likewise created the hereafter, paradise and hell. A grievous punishment is promised to all disbelievers and hypocrites.

Hell, the worst place that can ever imagine, is a source of the sheerest torture. This torture and pain is not similar to any kind of pain in this world. It is much more intense than any pain or misery one can ever face in this world. It is surely the work of Allah, the Exalted in Wisdom. The most fearsome characteristic of hell is its eternal nature. Once in hell, there will be no return. The only reality is hell together with many other kinds of torture. Encountering such an eternal torture, a person falls into desperate hopelessness. He has no further expectations. People in hell perceive pain through all five senses. Their eyes see disgusting and terrible images; their ears hear frightening screams, roars and cries; their noses fill with terrible and unpleasant smells; their tongues taste the most unbearable, vile tastes. They feel hell deep in their cells; this is a maddeningly severe pain that is difficult to imagine in this world. Their skin, their

⁶³ Muhammad bin Salleh al-Utheimeen, *Explaining the Fundamental of Faith*, trans. Saleh al-Saleh (Al-Dimam: Islamic Cultural Center, w.d.), 79.

internal organs and their whole body are wracked and they writhed in pain.⁶⁴

The only people who will be punished in Hell eternally with no chance of escape are those who disbelieve in God and associate others with Him in their worship. Hypocrites are equated with disbelievers, and they face the same punishment. Those who believe in God may spend a short time in Hell, in punishment for sins they committed during their lives. Sins such as arrogance, pride, murder, envy, lying or oppression may be punished for transgressing God's limits or for being neglectful of one's duties to God.⁶⁵

The regret becomes deeper and deeper; not having followed the commands of Allah in the world makes them feel profound remorse. Those who reject the commands of Allah in this world whether consciously or unconsciously, denies the existence of their Creator will have no salvation in the hereafter.

3.15.1. The levels of hell

It has seven doors leading to a fiery crater of various levels, the lowest of which contains the tree *Zaqqūm* and a cauldron of boiling pitch. The level of hell depends on the degree of offenses. Suffering is both physical and spiritual.⁶⁶

1. *Jahannam*: Hell because of the depth of its pit.
2. *Laẓā*: blazing fire because of its flames.
3. *Huṭamah*: broken pieces or debris because it breaks and crushes everything that is thrown into it.
4. *Sa'īr*: blazing flame because it is kindled and ignited.

⁶⁴ Muhammad bin Ahmad al-Qurtubi, *Al-Tazkirah fī 'aḥwāl al-Mautā wa 'umūr al-Akhirah*, 96.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ Sayyid Sābiq, *Akidah Islam: Al-'Aqāid al-Islāmiyah*, 623-626.

5. *Saqar*: because of the intensity of its heat.
6. *Jaḥīm*: fire - because of its blazing fire.
7. *Hāwiyah*: chasm or abyss - because the one who is thrown into it is thrown from top to bottom.

3.16. Conclusion

This chapter describes the concept of resurrection in Islam which meets the second objective of this study. This research focus on the afterlife of Islam from death to the human soul to the *barzakh* to the day of Judgement and finally to heaven and hell. The reason why the researcher explains about the afterlife in Islam is to make certain that the Muslims would not mix up their beliefs in the afterlife with others such as the concept of reincarnation in Buddhism.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS OF REINCARNATION FROM ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE

4.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher evaluates the Buddhism belief in reincarnation and Islamic belief in resurrection based on Islamic perspective. The researcher also analyses some of the Malay beliefs which have been influenced by the Buddhism teachings.

4.2. Buddhism and Islam

Every religion teaches moralities, ethics and righteousness. They have their own set of principles that they have to follow in order for them to reach their goal in life. In Buddhism, the core of the Buddha's teaching is the Four Noble truths. To attain their goal in life is to follow the Noble Eightfold path.

In Islam, everything they do is to achieve the blessing of Allah and His Prophet Muhammad p.b.u.h. They need to submit to the will of Allah and must follow the teaching of al-Qur'ān and *al-Ḥadīth*. Muslim ought to believe in Allah, His angles, His revelations, His Prophets, the day of resurrection and lastly predestination.¹ In *Sūrah al-Baqarah*, it says;

وَلَكِنَّ الْإِبْرَءَمَنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَالْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ وَالْكِتٰبِ وَالنَّبِيِّنَ

Al-Baqarah 2:177

¹ Sayyid Sābiq, *Akidah Islam: Al-'Aqāid al-Islāmiyah*, trans. H. Moh. Abdai Rathomy (Kuala Lumpur: Pustaka Jiwa Sdn. Bhd., 2003), 3-4.

Meaning: Righteousness is he who believes in Allah and the Last Day and the Angels and the Scriptures and the Prophets.

Buddhism and Islam believe that there is life after death. Both religions emphasize afterlife in their teachings. For Buddhism, it is extremely important to believe in the afterlife. The teachings of Buddha are authoritative and binding on all Buddhists. The belief in afterlife is in fact, the essence of Buddhism.

For Islam, faith in the Hereafter is one of the most important pillars of Islamic faith. Belief in the Hereafter is a sign of true faith, and as such is very important. This shows that Islam holds the belief in the oneness of God (*tauḥīd*) in order to achieve a great afterlife. However there is no concept of God in Buddhism. Thus, faith in the afterlife for a Buddhist is not because of the belief in God, but rather to escape the cycle of rebirth (*samsara*).

With the absence of the concept of God, Buddhism failed to give satisfactory answers in connection with the origin of life, the purpose of life, the goal and destiny of life and also the place of man in the scheme of things. Buddhism could not but give a philosophy of life totally inadequate, unsuited and unacceptable to basic human nature. In Islam however, with the existence of God, the purpose, end as well as goal of life ultimately become positive, dynamic and sublime. Moreover, because of God, this world is real and is a moral order, which is so constituted as to be compatible with success in the moral struggle.

4.3. The Soul (*Atman*)

In their analysis of the self, the Buddhist found that man had no immortal abiding changeless substance in him called soul or ego. Buddha was apparently making a laudable attempt at cutting at the roots of the moral evils which arise from excessive love of self. This constitutes an understanding of Buddha's attack on the ego. These sins of the ego are the most widespread.²

Islam has a solution in solving this problem in an effectual and acceptable way. Islam does not ask that the empirical self be destroyed or annihilated. Fairly, Islam demands that the individual ego be sublimated in the service of the divine Ego (*jihād fī sabīlillah*). Within the sphere of morality this is achieved through active participation in the moral struggle resulting in the purification (*tazkiyyah al-nafs*) rather than destruction of the self. This purification process begins with the taming of the carnal animal self or the evil self (*al-nafs al-ammārah*). This is the intensely practical stage of the purification process.³

Then comes the stage of psychological training involving the quickening to life of the self-reproaching spirit or the self, conscious of evil it has committed, and regretful of having done so (*al-nafs al-lawwāmah*).⁴

² Walpola Rahula, *What the Buddha Taught* (Kuala Lumpur: SAM Publishing Sdn. Bhd., w.d.), 51.

³ Imran N. Hosein, *Islam And Buddhism In The Modern World* (New York: Masjid Dar al-Qur'an, 2001), 38.

⁴ *Ibid.*

Finally to the stage of the beatified self which means free from evil, and in a state of peace and contentment (*al-nafs al-muṭma'innah*). Here the sublimation of the finite self and its submission to the Infinite Self is complete.⁵

Islam understands that soul is part of human beings. It is innate in them thus it cannot be remove. However Buddhism believes that man has no soul because having soul will lead to moral evils. Islam taught the followers on how to handle their souls. Unlike Buddhism, ask their followers to cut off their soul whereby it is impossible to cut off something that is the essence of human beings.

4.4. Death

Buddhism and Islam believe that every soul will die. No one will live forever in this world. Nobody will escape from death. To gain a great afterlife, both Buddhists and Muslims need to prepare themselves by doing what their religion orders them to do.

Buddhists believe that after death, a person will be reborn to another form. The soul would not die along with the body, but it will reincarnate into another world such as animal or ghost or human according to their *karma*. They believe in *karma*, which in future people will experience the consequences of their past deeds. Good *karma* comes from good deeds, and bad *karma* from bad deeds.

On the contrary, Muslims believe that everyone will die only once and as God has willed, will have an endless life in the world to come. They won't return to this world after they die. Once the time granted for them terminates, their lives end for these

⁵ *Ibid.*

apparent reasons. Meanwhile, none of the material resources devoted to saving one from death will bring another breath of life as saying by the Buddha. The one who will die will be them. They will experience everything which will happen after death all alone. Nobody will pay for their wrongdoings unlike Buddhism, a person who commits sins will die and reborn in another body and the new body will pay for everything he had done in the past.⁶

It is stated in the following verse in The Qur'ān that death is tasted only once.

لَا يَذُوقُونَ فِيهَا الْمَوْتَ إِلَّا الْمَوْتَةَ الْأُولَىٰ وَوَقَّاهُمْ عَذَابَ الْجَحِيمِ ﴿٥٦﴾

Al-Dukhān 44:56

Meaning: Nor will they there taste Death, except the first Death, and He will have protected them from the punishment of Hellfire.

The difference between Islam and Buddhism on this issue is that Islam believes everyone will die only once, contrary to Buddhism belief that everyone will die more than once. Islam rejects this, as the concept of more than one death and rebirth to become the same person does not hold up due to the fact that the person will not be the same anymore.

4.5. Karma

Buddhism believes in *karma* and it determines in what station or status they shall be reborn in the next life. However, there is no concept of *karma* in the Islamic teaching.

⁶ Harun Yahya, *Islam and Buddhism* (India: Islamic Book Service, 2003), 8.

Islam solves the problem of despair with its concept of Allah who is full of Compassion and Mercy. He will always forgive the sinners who asked for forgiveness. Human beings in moral struggle crave for a source of unfailing hope and comfort. This can only be provided with the concept of compassionate, loving and forgiving from God who is full of grace.⁷

﴿ قُلْ يٰٓعِبَادِيَ الَّذِيْنَ اَسْرَفُوْا عَلٰٓى اَنْفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوْا مِنْ رَّحْمَةِ اللّٰهِ ۚ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَغْفِرُ
الذُّنُوْبَ جَمِيْعًا ۚ اِنَّهٗ هُوَ الْغَفُوْرُ الرَّحِيْمُ ﴾

Al-Zumar 39:53

Meaning: Say, "O My servants who have transgressed against themselves [by sinning], do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Indeed, Allah forgives all sins. Indeed, it is He who is the Forgiving, the Merciful."

Islam provides the system of rewards and punishment by heaven and hell which balanced in favour of rewards for the good and punishment for the wrongdoings. When a man carry out a good deed, Allah will reward him, but if he commits a sin, Allah will punish him. It is not the man himself who have the influence to speculate their own life. Allah is the only one who is acting alone and powerful enough to give reward and punishment to the humans.⁸

﴿ مَنْ جَاءَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ عَشْرُ اَمْثَالِهَا ۖ وَمَنْ جَاءَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ فَلَا تُجْزٰى اِلَّا مِثْلَهَا وَهُمْ
لَا يُظْلَمُوْنَ ﴾

Al-An'ām 6:160

Meaning: Whoever comes [on the Day of Judgement] with a good deed will have ten times the like thereof [to his credit], and whoever comes with an evil deed will not be recompensed except the like thereof; and they will not be wronged.

⁷ Abdullah Mustafa Numsuk, *Al-Budhiyah Tārikhīhā wa Aqā'idahā wa 'Alāqah As-Ṣūfiyyah bihā* (Riyadh: Dār Al-Aḍwa' As-Salaf, 1999), 195.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 200.

If each individual is supposed to go through a painful cycle of transmigration to acquire eternal bliss, the God's promise to punish the wicked and the sinful and to reward the good and the righteous, suggest that there is no meaning for the individual life. The fact is, nobody could remember what he had done in the previous life since there are no previous life and this so-called cycle of lives, and yet, there is no meaning in being born as an animal does not have any intellectual ability to comprehend its animalness, thus punishment of bad *karma* seems meaningless. This is unacceptable for Providence, for God is neither vain nor pointless in His actions. The Qur'ān state that sins will be forgiven if truly repented. This proves how much better the concepts of forgiveness befit God.⁹

In Buddhism, man is responsible for his own existence. Since man is the cause of his own existence, by the same token he is the maker of his own destiny. He is what he makes of himself. Islam believe in *al-Qadar* which means Allah's predestination of beings according to His foreknowledge and as necessitated by His wisdom.¹⁰ In Islam, it is Allah who created man and Allah who further endowed him with personality and freedom. Neither is man the master of his destiny, nor is Allah the despot working out the destiny of man. Islam strikes the middle course. By doing so, Islam escapes the terror of the complete freedom of existentialism. *Taqdīr* in Islam gives man the freedom to participate in the making of his own destiny. At the same time, Allah himself also participates with him in the making of his destiny. The idea of *al-Qadar* is optimistic and a motivating concept towards becoming a better Muslim.¹¹

⁹ 'Ali Unal, *The Resurrection and The Afterlife* (Virginia: The Fountain, w.d.), 242.

¹⁰ Sa'ad bin Fawaz al-Samil, *Syarah al- Aqīdah al-Wasāṭiyyah li-Sheikh al-islām Ibn Taimiyya* (Al-Manṣūrah: Dār Ibn Rajb, 2003), 418.

¹¹ Muhammad 'Abduh, *Risalah at-Tauhid: The Theology of Unity*, trans. Ishaq Musaad and Kenneth Cragg (Kuala Lumpur: Islamic Book Trust, 2004), 50-51.

وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ فَقَدَرَهُ تَقْدِيرًا ۝

Al-Furqān 25:2

Meaning: and has created each thing and determined it with [precise] determination.

In Buddhism, when a man gets his *karma*, either it is a good or a bad *karma*, it is based on his own doing. They are born accordance to their *karma*. The concept is similar to Christianity, whereby man are born with an original sin. The concept of *karma* and original sin deny the freedom and the free will of man. Unlike Muslims who are born with pure soul with no burden of *karma* or inheritance of any sin. If man accepts his *karma*, he would not have the initiative and freedom in his doings and diligence. Hence, Buddhism is like *Qadariyah* in terms of denying *al-Qadar*, and they are also similar to *al-Jabariyah* in terms of denying the free will of human being.¹²

مَنْ عَمِلْ صَالِحًا فَلِنَفْسِهِ ۖ وَمَنْ أَسَاءَ فَعَلَيْهَا ۚ وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِظَلَّامٍ لِّلْعَبِيدِ ۝

Al-Fuṣṣilat 41:46

Meaning: Whoever does righteousness - it is for his [own] soul; and whoever does evil [does so] against it. And your Lord is not ever unjust to [His] servants.

Some Muslims commonly talk about fate (*qismah*) within the context of Islamic belief and practice. Allah, as omnipotent deity decides the fate or lot (*qism*) of each person. Muslims stress that each person gets the consequences of his own actions. One should follow the basic tenets of Islam and also fulfill familial and social responsibilities towards another fellow man. Negligence in religious duties and social relations are

¹² Abdullah Muṣṭafā Numsuk, *Al-Budhīyah Tārīkhīhā wa Aqā'idahā wa 'Alāqah As-Ṣūfiyyah bihā*, 205.

believed to contribute to unfortunate consequences in one's fate. It is Allah who judges men's thoughts and actions and metes out the consequences.¹³

Islam rejects the concept of *karma* because it denies the freedom and free will of man. Islam believes in *al-Qadar* which gives man the freedom from existentialism. It is unreasonable for a man to suffer for another man's sins. Unlike Buddhism, Islam maintains that every person will face his own action and will be punished for his own sins. Since Allah is full of Compassion and Mercy, He will always forgive the sinners who asked for forgiveness.

4.6. Dependent Origination

The theory of dependent origination states that there is no object or event which is independent in respect of its ordinary existence or its appearance. All objects are dependent for their existence, or appearance, on other objects and all events on other events. This theory states that all is contingent and nothing is necessary. Therefore, it leaves no room for a self-existent, self-subsistent reality or God.¹⁴

Islam makes a different use of the law of causality than Buddhism. For Buddhism, the causal law is absolute and universal. There is, therefore, a necessary relation between cause and effect. Islam makes causality relative to the spatiotemporal dimension of existence. This is likely because Islam believes in the existence of the unseen world which transcends causality. Even within this spatiotemporal dimension of existence, Islam holds a divine involvement both in nature and in human affairs.¹⁵

¹³ Charles F. Keyes and E. Valentine Daniel, *Karma: An Anthropological Inquiry* (California: University of California Press, 1983), 136.

¹⁴ Narada Thera, *The Buddha-Dhamma* (New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 1999), 184.

¹⁵ Imran N. Hosein, *Islam And Buddhism In The Modern World*, 26.

The theory of dependent origination also produced the theory of universal flux. Nothing is real so nothing is permanent. All is contingent thus all is transitory. Things are constantly coming into being and passing away. They exist only for moments.

The fact of change also finds expression in the Qur'ān, but in a different perspective from its Buddhist counterpart. Both Buddhism and Islam verify the action of change in the order of natural phenomena. Buddhism uses the universal flux to turn away the individual from the life of this world and to build up his obligation to the other worldly life. This application is negative and destructive. This is because that individual may be too obsessed in building up his next life rather than focusing to live in the present life. Unlike Islam, the application is positive and constructive whereby it is applied to the goods and pleasures which men cling to in this life to affirm the more permanent life in the hereafter.¹⁶

وَابْتَغِ فِيمَا ءَاتَاكَ اللَّهُ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ ۖ وَلَا تَنْسَ نَصِيبَكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا
وَأَحْسِنْ كَمَا أَحْسَنَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ ۖ وَلَا تَبْغِ الْفُسَادَ فِي الْأَرْضِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ
الْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾

Al-Qaṣaṣ 28:77

Meaning: But seek, through that which Allah has given you, the home of the Hereafter; and [yet], do not forget your share of the world. And do good as Allah has done good to you. And desire not corruption in the land. Indeed, Allah does not like corrupters.

There is no concept of dependent origination in Islam because it denies the existence and the work of God. Buddhism asks the believers to totally turn away from this world. On the other hand, Islam does not ask that the believer should turn away from this world so full of change. Islam asks that the believer should ponder and reflect over the fact of

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 34-35.

change in this world and carry out his obligation in this world which is applied to the goodness.

4.7. Rebirth

Together with the theory of *karma*, there is also the theory of rebirth. *Karma* determines in what station or status we shall be reborn in this life. According to the doctrine of rebirth, after undergoing cycles of suffering, their lives will end in some way, which means the end of the cycles of rebirth. Therefore, by its very nature, rebirth is not a final end and does not contradict the world's final destruction and the Supreme Judgement.¹⁷

On the contrary, Islam requires believe in the resurrection and Judgement day, when justice is meted out to each individual soul according to the individual's record in life. If the individual soul passes into different lives, there will be confusion in terms of which form or personality that individual will be resurrected, commanded to give account to, and in which personality either be rewarded or punished.

The theory of rebirth contradicts to the Islamic belief such as in the Judgement day, *Ḥisāb*, paradise and hell. Man will be accounted on the day of Judgement. Good deeds with rewards and sins with punishment. Different from Buddhist belief, they do not have the theory of *Ḥisāb*. They will be undergoing numerous rebirths until they are left with no sins.¹⁸

¹⁷ Aggacitta Bhikkhu, *Dying to live: The role of Kamma in dying and rebirth* (Selangor: Sukhi Hotu Dhamma Publications, 1999), 51.

¹⁸ Muhammad bin Salleh al-Utheimeen, *Syarah al-'uṣūl al-'īmān: Explaining the Fundamentals of Faith*, trans. Saleh al-Saleh (Riyadh: Islamic Cultural Centre, w.d.) 74.

