

## AGE DOES NOT DETERMINE DEATH

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ، أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ،  
وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدَهُ وَرَسُولَهُ،

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ وَمَنْ تَبِعَهُمْ  
بِإِحْسَانٍ إِلَى يَوْمِ الدِّينِ.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ،

فِيَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ.

Let us increase our righteousness to Allah the Almighty by doing all that He prescribes and leaving all that He prohibits. May we be blessed by Allah the Almighty in this life and the hereafter.

**Dear brothers and sisters,**

All muslims believe that life after death is a phase that all humans undergo. Age does not determine when we die; be it young or old. Even though we possess power, wealth and health, death is sure to occur. In fact, even the prophets and messengers cannot avoid death. Allah the Almighty says in chapter 4 (surah al-Nisaa) verse 78:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

أَيْنَمَا تَكُونُوا يُدْرِكَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ وَلَوْ كُنْتُمْ فِي بُرُوجٍ مُشِيدَةٍ

Which means: “Wherever you may be, death will overtake you, even if you should be within towers of lofty construction.”

Death is inevitable. No one can escape from facing death when the time comes which has been determined by Allah the Almighty. When the time comes, the angel of death, Izrail will take our life no matter where we are. Allah the Almighty says in chapter 62 (verse al-Jumu'ah) verse 8:

قُلْ إِنَّ الْمَوْتَ الَّذِي تَفِرُونَ مِنْهُ فَإِنَّهُ مُلْقِيكُمْ ثُمَّ تُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ عِلْمِ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ  
فِيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

Which means: Say, "Indeed, the death from which you flee - indeed, it will meet you. Then you will be returned to the Knower of the unseen and the witnessed, and He will inform you about what you used to do."

When our souls separate from our bodies, we leave behind all that we own in this world; our families, relatives and our wealth. The deceased will be managed according to islamic rites and sent to the grave for burial. In that instance, we will enter another realm (*barzakh*) while awaiting the day of retribution in the hereafter.

*Barzakh* (purgatory) is a place of the beginning of the Hereafter. As human face the difficulties of pain during death, the body will also once again face the difficulties of torture in *barzakh*. When our families leave the graveyard and we are left alone in the darkness of the grave, two angels of death will approach us. They are Munkar and Nakir.

For those who are righteous and have done good deeds; they will rest and be at peace. On the contrary, for those who are burdened with sins for violating the commands of Allah the Almighty, *barzakh* will be a torturous place filled with pain and misery for them until the advent of Judgment Day. They will be like drowning people and crying out for help. The Prophet (pbuh) said in a hadith narrated by Imam al-Tirmizi:

إِنَّ الْقَبْرَ أَوَّلُ مَنَازِلِ الْآخِرَةِ فَإِنْ نَجَا مِنْهُ فَمَا بَعْدَهُ أَيْسَرُ، وَإِنْ لَمْ يَنْجَحْ مِنْهُ  
 فَمَا بَعْدَهُ أَشَدُّ مِنْهُ.

Which means: “Verily, the grave is the first stage of the Hereafter. Whoever is saved from it, whatever comes after will be easier for him. If he is not saved from it, whatever comes after will be harder for him.”

Why does Islam encourage its followers to remember death? Death is a definite and inevitable event. However, remembering death does not mean that we force ourselves to die early or deliberately expose ourselves to death. Remembering about death is to train us to do good deeds, be humble and not arrogant, be calm, etc. It also creates awareness that life in this world is preparation for life in the hereafter. Remembering death makes us more able to plan our worldly life for the hereafter.

**Dear brothers and sisters,**

Before we die, let us prepare ourselves with good deeds, righteousness and faith to Allah the Almighty. Let us pray that we belong among the righteous who are constantly increasing our worship. Indeed, righteousness will save mankind from the punishment in the grave and the hereafter. We must repent from the sins we have committed. The opportunities we get in this life should be best utilized wisely as

mentioned in a hadith narrated by Imam al-Tirmizi from Abi Bakrah Radhiallahu anhu:

عَنْ أَبِي بَكْرَةَ عَنْ أَبِيهِ أَنَّ رَجُلًا قَالَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، أَيُّ النَّاسِ خَيْرٌ، قَالَ: مَنْ طَالَ عُمُرُهُ وَحَسَنَ عَمَلُهُ، قَالَ: فَأَيُّ النَّاسِ شَرٌّ، قَالَ: مَنْ طَالَ عُمُرُهُ وَسَاءَ عَمَلُهُ.

Which means: Abu Bakrah reported: A man said, “O Messenger of Allah, which of the people are best?” The Prophet (pbuh) said, “One whose life is long and his deeds are good.” The man said, “Which of the people are worst?” The Prophet (pbuh) said, “One whose life is long and his deeds are evil.”

Indeed, *barzakh* awaits us no matter where we are and regardless of time. Are we prepared with sufficient good deeds to face death and the hereafter? Allah the Almighty says in chapter 67 (surah al-Mulk) verse 2:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفُورُ ﴿٢﴾

Which means:” [He] who created death and life to test you [as to] which of you is best in deed - and He is the Exalted in Might, the Forgiving.”

بَارَكَ اللَّهُ لِي وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقُرْآنِ الْعَظِيمِ، وَنَفَعَنِي وَإِيَّاكُمْ بِمَا فِيهِ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ، وَتَقَبَّلَ مِنِّي وَمِنْكُمْ تِلَاوَتَهُ، إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ. أَقُولُ قَوْلِي هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ

اللَّهُ الْعَظِيمَ لِيْ وَلَكُمْ، وَلِسَائِرِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ، وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ،

فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ.