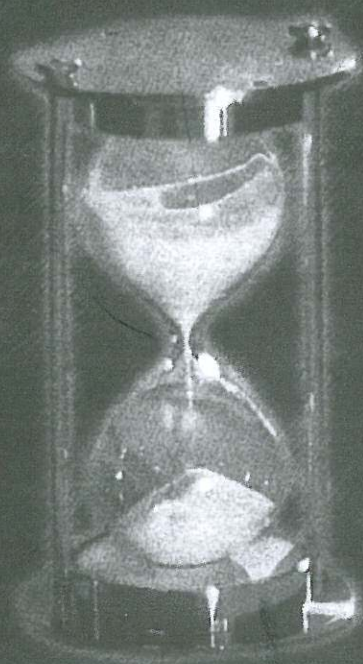


الطالِبُ al-talib
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every soul shall taste
DEATH

بَرَمَحْصَانِ مَبَارَك

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Are We Prepared For Death?

Ramadan, the ninth month in the Islamic *Hijri** calendar, is the blessed month in which the Qur'an was first revealed to Muhammad (pbuh), the best of creation. It is the month in which the gates of *Jannah* (heaven) are opened wide, and the gates of *Jahannam* (hell) are closed shut. Any act of worship that is performed by Believers during this month is weighed much higher by Allah.

Allahu Akbar (All praise is due to God), we as Muslims often taken advantage of this by spending more time in prayer, *du'a* (supplication), reading Qur'an and other acts of worship.

However, one aspect of worship that we don't often engage in, is remembrance of death. Death is essentially the most important part of the life of the Believer. The purpose of Muslims in the *dunya* (this world) is to be the absolute best servants to our Creator. It is upon death that we are ultimately judged whether or not we have been successful in this endeavor.

Thinking about death puts the whole world into perspective. If we live our lives with the constant reminder that everything can end in a heartbeat, we can then, *insha'Allah* (by the will of God) strive to live each and every second of our lives in complete accordance with the laws of Allah.

Viewing death as a precursor to meeting Allan separates Muslims from the Western image of death, which has sensationalized it in order to entertain and mesmerize us.

We spend our lives in constant preparation for many things: school, jobs, marriage etc., however, none of these things are guaranteed. Death is imminent. It is the one thing that we are absolutely sure is inevitable, yet often fail to appropriately prepare for. It is important to constantly realize that we are being judged for every action we engage in, and that we will be held accountable for them.

Unfortunately, sometimes our priorities are not where they should be. When preparing for exams, we often spend days and nights glued to our books. We lose sleep out of fear for our grades. Why do we do this? Because it makes sense. When attempting to achieve a positive result in any matter – a result that we can be content with – it only makes sense to prepare for it the best we can. However, the disequilibrium of time spent on fearing unfavorable grades to fearing Allah is something that needs to be realigned.

We must ask ourselves, are we honestly preparing sufficiently for the ultimate test?

In remembering death, we are preparing for our meeting with our Creator. This is the perspective we must attain.

Death should not be viewed as morbid or dark. Rather it should be a reminder for us to



question every action we engage in - if that action will please Allah or not - and act accordingly. The Prophet (pbuh) said, "Whoever would abhor meeting with Allah, Allah abhors meeting with him."

The current state of the *Ummah* (global Muslim community) has led us into a situation that would likely be displeasing to Allah and His Messenger (pbuh). We are constantly fighting amongst each other. We have formed more sects than can be counted on one hand. We allow Western fighter jets to leave from the holy lands of the Prophet (pbuh) to bomb and kill innocent Muslim children. The so-called "leaders" of our countries are ruling in the name of Islam, yet are blatantly ignoring the very basic concepts of Islam. The West is constantly portraying Muslims as violent and backward savages.

What should our response be to this? Obviously, we must speak out and defend that which is the Truth. However, we must also ask ourselves why we are in this state. One possible answer is that we are not fulfilling our duties to Allah.

Constant remembrance of Allah and implementation of His laws are part of our obligations. The Prophet (pbuh) said, "Death is a precious gift to the Believer."

The *dunya* is the Believer's prison. We are constantly surrounded by things which do not

agree with the laws of Islam. Death, therefore, is a gift from Allah. As long as we fulfill our obligation towards Him, He has promised us a release from this prison and entrance into a wondrous place where there exist "gardens beneath which rivers flow."

Remembrance of death allows us to detach ourselves from the evils of this world. The Prophet (pbuh) has said, "The man engrossed with this world does not remember death, or, if he does, it is with regret for this world, and he busies himself with disparaging death."

Remembrance of death helps us focus on every single action we make with the goal of pleasing Allah, and it helps us avoid behaving as though we are immortal.

In this blessed month, it is important that we take advantage of Allah's mercy. Despite our constant disobedience to Him, His doors of Mercy are always open.

May Allah shower His blessings upon the Prophet (pbuh), his family, and his companions. May Allah protect us from the evils of this world, increase us in our love for Islam and our love for the Hereafter, and make us sufficiently prepared for death when it approaches us. Amin.

Jazakum Allahu khayran,
- The Al-Talib Staff -

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Jazakum Allahu khayran.

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Altalib exists to serve the needs of the UCLA Muslim community, the general Muslim community, and the general non-Muslim community. It is an independent forum for a diverse spectrum of views and opinions. Altalib serves to educate about Islam and Muslim culture. Altalib collects the mainstream media's misrepresentation about Islam and Muslim people. Altalib is the first publication of its kind in the United States - a newsmagazine run by volunteer students dedicated to Muslim issues.

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*As opposed to the Western Gregorian calendar, Muslims follow a calendar which starts with the Prophet's (pbuh) migration from Makkah to Madinah, making this year 1419 *Hijri*.