In Buddhism, the world is a place to punish the sins. Therefore they will return or be reborn to this world to pay for their sins. In Islam, the world is a place for commitment and submission to God. It is not a place for reckoning, it is impossible to be reckoning without giving chance and time to live and performing good deeds.¹⁹

The soul together with the same body will be rised back on the day of Judgement to face their retribution. The Qur'ān said that the soul will not go back to the world again to redeem the wrongdoings of the past. If man return to the world, they will go back to their past life that full of sins and will forget the purpose of their lives.²⁰

بَلْ بَدَا لَهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يُخْفُونَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَلَوْ رُدُّوا لَعَادُوا لِمَا نُهُوا عَنْهُ وَإِنَّهُمْ

لَكَذِبُونَ

Al-An'ām 6:28

Meaning: But what they concealed before has [now] appeared to them. And even if they were returned, they would return to that which they were forbidden; and indeed, they are liars.

As have been evident, there is no single, consistent notion of the afterlife within Buddhism. Reincarnation or rebirth is an un-Islamic idea. It has no place in the Qur'ān and *Sunnah*. Islam believes in resurrection, not reincarnation. Thus, there is no such thing as past lives according to Islam. Allah created humans from nothing and gave them existence. They have only one life on this earth. After death, they will be raised up again on the Day of Judgement. There is no return to this life and the dead stays in the grave until the Day of Resurrection.²¹ Allah says in the Qur'ān:

¹⁹ Muhammad Sayyid Ahmad Al-Musayyar, *Roh: menurut Perbahasan Ulama Kalam dan Ahli Falsafah* trans. Muhammad Ramzi Omar (Malaysia: Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia, 2003), 280.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 281.

²¹ 'Ali Unal, *The Resurrection and The Afterlife*, 234.

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَ أَحَدَهُمُ الْمَوْتُ قَالَ رَبِّ ارْجِعُونِ ﴿٩٩﴾ لَعَلِّي أَعْمَلُ صَالِحًا فِيمَا
تَرَكْتُ كَلَّا إِنَّهَا كَلِمَةٌ هُوَ قَائِلُهَا وَمِنْ وَرَائِهِمْ بَرْزَخٌ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾

Al-Muaminūn 23:99-100

Meaning: When death comes to one of them, he says, "My Lord, send me back again. So that perhaps I may act rightly regarding the things I failed to do!" No indeed! It is just words he utters. Before them there is an interspace until the Day they are raised up.

The theory of rebirth is contradictory to the Islamic belief. Islam rejects reincarnation and rebirth because the dead will not return to the world again. It will stay in the unseen realm until the day of resurrection.

4.8. Planes of Existence

As mentioned before in chapter two, Buddhism teaches that there are six realms of existence. These six realms can be divided into two groups, one that is relatively fortunate which is heaven and the other, unfortunate which is hell.

4.8.1. Heaven and Hell

The concepts of heaven and hell are stated in both religions' belief. In many religious traditions, heaven is pictured as pertaining to some type of peaceful life after death related to the immortality of the soul. Heaven is generally construed as a place of happiness, sometimes eternal happiness. In contrast, hell is a place of suffering and punishment in the afterlife, punishment in Hell typically corresponds to sins committed in life. Hell is traditionally depicted as fiery and painful, inflicting guilt and suffering.

Whether one is reborn in Heaven or in one of the various levels of Hell, the forms of existence in these places are transitory, as they are on earth, and are not eternal. As in Buddhism, the period of time for individuals remains in these places depends on the amount of good and evil they have done while on earth. When the prescribed time has been completed, they will return to earth again. Heaven and Hell are no more than temporary states of existence in which the individuals receive their rewards for the acts they have committed while on earth.

Buddhism teaches that there is a kind of Paradise and Hell, as a reward and punishment for what a person has done. But because of this belief does not stem from a revealed religion for it contains many contradictions and illogicalities, in a sense that the reward or punishment would be stopped in order to start a new trial in the next life. Above all, and contrary to what God has revealed in the Qur'ān, Buddhism believes that Paradise and Hell are only transitory.²²

The most notable idea of Buddhism is that in the Buddhist scheme no one is condemned to abide permanently in any given realm. Hell is not a place of permanent damnation, and heaven is not a place of eternal happiness. In this opinion, the Buddhist hell and heaven is like the Islamic concept of *barzakh*. The second difference is that the Buddhist hell is more varies, and is thought to have cold as well as hot areas in which the departed spirits suffer until their evil *karma* is purged.²³

Again, one of the most illogical aspects of this belief is the idea that all systems in the world operate, in effect, by themselves. According to Buddhism, the existence of the universe and human beings is uncontrolled, so is the cycle of death and re-birth. There

²² Chan Khoon San, *Buddhism Course*, 98.

²³ Charles F. Keyes and E. Valentine Daniel, *Karma: An Anthropological Inquiry*, 16.

is no room in this belief for a Creator who has brought the world into existence and the life upon it, together with Paradise and Hell to reward or punish the human beings for what they have done. However, accepting the existence of Paradise and Hell as places where reward and punishment are given, but not explaining how these realms were created is unacceptable.²⁴

Although both religions believe in heaven and hell, Islam differs from Buddhism in terms of its concept. Islam rejects the notion of transitory stay in the hereafter as both are eternal and final resting place. On the other hand, heaven and hell in Buddhism are only transitory as they will rebirth and live again.

4.9. *Samsara*

For the Buddhist, the concept of *samsara* is the round of rebirth which is perceived as a kind of suffering. Thus the Buddhist believes that the world is not free from suffering. Since suffering is ingrained in the very nature of the world, it would hardly be worthwhile to try to confront the suffering of the world. The purpose of life in Buddhism is to escape from *samsara*, to find salvation from suffering.²⁵

For the Muslims there is suffering in the world but suffering is not in the nature of the world. It can be removed. It is the duty of the Muslim to decrease the misery and sufferings of the world. Suffering is also a test from Allah to determine the patience and willingness of Muslim in coping with the misery and managing their desire which will result them reward or punishment in the hereafter. Suffering has purpose in Islam; it tests their faith and corrects their unbelief. The human being has to go through tests so

²⁴ Harun Yahya, *Islam and Buddhism*, 94-96.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 122.

that he may be built into something durable, reliable and flawless. Allah uses suffering to test man and to build him. A true Muslim will remain faithful throughout the trials of life.²⁶

There are two views on the purpose of God on allowing the existence of suffering in this world. Firstly, suffering is a punishment for sins. It is to cleanse them from the evil that reside in their soul. The sins they commit are from their own self. They did not obey what God commands them to do in the Qur'ān. Therefore, they are the one who cause their own sins. Allah is the most compassionate and merciful thus He punished them in this world so they will not be punished in the hereafter which is far worse.²⁷

وَلَيَبْتَلىَّ اللَّهُ مَا فِي صُدُورِكُمْ وَلِيُمَحِّصَ مَا فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ

الصُّدُورِ

Al-‘Imrān 3:154

Meaning: It was so that Allah might test what is in your breasts and purify what is in your hearts. And Allah is Knowing of that within the breasts.

Secondly, suffering is a trial or test for faithfulness in Allah. It asserts that by inflicting pain and suffering on the people, God actually wants to test their endurance and the depth of their faith in Him. There are people who seem to believe in God half heartedly on a kind of experimental basis. When they have faith in Allah as well as praying to Him, they are rewarded by Allah and then they will continue to have faith in Him. If they are not rewarded, they will turn unbelievers.²⁸

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 123.

²⁷ Taqī ad-Dīn Ahmad Ibn Taymiyyah, *Al-Hasanah wa al-Sayyi'ah: Misteri Kebaikan dan Keburukan*, trans. Nana Rohiyatna (Bandung: Pustaka Hidayah, 2008), 74-75.

²⁸ Kedar Nath Tiwari, *Comparative religion* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1983), 162.

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَعْبُدُ اللَّهَ عَلَى حَرْفٍ فَإِنْ أَصَابَهُ خَيْرٌ اطْمَأَنَّ بِهِ وَإِنْ أَصَابَتْهُ
فِتْنَةٌ أُنْقَلَبَ عَلَى وَجْهِهِ خَسِرَ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةَ ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْخُسْرَانُ الْمُبِينُ ﴿١١﴾

Al-Haj 22:11

Meaning: And of the people is he who worships Allah on an edge. If he is touched by good, he is reassured by it; but if he is struck by trial, he turns on his face [to the other direction]. He has lost [this] world and the Hereafter. That is what is the manifest loss.

Thus suffering seems to be a necessary part of God's purpose. It discriminates between the sincere and the insincere. The Qur'ān taught us the concept of *ṣabr* which means patience, forbearance, self-control, endurance and hardiness. If a Muslim can endure the trial and test from Allah, Allah will raise his position to a higher place.²⁹

In Islam, there is a suffering in this world. But the perspective of suffering in Islam is different from the perspective of suffering in Buddhism. Islam does not agree that everything about the world and life are made up of suffering. For Muslims, suffering is to cleanse their hearts and to test their faith in Allah.

4.9.1. Desire (*Tanha*)

In Buddhism, desire (*tanha*) will lead to cycle of rebirth (*samsara*). Desire is the basic essence of a man. Human cannot run from having a desire in life. To escape from it, Buddhist has to detach himself from the world. If desire is taken in its general sense, it is obvious that all desires do not lead to suffering. Only wicked desires will lead to suffering. The Qur'ān asks mankind to restrain the desires of their own self, but not all desires need to be restrained.³⁰

²⁹ Yusuf Al-Qaradhawi, *Takdir*, trans. Abduh Zulfidar Akaha (Jakarta: Pustaka al-Kautsar, 2002), 196.

³⁰ Abdullah Mustafa Numsuk, *Al-Budhiyah Tārikhīhā wa Aqā'idahā wa 'Alāqah As-Ṣūfiyyah bihā*, 239.

