

References

- Anjum, S., Ullah, R., Rana, MS, Ali Khan, H., Memon, FS., Ahmed, Y., Jabeen, S., & Faryal, R.(2020). COVID-19 pandemic: A serious threat for public mental health globally. *Psychiatra Danubina*, 32(2), 245-50.
- Bojdani, E., Rajagopalan, A., Chen ,A., Gearin, P., Olcott, W., Shankar, V., Cloutier, A., Solomon, H., Naqvi, NZ., Batty, N., & Festin, F.,E. (2020). COVID-19 pandemic: impact on psychiatric care in the United States. *Psychiatry research*, 289, 113069.
- Jakovljevic, M. (2021). Psychiatry Danubina and challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic: The answer is in the knowledge, empathy, coherence and global ethics. *Psychiatra Danubina*, 33(4), 461-7.
- Sinha, A., Choudhury, A.,A., Kumar Padhy, S., & Mishra, S.(2024). Telepsychiatry vs In-Person Consultation During COVID-19 Pandemic: A Comparison Across Diagnosis. *Psychiatra Danubina*, 36(1), 109-14.
- Srinivasan, V., Abathsagayam, K., Suganthirababu, P., Alagesan, J., Vishnuram, S., & Vasanthi, R.,K.(2023). Anxiety's correlation with sleepiness and memory among security officers during Covid-19 pandemic. *Work*, (Preprint), 1-7.
- Srinivasan, V., Vishnuram ,S., Suganthirababu, P., Kumaresan, A., Divyalaxmi, P., Saranya Devi, M.,& Alagesan, J.(2021). Impact of COVID-19 online classes on morningness-eveningness personality among adult college students: A survey study. *Work*, 70(3), 695-700.
- Waris Nawaz, M., Imtiaz, S., & Kausar, E.(2020). Self-care of frontline health care workers: during COVID-19 pandemic. *Psychiatra Danubina*, 32(3-4), 557-62.

Correspondence:

Surya Vishnuram

Saveetha College of Physiotherapy, Saveetha Institute
of Medical and Technical Sciences, Chennai,
Tamil Nadu, India
suryavishnuram@gmail.com

* * * * *

A spiritual view to the fate of people who died in earthquakes

Hüseyin Çaksen

Divisions of Pediatric Neurology and Genetics and Behavioral-Developmental Pediatrics, Department of Pediatrics,
Faculty of Medicine, Necmettin Erbakan University, Meram, Konya, Türkiye

received: 14. 4. 2024;

revised: 14. 4. 2024;

accepted: 9. 7. 2024

* * * * *

In the last 40 years, there has been a 6-fold increase in the number of earthquakes worldwide (Kušević et al., 2021). Worldwide, more than one million earthquakes occur each year, or an average of two a minute. Case fatality rates are high in major earthquakes (Pan American Health Organization, 2024). A massive earthquake struck Southern Türkiye and Syria with a magnitude of Mw 7.7 on 6 February 2023 causing more than fifty thousand of deaths. Most people in many cultures around the world wonder about the afterlife of their family members, relatives, and friends who died in the earthquakes. Moreover, losing of a family member in an earthquake is one of the important predictors of mental health problems. Herein, we discuss the fate of people who died in earthquakes to draw attention to the life after death of those people.

After the earthquake, more than one out of four individuals reported severe symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder, one out of three reported severe symptoms of depression, and

one out of five reported severe symptoms of anxiety (Cenat et al., 2020). Following the earthquake, the level of exposure to the traumatic event (i.e., destruction of environment and home, witnessing death, sustaining injury, losing their job or a family member, etc.) is one of the most important predictor of posttraumatic stress disorder, depression, and anxiety symptoms, for children, adolescents, and adults (Cenat et al., 2020).

In the Abrahamic religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam), the dead go to a specific place (e.g. Paradise or Hell) after death, as determined by Allah, based on their actions and beliefs during life. However, the fates of people who died in the earthquake are different. There are many hadiths that those who died in earthquake became martyrs and that martyrs will go to Paradise. The Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam) said "There are seven types of martyrdom apart from being killed in Allah's path. Those who die of plague, those who are drowned, those who die of pleurisy, those who die of an internal

complaint, those who are burnt to death, those who are killed by a building falling on them, and women who die while pregnant are martyrs." (Sunnah.com, 2024a). The Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam) has also informed us our Lord's Message that whoever of us is martyred, will go to Paradise (Sunnah.com, 2024b). A Muslim who sacrifices his life in the way of Allah is called a martyr. Martyrdom is the highest rank in Islam (Atar, 2010). Martyr is a concept that takes place in Judaism, Christianity, and Sikh religions as well as Islam (Gürkan, 2010). However, there are some differences about understanding of martyrdom between Islam and these religions. Martyrs are very valuable in the sight of Allah. It is stated that the highest rank in the hereafter is martyrdom after prophethood (Atar, 2010).

Nursi (2012) noted that children and innocent Christians who died in the earthquake were a kind of martyrs as follows: Those who died from celestial calamity and the disaster caused by the murders of cruel people, if they are under the age of fifteen, are considered martyrs regardless of their religion. Like Muslims, their great spiritual rewards reduce that calamity to nothing. Those who are above fifteen, if they are innocent and oppressed, have a great reward and save them from Hell. Even if he is an unbeliever in such calamities, there is some kind of mercy and reward for him, that calamity is relatively cheap for him. Such celestial calamities are a kind of martyrdom for the innocents. Now, it can be said that the disasters suffered by the oppressed Christians, who were in the dark like interregnum and belonged to the Prophet Isa (Alayhi As-Salam), are a kind of martyrdom for them (Nursi, 2012).

In conclusion, based on the Islamic teachings, we would like to emphasize that all children under the age of fifteen who died in an earthquake are martyrs regardless of their parents' religious beliefs. Muslims who died in an earthquake are martyrs

and their damaged or lost property is considered charity. Innocent and oppressed Christians who died in the earthquake are also a kind of martyr. Lastly, there is a kind of mercy and reward for the unbelievers who died in an earthquake. We think that these spiritual teachings can be used when providing psychological support to those who survived the earthquake and lost their loved ones.

Acknowledgements: None.

Conflict of interest: None to declare.

References

- Atar, F. (2010). Martyr (in Turkish). Turkish Religious Foundation. Encyclopedia of Islam. TDV Publishing, Printing and Trading Business. <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/sehid>
- Cenat, J. M., McIntee, S. E., & Blais-Rochette, C. (2020). Symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety and other mental health problems following the 2010 earthquake in Haiti: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 273, 55-85.
- Gürkan, S. L. (2010). Martyr (in Turkish). Turkish Religious Foundation. Encyclopedia of Islam. TDV Publishing, Printing and Trading Business. <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/sehid>
- Kušević, Z., Krstanović, K., & Kroflin, K. (2021). Some psychological, gastrointestinal and cardiovascular consequences of earthquakes. *Psychiatria Danubina*, 33(Suppl 4), 1248-53.
- Nursi, B. S. (2012). Letter 76 (in Turkish). From the Risale-i Nur Collection. The Kastamonu Letters. Söz. <http://www.erasale.com/#content.tr.9.141>
- Pan American Health Organization. (2024). Earthquakes. <https://www.paho.org/en/health-emergencies/earthquakes>
- Sunnah.com. (2024a). Mishkat al-Masabih, 1561; Book 5, Hadith 39. <https://sunnah.com/mishkat:1561>
- Sunnah.com. (2024b). Sahih al-Bukhari, 7530; Book 97, Hadith 155. <https://sunnah.com/bukhari:7530>

Correspondence:

Prof. Hüseyin Çaksen, MD, PhD,

Divisions of Pediatric Neurology and Genetics and Behavioral-Developmental Pediatrics, Department of Pediatrics, Faculty of Medicine, Necmettin Erbakan University, 42090 Meram, Konya, Türkiye
huseyincaksen@hotmail.com / +90 332 223 66 84