وَلَا تَتَّبِعِ الْهَوَىٰ فَيُضِلَّكَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ

Şād 38:26

Meaning: and do not follow [your own] desire, as it will lead you astray from the way of Allah .

The third of the noble truths states that desire or *tanha* can be removed. If the cause of rebirth is present, the effect will arise. Do away with the cause, the effect will vanish. But the total repudiation of desire is not possible because desire is the primary condition of human beings activity and the foundation of their development.

To put it briefly, Islam understands that it is impossible for human beings to cut off their desire because it is inborn in them. Islam taught their followers to control and manage their own desire and not to remove it totally as what the Buddhist believed.

4.10. *Nirvana*

Nirvana is the ultimate goal in Buddhism's belief. In this life *Nirvana* may be salvation from suffering. To escape from rebirth is by enlightenment and that is the purpose of life in Buddhism.

However, Islam gives two goals in life, one immediate and the other ultimate. The first being achieved, the second is sure to be achieved. To a Muslim, the whole purpose of life is '*ibādah* or worship to the One True Almighty God on terms and under His conditions. The term "worship" to a Muslim includes any and all acts of obedience to Almighty Allah. To follow what has been written in the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet p.b.u.h.³¹

³¹ 'Imran N. Hosein, *Islam And Buddhism In The Modern World*, 116.

By doing that, Muslims will be blessed with heaven. *Nirvana* is not heaven. Muslims believe heaven is a place of ultimate joy, where fulfillment is absolute. A state in which one has the most powerful of all desires satisfied the desire for God. In heaven, a person maintains a body and soul and the personal identity continues forever. And finally, in heaven one resides alongside Allah the Almighty. *Nirvana* on the other hand is a state noted by the absence of all desire. The body is gone, there is no soul, and there is no personal identity that continues forever.³²

The ultimate goal in life as given by the Sufis is that fulfillment of the ultimate longing of the lover for the beloved. It is the culmination of the struggle for achieving closeness to Allah (*qurbah*), it is the meeting with the Lord Himself.

فَمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا

Al-Kahfi 18:110

Meaning: So whoever would hope for the meeting with his Lord - let him do righteous work

The goal in this life according to Sufism is to build the over-all human personality that it becomes godly, sublime and beatified. Allah himself is the goal of life in Islam. He is the most potent factor in the life of a Muslim. It is winning God's pleasure and meeting Him, which Islam holds out as the ultimate goal in life. The immediate goal being godliness, all human's life revolve around this pivotal ideal which is the goal in life of godliness.³³

Sufism believes in the theory called *fanā'* which means annihilation. *Fanā'* is a stage which a Sufi reaches after he has perfected his inner purification, concentration and

³² Jacky Sach, *The Everything Buddhism Book*, 194-195.

³³ Imran N. Hosein, *Islam and Buddhism in The Modern World*, 117-118.

prayer to the point of being able to discover the inner sense and the reality of being. Even though a *sālik* will have the experience of spirituality during his journey towards Allah, the continual and all-knowing discovery of spirituality comes after arriving at the stage of annihilation.³⁴ According to Sufi philosophy, *fanā*’ is followed by *baqā*’ which means residing in God, that is being conscious of God and God alone, along with a feeling of a profound affinity with Him. He is metaphorically within our hearts or souls. *Fanā*’ is to perish the immoral self interest and self ego so man can be godly.³⁵

Islam is a religion of *fiṭrah*. There is no contravention in the teaching of Islam. Islam does not accept the theory of *nirvana* and some Muslim scholars do not agree with *fanā*’ because it will lead to stripping oneself from craving and suppressing of the desire until the will is disrupted and disappear. Islam realizes the nature of human beings and the awareness of their rights. It is because Islam is a religion of Allah and humans are His creation, and the creator is aware of the needs of His creation. It is innate in human beings to have desire, craving and lust.³⁶

زُيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ حُبُّ الشَّهَوَاتِ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ وَالْبَنِينَ وَالْقَنَاطِيرِ الْمُقَنْطَرَةِ مِنَ
الذَّهَبِ وَالْفِضَّةِ وَالْخَيْلِ الْمُسَوَّمَةِ وَالْأَنْعَامِ وَالْحَرْثِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ مَتَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ
الدُّنْيَا ۗ وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ حُسْبُ الْمَآبِ ﴿٣٤﴾

Al-‘Imrān 3:14

Meaning: Beautified for people is the love of that which they desire - of women and sons, heaped-up sums of gold and silver, fine branded horses, and cattle and tilled land. That is the enjoyment of worldly life, but Allah has with Him the best return.

³⁴ Nahid Angha, *Principles of Sufism* (Fremont: Jain Publishing, 1991), 105.

³⁵ Fatima Hussain, *Sufism Revisited* (Lahore: Sang-e-meel Publications, 2010), 358.

³⁶ ‘Abdullah Muṣṭafā Numsuk, *Al-Budhiyah Tārikhīhā wa Aqā'idahā wa 'Alāqah As-Ṣūfiyyah bihā*, 271.

In order to practice the religious way of life, man does not have to negate himself. Rather, he has to affirm himself to become devote and pious. Man must foster the growth of the very dimensions of his being. This is contradicted to other religious viewpoints where for example in Christianity, to become pious, one must negate himself including his physical being and in Buddhism where man has to negate himself, not only his physical being and self, but also his very existence as an individual.³⁷

Islam is a realistic religion. It came with a sensible worship. It takes into account the reality of different circumstances in life therefore *‘ibādah* is an *‘amal* and *‘amal* is an *‘ibādah*. Islam designs the way of life by *tazkiyah al-nafs* (purification of the soul), refine *al-akhlāq* (ethics) and strength of the relation between human beings and also between Allah. Furthermore is to get the blessing of Allah is by praying five times a day, fasting during *Ramaḍān*, to give alms and to perform pilgrimage. By performing all this *‘ibādah* as well as having *imān* in Allah and the final Judgement will make human reach their goal in life which is the blessing of Allah.³⁸

There is no concept of *nirvana* in Islam. Islam rejects this concept because Islam believes in heaven and hell which are places where a person maintains a body and soul and the personal identity continues forever. Whereas *nirvana* is a state where there is no body, no soul and there is no personal identity that continues forever. That very person will just disappear when he reaches *nirvana* as if there is no purpose and reward in the afterlife. Different from Buddhism, in Islam, there is a purpose in life which is to achieve blessing from Allah in order to have a great afterlife by entering a perfect place which is in heaven.

³⁷ ‘Imran N. Hosein, *Islam And Buddhism In The Modern World*, 126.

³⁸ Abdullah Muṣṭafā Numsuk, *Al-Budhiyah Tārikhīhā wa Aqā'idahā wa 'Alāqah As-Ṣūfiyyah bihā*, 274.

4.11. Malay Mystical Belief

Before the arrival of Hinduism and Buddhism, the Malay believes in Animism and Dynamism. After Hinduism and Buddhism came to the Malay world, Malays' belief became Syncretism. In the Malay world, the teaching of Hinduism and Buddhism not only influence their religious belief, but enriches the conception of Animism and Dynamism which have been there all along. Later when they started to accept Islam, the basis of *Tauḥīd* has been introduced to them. The arrival of Islam leads to changes in their principle of life.

In Hinduism and Buddhism, the belief in reincarnation is a law in both religions. They believe that man will reincarnate in different kind of form based on their past act until they are liberate from *samsara*. The only way to achieve their goal is to free themselves from the desire of the world. When this teaching came to the Malay world, they believe that their kings are incarnation of the Gods or *Sang Hyung*. Thus, they have to devout themselves to their kings. After the arrival of Islam, their faith to the kings changes to the faith to Allah but the elements of their old belief is still there until now.³⁹

The belief in ghosts and spirits are still strong until today due to the influenced of the Malay dramas and movies which are about ghost and spirit such as *Pontianak*, *hantu kubur*, *pocong* and so on. Ghosts and spirits do not exist within the context of Islamic doctrine, and believing in them is against Islam. Of course the Qur'ān speaks about such supernatural beings such as angels, *jinn*, *iblis* and *shaiṭān*. But their forms, origins and functions are not the same as those held within the traditional system. Ghosts and spirits in the Malay world are believed to be from the soul of the dead which has become a

³⁹ Ahmad Zuhairi Abdul Halim, *Amalan Mistik dan Kebatinan Serta Pengaruhnya Terhadap Alam Melayu* (Malaysia: Tamadun Research Trust, w.d.), 236.

ghost. In Islam, when a man dies, he will not be reborn to any kind of form as ghosts or gods or even animals. They will stay dead until the day of resurrection. *Jinn*, *iblis* and *shaiṭān* were created by God in their original form which is fire from the beginning.⁴⁰

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ صَلْصَلٍ مِنْ حَمَلٍ مَسْنُونٍ ﴿١٦﴾ وَالْجَانَّ خَلَقْنَاهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ

مِنْ نَارِ السَّمُومِ ﴿١٧﴾

Al-Hijr 15:26-27

Meaning: And We did certainly create man out of clay from an altered black mud. And the jinn We created before from scorching fire.

Some people have claimed that they saw ghosts or spirits that resembled their family that had pass away. Those things that they saw were actually *jinn* and *shaiṭān*. It is their duty to whisper into the hearts of men and women urging them to commit sins. *Iblīs* obtained permission from God and vowed that he would lead all men and women astray to Hell as a way of revenge against them.⁴¹

قَالَ فِيمَا أُغْوَيْتَنِي لَأَقْعُدَنَّ لَهُمْ صِرَاطَكَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ﴿١٦﴾ ثُمَّ لَا تَجِدُنَهُمْ

مِنْ بَيْنِ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ وَعَنْ أَيْمَانِهِمْ وَعَنْ شَمَائِلِهِمْ وَلَا تَجِدُ

أَكْثَرَهُمْ شَاكِرِينَ ﴿١٧﴾

Al-A'rāf 7:16-17

Meaning: [Satan] said, "Because You have put me in error, I will surely sit in wait for them on Your straight path. Then I will come to them from before them and from behind them and on their right and on their left, and You will not find most of them grateful (to You).

⁴⁰ Amiruddin Faatih, *Penciptaan Roh, Jin & Malaikat, Mukjizat, Karamah dan Sihir* (Selangor: Al-Hidayah Publication, 2010), 117.

⁴¹ Sayid Sābiq, *Akidah Islam: Al-'Aqāid al-Islāmiyah*, 290.

Since belief in Islam is not really deep among some of the common Malay people, there is always the possibility that their beliefs in ghosts and spirits will supersede their belief in Allah, which is tantamount to polytheism (*shirk*), a cardinal sin in Islam.⁴²

As traditional beliefs are still strongly rooted in Malay society, it may not be wrong to imply that Islam as generally practiced among the Malays is only skin-deep.⁴³ Traditional beliefs have become part and parcel of Malay life, part of the Malay cultural heritage especially the media. The media nowadays prefer to show horror films and dramas on ghosts and spirits according to the preference of the Malay society. They are related to social and economic values and to the activities of the Malays, and as long as these exist so will the traditional beliefs.⁴⁴ Until today, the traditional beliefs of ghosts (*hantu*) and spirits are still exist in the Malay Muslim society.

The Malay Muslims belief in ghost and spirits are contrary to the Islamic belief because ghosts and spirits do not exist within the context of Islamic doctrine. In Islam, when a man dies, he will not be reborn to any kind of form as ghosts or gods. Instead, he will stay dead until the day of resurrection. This belief of ghosts and spirits will supersede their belief in Allah and can lead to *shirk*.

4.12. Reincarnation in Deviant Muslim Sects' Belief

The concept of reincarnation is not recognized as part of Islamic teachings. As explained earlier, Islam totally rejects the doctrine that after death the soul moves on to inhabit another body. However, there are deviated sects in certain Muslim communities

⁴² Syed Husin Ali, *The Malays: Their problems and future* (Selangor: The Other Press Sdn. Bhd., 2008), 62.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

that have been influenced by the theory of reincarnation. In the Malay Archipelago, there are several groups that hold on to such idea. Sects such as Abū Bakar Bappu and Al- Arqām are two of the several examples.

Al- Arqām was banned in Malaysia on the 5th of august 1994 due to their deviant belief. They believe that Imam *al-Mahdi* will be born and Sheikh Taha Suhaimi who had died a long time ago will reborn as *al-Mahdi*.⁴⁵ The concept of *al-Mahdi* according to Al- Arqām does not exist in the teaching of Islam and it is contrary with *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al- Jamā'ah*. Most of the *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al- Jamā'ah* scholars believe that Imam *Mahdi* who is a savior to humanity will be born in this time but when and who will be a question. No one knows except Allah s.w.t. It will remain hidden from human beings because the concept of *al-Mahdi* is unseen.⁴⁶ To predict the unseen such the arrival of *al-Mahdi* and the day of resurrection is not a practice that is taught by the Prophet. Muslims are asked to be ready and be prepared for the hereafter but when the day of Judgement will happen, is not their concern as nobody knows about it. The Prophet himself was once asked about the coming of Judgement day but he did not know when. He only describes the signs and marks of the impending doom. Same goes to *al-Mahdi*, he only describes the character but did not clarify who the person is.⁴⁷

The teaching of Abū Bakar Bappu is deviant from the true teaching of Islam. This deviant teaching was found in October 24 1978. He claimed that he is the reincarnation of Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq. He was from Johor, a state in Malaysia and had more than 60 followers. His followers also claimed that Abū Bakar Bappu is indeed Abū Bakr al-

⁴⁵ Wan Mohd Azam Mohd Amin, *Ajaran Sesat* (Kuala Lumpur: IIUM Press, 2009), 79.

⁴⁶ Mohd Lazim Lawee, *Penyelewengan Jemaah Al-Arqam dan Usaha Pemurniannya* (Bangi: Penerbit Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 2004), 136.

⁴⁷ Abdul Hamid Bin Yunus, *Penjelasan terhadap 58 ciri ajaran sesat di Malaysia* (Putrajaya: Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia, 2005), 25.

Şiddīq which had been reincarnated to this world by God to lead the Muslims.⁴⁸ Embodiment of soul by another body is against the teaching of Islam. This concept came from the teaching of Hinduism and Buddhism which is called reincarnation.⁴⁹ Soul of the dead cannot live inside a living body. It is because the dead souls exist in another realm which is the *Barzakh* according to Islam. This belief of transmigration of soul from a body to another can lead to *kufr*.⁵⁰ This shows that some of the Malay Muslims are easily influenced by this teaching are because of the strongly rooted tradition in them. Furthermore, lack of Islamic knowledge and ignorance of it. Other factors such as obsession, fanaticism and extremism towards the teaching of an Islamic scholar can lead someone to become deviant. It is important to learn the Islamic knowledge especially the *tauḥīd* from a proper sheikh and groups by examine the sheikh first.

The implications for embracing the concept of reincarnation are severe. In Islam, Muslims who are involved in the rituals of calling the souls can be seen as an act of *shirk* or *riddah*. *Shirk* can be seen as an act of believing, worshipping, asking and having faith in other than Allah. This can be considered to be the biggest sin if a Muslim commits the act of *shirk* as it could ruin one's faith (*Īmān*).

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ ۚ وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ

فَقَدْ أَفْتَرَىٰ إِثْمًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٤٨﴾

Al-Nisā' 4:48

Meaning: Surely Allah does not forgive that anything should be associated with Him, and forgives what is besides that to whomsoever He pleases; and whoever associates anything with Allah, he devises indeed a great sin.

⁴⁸ Fatkhi Abdullah, "Lelaki dakwah dirinya Saidina Abu Bakar, Ramai Bimbang", 25 Oct 1978.

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 30.

⁵⁰ Muhammad 'Uthman El-Muhammady, "Masalah Tahdir al-Arwah" in *Noktah Hitam: Ajaran Sesat di Singapura*, ed. MUIS and PERDAUS (Singapura: MUIS, w.d.), 501.

Riddah or apostasy is the state of abandonment or renunciation in intention or word or deed by a person who was previously a follower of Islam. Al- Qur'ān clearly states that an apostate who dies, all his good deeds that he performed in his life are considered to be futile.

وَمَنْ يَرْتَدِدْ مِنْكُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِ ۖ فَيَمُتْ وَهُوَ كَافِرٌ فَأُولَٰئِكَ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فِي
الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ ۖ وَأُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿٢١٧﴾

Al-Baqarah 2:217

Meaning: and whoever of you turns back from his religion, then he dies while an unbeliever – these it is whose works shall go for nothing in this world and the hereafter, and they are the inmates of the fire; therein shall abide.

Muslim deviant sects can be detected through their practices which are *shirk* and also *bid'ah* as the case of Al- Arqām and Abū Bakar Bappu. The nature of these groups shed light on some of the Malay societies that still do have strong belief in tradition and custom which they mix up with the teaching of Islam. It is because the Malay societies have been influenced by the belief of animism, civilization and tradition of Hinduism and Buddhism. These beliefs are prevalent today due to its strong existence before the spread of Islam in this region. Thus, it is difficult to eradicate the old belief system. Furthermore, the ignorance of Islamic knowledge in some of the Malay society especially the '*aqīdah*' increases the chance to become deviant.⁵¹

The '*aqīdah*' is the base of Islam. If a person's '*aqīdah*' is damage, it can lead him to be a *murtad* (apostasy). Therefore, it is important to preserve the '*aqīdah*' so it would not be easily influenced by other teachings besides the teaching of Islam. Sometimes, these people wanted to learn more on Islam, but they found the wrong teacher (*ustaz*) who

⁵¹ Engku Ahmad Zaki Engku Alwi, *Ajaran Sesat: Mengenali Jalan Yang Terpesong* (Selangor: Pts Publications & Distributors Sdn. Bhd., 2007), 130.

misguides them from the true teaching of Islam. This is why it is important to find the right *ustaz* to guide them on the learning journey of Islam.

In conclusion, the belief in animism, Hinduism and Buddhism cannot be erased fully from the Malay thought and also practices due to its historical relations.⁵² Despite the fact that the Malays are Muslims and also *da'wah* has been applied to them, they are still easily influenced by the deviant sects. This is because the tradition of the Malay society is superstitious. They are easily inclined to the belief of supernatural and mysterious things. For example, they will get obsess to their *sheikh* who they believe is a divine person and to the extent they believe that he will not die and will reincarnate to a greater being such as the *al-mahdi*.

4.13. *Kenduri Arwah* in Islamic Perspective

Kenduri Arwah, prior to the existence of Islam, was a ritual to pray for the souls of the dead. This ritual was adopted from the Hindu-Buddha teachings by deceased family on certain days after the death of a family member. Based on the beliefs, the souls of the dead will return to demand sympathy. The ritual also involved worshipping the dead and also to held a feast. This belief was then had been Islamized by Islamic scholars by infusing Islamic tenets.

The concept of *Kenduri Arwah* is now seen as the culture of a specific community, infused with Islamic tenets through methods of promoting unity. The infusion of Islamic tenets can be seen by observing certain practices including the recitation of *Sūrah Yāsin*

⁵² *Ibid.*

or supplications that was taught by the Prophet. These recitations can be observed as a replacement for demonic spells and the calling of spirits or devils.⁵³

The purpose of this infusion is to transform the Hindu-Buddha practices that have existed several centuries before Islam came. It is evident that to change a belief system is in fact difficult with regards to *Kenduri Arwah*. The infused Islamic concept is based on the arrival of pray (*duā*) from the living to the dead, because Prophet p.b.u.h. taught about *duā* to the dead. From Abū ‘Abd al-Rahmān Bin ‘Auf reported that the Messenger of Allah p.b.u.h. offered a funeral prayer and he memorized the prophet’s supplication. After hearing this supplication of the Messenger of Allah p.b.u.h., Abū ‘Abd al-Rahmān Bin ‘Auf said that he wished he had been that dead man. He p.b.u.h. prayed:

اللهم اغفر له، وارحمه، وعافه، واعف عنه، وأكرم نزله، ووسع مدخله
واغسله بالماء والثلج والبرد ونقه من الخطايا، كما نقيت الثوب الأبيض
من الدنس، وأبدله داراً خيراً من داره، وأهلاً خيراً من أهله، وزوجاً خيراً
من زوجته، وأدخله الجنة، وأعذه من عذاب القبر، ومن عذاب النار.

Meaning: O Allah! Forgive him, bestow mercy upon him, pardon him, accord him a noble provision and make his grave spacious, wash him with water, snow and hail, purify him from sins as You have purified the white garment from soiling, give him a better abode in place of his present one, and a better family in exchange of his present one, and a better spouse in place of his present wife; admit him to heaven and protect from the trial in the grave and punishment in the Hell.⁵⁴

How this can be accepted in Islam is because of the same concept existed in Islam in terms of giving food to the needy, relatives and neighbours. This act of giving food is

⁵³ Zawawi Haji Ahmad, *Tafsir Surah Yasin Dari Perspektif Sains Dan Sejarah* (Malaysia: w.p., 2004), 3.

⁵⁴ Narrated by Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Book 7, No. 935.

highly commended in Islam as it can bring closer ties in a Muslim community.⁵⁵ This can be proved by the following verse:

وَيُطْعِمُونَ الطَّعَامَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ مِسْكِينًا وَيَتِيمًا وَأَسِيرًا ﴿٨﴾ إِنَّمَا نَطْعِمُكُمْ لَوَجْهِ اللَّهِ
لَا نُرِيدُ مِنْكُمْ جَزَاءً وَلَا شُكُورًا ﴿٩﴾
Al-Insān 76:8-9

Meaning: And they give food in spite of love for it to the needy, the orphan, and the captive, [Saying], "We feed you only for the countenance of Allah. We wish not from you reward or gratitude.

4.14. Conclusion

This chapter is an analysis of reincarnation in Islamic perspective which meets the last objective of this research. The researcher analyse the concept of soul, death, *karma*, dependent origination, rebirth, planes of existence which are the heaven and hell, *samsara* and lastly *nirvana*. The researcher also analyse the Malay mystical belief, reincarnation in deviant Muslim sects' belief and *kenduri arwah* due to the traditional beliefs of Buddhism that have influenced the Malay Muslim societies. Even though Islam rejects the concept of reincarnation, there are still number of Muslims who are influenced by it and other teachings in Buddhism. The voices of true Islamic scholars must be projected and spread across the Malay Muslim world.

⁵⁵ Zawawi Haji Ahmad, *Tafsir Surah Yasin Dari Perspektif Sains Dan Sejarah*, 3.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

5.1. Introduction

In this chapter five, the researcher is going to come out with a conclusion of the whole study and also recommendations of this study.

5.2. Conclusion

After analyzing the topics in chapter one, two, three and four the researcher comes to accomplish a conclusion that wraps up all the four chapters before. This research is to undertake an analysis study from Islamic perspective on reincarnation in Buddhism. The researcher will divided this conclusion into two parts. Firstly it will be on the conceptual analysis of reincarnation in Buddhism from Islamic perspective which consists of the fundamentals, death, soul, karma, dependent origination, suffering, desire, the afterlife, heaven and hell as well as nirvana. Secondly it will be on the elements of reincarnation in the Malay society which consists of the Malay mystical belief, deviant Muslim sects and *kenduri arwah*.

Firstly on the conceptual analysis of reincarnation in Buddhism from Islamic perspective, the researcher will started on with the fundamentals of both religions. A Buddhist has to follow the Four Noble Truth and the Eightfold Path in order to achieve enlightenment which is nirvana. Whereas in Islam, the fundamentals of faith is to follow the six Pillars of Faith, the five Pillars of Islam and *ihsān* which is to do good things in life. The researcher finds that there is a similarity between Buddhism and Islam on

moralties. Both religions emphasize on doing good deeds in life. It taught people ethical and righteous. Before leaving the world, they must do good things to other humans, animals, nature and all living things to gain a great afterlife.

Secondly, both religions believe every soul will meet death. A Buddhist will experience many deaths. He will be rebirth to another form. The soul would not die along with the body, but it will reincarnate into another world. However, Islam rejects this as the concept of more than one death and rebirth to become the same person does not hold up due to the fact that the person will not be the same anymore. Muslims believe that everyone will die only once. They won't return to this world after they die. They will stay in the *barzakh* until the day of Judgement.

Thirdly, in the concept of soul, Buddhism denies that man has soul or ego in him. To them, soul or ego is the root of the moral evil because this concept will produce harmful thoughts of selfish, desire, craving and hatred. It has to be cut off to attain nirvana. Unlike Islam, a man has spirit (*rūh*), body (*jasad*) and soul (*nafs*) which is the body and spirit together. Muslim cannot question on the spirit or soul because it will remain one of Allah's secrets and will be hidden from man till the day of judgement. Islam is different from Buddhism belief in the aspect of soul because Islam does not ask that the empirical self to be destroyed or annihilated. Instead, it demands that the individual ego be sublimated in the service of the divine Ego. Islam understands that soul is part of human beings. It is innate in them thus it cannot be remove.

Next, Buddhism believes in *karma* which will determine in what station or status they shall be reborn in the next life. They believe that people will experience the consequences of their past deeds. Good karma is from good deeds and bad karma is

from evil deeds. Islam rejects the concept of *karma* because it denies the freedom and free will of man. Islam provides the concept of *al-Qadar*. Islam gives man the freedom to participate in the making of his own destiny. At the same time, Allah also participates with man in the making of his destiny. Unlike Buddhism, man is responsible for his own existence. It is unreasonable for a man to suffer for another man's sins. However in Islam, that very person will face his own action and will be punished for his own sins. Islam also taught the believer on the concept of forgiveness and compassionate from Allah furthermore the sins will be forgiven by Allah if truly repented. Islam provides the system of rewards and punishment by heaven and hell.

Then, in Buddhism, they believe in the concept of dependent origination which is the causes of suffering and rebirth. To them, there is no object or event is independent in respect of its ordinary existence or its appearance. All objects are dependent for their existence, or appearance, on other objects and all events on other events. However, there is no concept of dependent origination in Islam as it denies the existence and the work of God because in Islam, He participates in all aspect of man's life.

For a Buddhist, *samsara* is faced at every stage of life, from birth, through old age and ending in death. For them, the world is a suffering place. However in Islam, there is suffering in the world but suffering is not is the nature of the world. The perspective of suffering in Islam is different from the perspective of suffering in Buddhism. For a Muslim, suffering is a test from Allah to determine the patience and willingness of men in controlling their desire that will be given as reward or punishment from it.

Buddhism asks the believer to totally turn away from this world because the origin of suffering is *tanha* which is the craving or attachment that leads from birth to birth,

which accompanied by pleasure and greed. According to them, desire will lead to rebirth. However, Islam asks the believer that they should ponder and reflect over the fact of change in this world. Desire is the basis essence of a man. The total repudiation of desire is not possible because desire is the primary condition of human beings activity and the foundation of their development. Therefore, Islam taught their followers to control and manage their own desire and not to remove it totally as what the Buddhist believed.

Buddhism believes in rebirth and not reincarnation. It teaches that rebirth takes place without an unchanging self or soul passing from one form to another. Humans have to experience a number of rebirths, until such a time as the soul has obtained an appropriate level of *nirvana*. They will be reborn as a God, a man, a ghost, a demigod, an animal, and an inhabitant of hell. The type of rebirth will be conditioned by the moral tone of the person's actions (*karma*). To achieve the goal in life is to follow the Four Noble Truths. However, the belief in the hereafter as stated in the Qur'ān is resurrection in *barzakh* then the final Judgement. They will go through questions in the grave and their level of comfort while in the grave, however, depends on their belief in Allah, the Qur'ān, the Prophet Muhammad p.b.u.h. and his *Sunnah* as well as their deeds during past life. Individuals will be resurrected on the day of Judgement and will be divided between paradise and hell. Islam rejects the concept of reincarnation. Thus, the theory of rebirth is contradictory to the Islamic belief because the soul will not return to the world again to redeem the wrongdoings of the past. It will stay in the unseen realm until the day of resurrection. In Islam, the world is a place for commitment and submission to God. It is not a place for reckoning. Unlike Buddhism, the world is a place to punish the sins.

In Buddhism, the forms of existence in heaven and hell are only transitory realms as they are on earth, and are not eternal. Hell is not a place of permanent damnation, and heaven is not a place of eternal happiness. The departed spirits will then suffer in hell until their karma is purged. However Muslims also believe in the existence of paradise and hell. Although both religions believe in heaven and hell, Muslims understanding of it is contrary from the Buddhists. Islam believes that heaven and hell are everlasting and remains for all eternity. It is a final resting place for Muslims. Unlike Buddhism, they will rebirth and live again even after they enter heaven or hell. Hence, Buddhist hell and heaven is like the Islamic concept of *barzakh* which is transitory before the final Judgement. The difference with the concept of hell in Islam is that the Buddhist hell is varies.

Lastly, the ultimate goal of life in Buddhism is *nirvana*. It is a state of eternity, peace and tranquility. Nirvana is a salvation from suffering and cycle of birth and death. However there is no concept of nirvana in Islam. Islam rejects this concept because Islam believes in heaven and hell which is a place where a person maintains a body and soul and the personal identity continues forever. Nirvana on the other hand is a state noted by the absence of all desire. The body is gone, there is no soul and there is no personal identity that continues forever. That very person will just disappear when he reaches nirvana as if there is no purpose and reward in the afterlife. However, the whole purpose of life in Islam is ‘*ibādah* or worship Allah and follow the Qur’ān and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet in order to achieve heaven which is the ultimate goal for Muslims plus it is for eternity.

Next, the researcher will conclude on the elements of reincarnation in the Malay society. Firstly it will be on the Malay mystical belief. The Malay has been influenced

by the Hinduism and Buddhism long before they became Muslim. Their influence is within the indigenous belief in spirits, ghosts, rituals and funeral. Although Malays are Muslims now, the influence of traditional beliefs is strongly rooted in them. The belief in ghosts and spirits such as *pontianak*, *langsuyar*, *hantu kubur* and *pocong* is still strong among the Malay society. They portray their belief in modern films and media, for example, *Pontianak Harum Sundal Malam*, *Hantu Bonceng*, *Karak* and also *Amukan Pocong*. However, the Malay Muslims belief in ghost and spirits are contrary to the Islamic belief ghost and spirits because it does not exist within the context of Islamic doctrine. However, the Qur'ān do speaks about such supernatural beings such as angels, *jinn*, *iblis* and *shaitān*. In Islam, when a man dies, he will not be reborn to any kind of form as ghosts or gods or even animals. They will stay dead until the day of resurrection. In other words, there is no concept of ghost (*hantu*) in Islam except for the handy work of *jinn*, *iblis* and *shaitān* to mislead the 'aqīdah of the Muslims. Furthermore, there is no evidence of the souls of the dead can physically visit the living or manipulate the physical world in any way. The Malay beliefs in ghost and spirits will supersede their belief in Allah, which is tantamount to polytheism (*shirk*), a cardinal sin in Islam. Traditional beliefs have become part of the Malay cultural heritage because it is related to social and economic values as well as to the activities of the Malays. As long as these exist so will the traditional beliefs remains in their society.

Secondly, there are a few deviant Muslim sects such as Al-Arqām and Abū Bakar Bappu who believe in reincarnation. Al- Arqām believes that their Sheikh Taha Suhaimi who was actually declared dead will be reborn as *al-mahdi*. Whereas Abū Bakar Bappu claimed that he is the reincarnation of Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq. However in Islam, most of the *Ahl Sunnah wa al- Jamā'ah* scholars believe that Imam *Mahdi* who is a savior to humanity will be born in this time but when and who will be a question. Only Allah

knows and it will remain hidden from humans. According to Islam, the dead souls exist in another realm which is the *barzakh*. Consensus scholars agree that the soul will resurrect in the hereafter together with the body. Islam totally rejects the doctrine that after death the soul moves on to inhabit another body. They have misunderstood the true teaching of Islam by misinterpreting it. The implications for embracing the concept of reincarnation are severe. Muslims who are involved in this can be seen as an act of *shirk* and *murtad*. A number of Malay Muslim until now is being influenced by the teaching of their ancestors which is Hinduism and Buddhism. The ignorance of Islamic knowledge in some of the Malay society especially the '*aqidah*' can be easily influenced them with deviant teachings as well as fanaticism and extremism towards one teaching and Islamic scholar (*ustaz*) can lead to the deviant teachings. The belief in animism, Hinduism and Buddhism cannot be erased fully from the Malay thought and also practices. Unless, by curbing fanaticism and extremism can eradicate this issue overtime. Therefore, It is important to learn the Islamic knowledge especially the *tauḥīd* from a proper sheikh and groups by examine the *ustaz* first.

Lastly, the concept of *kenduri arwah* was known as a ceremony to pray for the souls of the dead. It has been accept among some of the Islamic scholars due to the culture of a specific community which already been infused with Islamic tenets through methods of promoting unity. The elements in *kenduri arwah* which have been infused with Islamic tenets such as the recitation of *Sūrah Yāsin* and also giving food to the people are highly commended by Islam. The purpose of this infusion is to transform the Hindu-Buddha practices that have existed several centuries before Islam came. It is evident that to change a belief system is in fact difficult with regards to *Kenduri Arwah*, the concept remains the same but performed in a different way. This can be accepted in Islam because this concept exists in Islam in terms of giving food to the relatives and

neighbours. This act of giving food is highly commended in Islam as it can bring closer ties in a Muslim community.

Last but not least, the researcher needs to emphasize that there is no theory of reincarnation in Islamic teaching. Islam rejects reincarnation, rebirth or transmigration of souls. In Islam, once a man dies, he will be in *barzakh* until he is resurrected on the day of Judgement.

Even though Islam rejects the theory of reincarnation, there are still number of Muslims who are influenced by the theory of reincarnation and other teachings in Buddhism. They are easily inclined to follow other teaching, culture, tradition and society. This is caused by lack of knowledge and understanding of Islam as well as fanaticism and extremism towards ones clan and descendent. For example, the Malays are strongly holding on to their tradition's belief even though some of it is erroneous from the Islamic teaching. Furthermore, some of the Muslims join the deviant Muslim sects and follow it without knowing the basic teaching of Islam and then went astray due to not knowing on how to differentiate the true teaching of Islam and the false one. It will spell disaster if this trend continues to exist in the Malay society. The voices of true Islamic scholars must be projected and spread across the Malay Muslim world.

Muslims must know how to differentiate and not to mix up their beliefs, which will lead to *murtad* in Islam if a Muslim's belief is changed. The duty of preachers to explain the truth to those who have not received the message and those who caught up in the unfounded idea of reincarnation and reject the existence of the everlasting afterlife, must look up to Allah and to the Qur'ān, the book that Allah revealed to them and chose for them as their guidance.

5.3. Recommendations

Based on what the researcher went through a very hard time in the process of making this study a reality, the writer hope the next researcher will explore more about Buddhism from the other view. They can also compare the afterlife in Islam with other religions such as Hinduism, Christianity, Judaism or Taoism. Moreover, they can analyze reincarnation in Hinduism in Muslim perspective.

They should emphasize more on Buddha's teachings for instance the four noble truths and the eightfold path. They may also do a research about the ancient scriptures in *Dhammapada* and the schools of Buddhism as knowledge for the people. They can also study on how the Buddhists meditate and their yoga. Besides that, they can delve into Buddhism symbols and *Mudra* which is hands and fingers gesture as well as the significance of it.

Furthermore, the researcher hopes that this research and discussion will be beneficial to the people in the field of comparative religion.

5.4. Table Conclusion

5.4.1. Conceptual Analysis of Reincarnation in Buddhism from Islamic Perspective			
SUB- TOPIC	BUDDHISM	ISLAM	ANALYSIS
The Fundamentals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Four Noble Truth • The Eightfold Path 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Six Pillar of Faith (<i>Iman</i>) • The Five Pillar of Islam (<i>Islam</i>) • <i>Ihsān</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both religions taught moralities, ethics and righteous.
Death	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience many deaths 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Die only once 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both religions believe that everyone will die. • Islam rejects the concept of many deaths. • Islam beliefs that after they die, they won't return to this world. They will die only once and will stay in the <i>barzakh</i> until the day of Judgement.
Soul	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Man has no soul or ego. • This concept will produce harmful thoughts of selfish desire, craving, hatred, ill-will, egoism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A man has spirit (<i>rūḥ</i>), body (<i>jasad</i>) and soul (<i>nafs</i>). • <i>Nafs</i> is the body and spirit together. • The spirit or soul will remain one of Allah's secrets and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Islam understands that soul is part of human beings. It is innate in them thus it cannot be remove. • Islam does not ask that the soul be

	and other defilements.	will be hidden from man till the day of Resurrection	<p>destroyed or annihilated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within the sphere of morality this is achieved through active participation in the moral struggle resulting in the purification rather than destruction of the self.
<i>Karma</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People will experience the consequences of their past deeds. • Determines in what station or status they shall be reborn in the next life. • Good comes from good, and evil from evil. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no concept of <i>karma</i> in Islam. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Islam rejects the concept of <i>karma</i> because it denies the freedom and free will of man. • Islam provides the concept of <i>al-Qadar</i> which gives man the freedom to participate in the making of his own destiny. • In Islam, that very person will face his own action and will be punished for his own sins. • The concept of

			<p>compassionate and forgiveness from Allah who is full of grace.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The system of rewards and punishment by heaven and hell.
Dependent Origination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Causes of rebirth and suffering. • There is no object or event is independent in respect of its ordinary existence or its appearance. All objects are dependent for their existence, or appearance, on other objects and all events on other events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no concept of dependent origination in Islam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dependent origination leaves no room for a self-existent, self subsistent reality or God. • Allah participates in all aspect of man's life. • Islam does not ask the believer to turn away from this world. Islam asks the believer to carry out his obligation in this world which is applied to the goodness.
Suffering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The world is made up of suffering. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is suffering in the world but suffering is not in the nature of the world. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The perspective of suffering in Islam is different from the

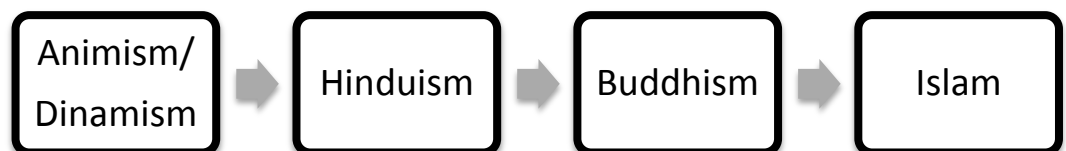
			<p>perspective of suffering in Buddhism.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suffering is a test from Allah to determine the patience and willingness of Muslim in coping with the misery and managing their desire which will result them reward or punishment in the hereafter.
Desire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The origin of Suffering is <i>Tanha</i> which is craving or attachment that leads from birth to birth, which accompanied by pleasure and greed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restrain the desires of their own self, but not all desires need to be restrained. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desire is the basis essence of a man. • The total repudiation of desire is not possible because desire is the primary condition of human beings activity and the foundation of their development. • Islam taught their followers to control and manage their own desire

			and not to remove it totally as what the Buddhist believed.
Afterlife	<p><u>Reincarnation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Buddhism, they use the term rebirth for reincarnation. • They have to experience a number of rebirths, until the soul has obtained an appropriate level of enlightenment to enter <i>nirvana</i>. • They will be reborn as a God, a man, a ghost, an animal, an inhabitant of hell, according to their <i>karma</i>. 	<p><u>Resurrection</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two resurrections that take place after death: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Barzakh</i> (The state between death and Judgement day). 2. Judgement Day: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The book of deeds ▪ The reckoning (<i>Ḥisāb</i>) ▪ The Scales (<i>Mīzān</i>) ▪ The Bridge (<i>Ṣirāṭ</i>) ▪ The Intercession (<i>Syafā'ah</i>) • Allah will resurrect people bodily and spiritually. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The theory of rebirth is contradictory to the Islamic belief. • The soul will not return to the world again to redeem the wrongdoings of the past. • It will stay in the unseen realm until the day of resurrection. • In Buddhism, the world is a place to punish the sins. In Islam, the world is a place for commitment and submission to God. It is not a place for reckoning.
Heaven and Hell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The forms of existence in heaven and hell are transitory, as they are on earth, and are not eternal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muslims believe in the existence of Paradise and Hell. • Paradise is an eternal place for the faithful who believe in Allah and also do good deeds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although both religions believe in heaven and hell, Buddhism understanding of it is contrary from

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hell is not a place of permanent damnation, and heaven is not a place of eternal happiness. • They will rebirth and live again even after they enter heaven or hell 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hell is the place, where disbelievers will remain for all eternity. • A final resting place for Muslims 	<p>Islam.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buddhist hell and heaven is like the Islamic concept of <i>barzakh</i> which is transitory. • The difference with the concept of hell in Islam is that the Buddhist hell varies. The departed spirits will then suffer until their evil <i>karma</i> is purged.
<i>Nirvana</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Nirvana</i> is the ultimate goal in Buddhism's belief. • <i>Nirvana</i> is a state of eternity, perfect peace and tranquillity. • <i>Nirvana</i> is free from suffering and <i>samsara</i> which is the cycle of birth and death. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no concept of <i>nirvana</i> in Islam. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Islam rejects the concept of <i>Nirvana</i>. • In heaven, a person maintains a body and soul and the personal identity continues forever. • <i>Nirvana</i> on the other hand is a state noted by the absence of all desire. The body is gone, there is no soul, and there is no personal identity that continues

			<p>forever.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That very person will just disappear when he reaches <i>nirvana</i> as if there is no purpose and reward in the afterlife. • The whole purpose of life in Islam is '<i>ibādah</i> or worship Allah and follow the Qur'ān and the <i>Sunnah</i> of the Prophet. • Heaven is the ultimate goal for Muslims. It is for eternity. <i>Nirvana</i> is not heaven.
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5.4.2. Elements of Reincarnation in the Malay Society



5.4.2.1. Malay Mystical Belief

BUDDHISM	MALAY	ISLAM	ANALYSIS
<p>❖ They believe that man will reincarnate in different kind of form such as ghosts, demigods etc. based on their past act until they are liberated from <i>samsara</i>.</p>	<p>❖ The belief in ghosts and spirits are still strong until today due to the influenced of the Malay dramas and movies which are about ghost and spirit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Pontianak</i> • <i>Hantu kubur</i> • <i>Pocong</i> 	<p>❖ Ghosts and spirits do not exist within the context of Islamic doctrine.</p> <p>❖ The Qur'ān speaks about such supernatural beings such as angels, <i>jinn</i>, <i>iblis</i> and <i>shaitān</i>.</p>	<p>❖ The Malay Muslims belief in ghost and spirits are contrary to the Islamic belief.</p> <p>❖ In Islam, when a man dies, he will not be reborn to any kind of form as ghosts or gods or even animals. They will stay dead until the day of resurrection.</p> <p>❖ There is no concept of ghost (<i>hantu</i>) in Islam except for the handy work of <i>jinn</i>, <i>iblis</i> and <i>shaitān</i> to mislead the 'aqidah of the Muslims.</p> <p>❖ There is no evidence of the souls of the dead can physically visit the living or manipulate the physical world in any way.</p> <p>❖ The Malays belief in ghosts and spirits will supersede their belief in Allah, which is</p>

			<p>tantamount to polytheism (<i>shirk</i>), a cardinal sin in Islam.</p> <p>❖ Traditional beliefs have become part and parcel of Malay life, part of the Malay cultural heritage. They are related to social and economic values and to the activities of the Malays, and as long as these exist so will the traditional beliefs.</p>
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5.4.2.2. Reincarnation in Deviant Muslim Sects' Belief

Deviant Muslim Sects	Islam	Analysis
<p><u>Al-Arqām</u></p> <p>They believe that Imam <i>al-Mahdi</i> will be born and Sheikh Taha Suhaimi who was actually declared dead will be reborn as <i>al-Mahdi</i>.</p> <p><u>Abū Bakar Bappu</u></p> <p>He claimed that he is the reincarnation of Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most of the <i>Ahl Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah</i> scholars believe that Imam <i>Mahdi</i> who is a savior to humanity will be born in this time but when and who will be a question. • No one knows except Allah s.w.t. It will remain hidden from human beings because the concept of <i>al-Mahdi</i> is unseen. • According to Islam, the dead souls exist in another realm which is the <i>Barzakh</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Islam totally rejects the doctrine that after death the soul moves on to inhabit another body. • The implications for embracing the concept of reincarnation are severe. In Islam, Muslims who are involved in this can be seen as an act of <i>shirk</i> or <i>murtad</i>. • The Malay societies have been influenced by the belief of animism, civilization and tradition of Hinduism and Buddhism, furthermore, the ignorance of Islamic knowledge in some of the Malay society especially the '<i>aqīdah</i>'. • Fanaticism and extremism towards one teaching and Islamic scholar (<i>ustāz</i>) can lead to the deviant teachings and by curbing it can eradicate this issue overtime. • It is important to learn the Islamic knowledge especially the <i>tauḥīd</i> from a proper sheikh and groups by examine the <i>ustāz</i> first.

5.4.2.3. *Kenduri Arwah* in Islamic perspective

<i>Kenduri Arwah</i>	Analysis
<p><u>Before Islam:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Kenduri arwah</i> was known as a ceremony to adore the souls of the dead. • It will be held by the deceased family on the first, the second and the third night then on the seventh night, followed by the fortieth night and next on the hundredth night after the death of a family member. <p><u>After Islam:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The concept of <i>kenduri arwah</i> is a culture of a specific community, infused with Islamic tenets through methods of promoting unity. • The infusion of Islamic tenets: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The recitation of <i>Sūrah Yāsīn</i>. 2. Giving food to the needy, relatives and neighbours. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of this infusion is to transform the Hindu-Buddha practices that have existed several centuries before Islam came. • It is evident that to change a belief system is in fact difficult with regards to <i>kenduri arwah</i>, the concept remains the same but performed in a different way. • This act of act of giving food is highly commended in Islam as it can bring closer ties in a Muslim community.

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APPENDIX A

Table 1

2.8 Fourfold *karma*¹

2.8.1. By way of function	2.8.1.1. Productive <i>karma</i> 2.8.1.2. Supportive <i>karma</i> 2.8.1.3. Obstructive <i>karma</i> 2.8.1.4. Destructive <i>karma</i>
2.8.2. By order of ripening	2.8.2.1. Weighty <i>karma</i> 2.8.2.2. Near death <i>karma</i> 2.8.2.3. Habitual <i>karma</i> 2.8.2.4. Reserve <i>karma</i>
2.8.3. By time of ripening	2.8.3.1. Immediately effective <i>karma</i> 2.8.3.2. Subsequently effective <i>karma</i> 2.8.3.3. Indefinitely effective <i>Karma</i> 2.8.3.4. Defunct <i>karma</i>
2.8.4. By place of ripening	2.8.4.1. Unwholesome <i>karma</i> 2.8.4.2. Sense-sphere wholesome <i>karma</i> 2.8.4.3. Fine-material-sphere wholesome <i>karma</i> 2.8.4.4. Immaterial-sphere wholesome <i>karma</i>

¹ Aggacitta Bhikkhu. 1999. *Dying to live: The role of Kamma in dying and rebirth..* Selangor: Sukhi Hotu Dhamma Publications. Pg. 35-41

Table 2

Ten Unwholesome Courses of Action²

Door	Body	Speech	Mind
Unwholesome Course Of Action	1. Killing. 2. Stealing. Sexual misconduct.	4. False speech. 5. Slandering. 6. Harsh speech. 7. Frivolous talk.	8. Covetousness. 9. Ill will 10. Wrong view.

Table 3

Ten Wholesome Courses of Action³

Door	Body	Speech	Mind
Wholesome Course Of Action	Abstinence from		8. Non-covetousness (generosity)
	1. Killing. 2. Stealing. 3. Sexual misconduct.	4. False speech. 5. Slandering. 6. Harsh speech. 7. Frivolous talk.	9. Non-ill will (loving-kindness) 10. Right view.

² *Ibid.*³ *Ibid.*

Table 4

Bases of Meritorious Deeds⁴

Threefold	<i>Dana</i>	<i>Sila</i>	<i>Bhavana</i>
Tenfold	1. Giving. 2. Transference of merit. 3. Rejoicing in others merit.	4. Virtue. 5. Reverence. 6. Service.	7. Meditation. 8. Hearing the <i>Dharma</i> . 9. Teaching the <i>Dharma</i> . 10. Straightening out one's view.

⁴ *Ibid.*

APPENDIX B



Picture 1

A symbol that represented *Dharma*,
The Buddha's teaching of the path to enlightenment.



Picture 2

Statue of Siddhartha Gautama Buddha



Picture 3

Pontianak



Picture 4

Pocong



Picture 5

Ashaari Mohammad
Founder of Al-Arqam



Picture 6

Kenduri Arwah