

AN ISLAMIC REFLECTION
ON DEATH, PURPOSE, AND PRIORITIES

If Allah Gave You One Year

A LIFE-CHANGING GUIDE TO REFOCUS,
REPENT, AND PREPARE FOR
WHAT TRULY MATTERS

*"Every soul will
taste death. And you
will only be given
your wages in full
on the Day of
Resurrection."*

— QUR'AN 3:185


PRACTICAL
GUIDANCE
ROOTED IN THE
QUR'AN & SUNNAH



REFLECT ON
WHAT TRULY
MATTERS



SEEK ALLAH'S
FORGIVENESS
SINCERELY



STRENGTHEN
YOUR MOST
IMPORTANT BONDS



BUILD HABITS THAT
LEAVE A LASTING
LEGACY



PREPARE TODAY
FOR TOMORROW
YOU DON'T SEE

TAHOOR PUBLISHERS

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*An Islamic Reflection on Death,
Purpose, and Priorities*

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An Islamic Reflection on Death, Purpose, and Priorities

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Qur'anic meanings and hadith translations are the author's renderings, presented for reflection. Readers are encouraged to return to the original sources and qualified scholars for precise wording and rulings.

This book is a work of spiritual reflection intended to inspire hope, purpose, and preparation for the Hereafter. It is not a substitute for qualified medical, psychological, or scholarly guidance. Readers facing illness, loss, or distress are warmly encouraged to seek appropriate professional and pastoral support.

First edition.

*For every soul that will taste death —
which is to say, for you.*

كل نفس ذائقة الموت

“Every soul will taste death.”

Sūrah Āl ‘Imrān 3:185

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INTRODUCTION

If Allah Gave You One Year

Imagine a letter arrives tomorrow morning, and somehow you know beyond any doubt that what it says is true. It contains a single sentence: *You have one year left to live.* Not a vague someday. Not decades away. Three hundred and sixty-five days, and then you will stand before your Lord. Sit with that for a moment, really sit with it. Feel what happens in your chest. Notice what suddenly seems urgent, and what suddenly seems absurd. Notice who you think of first. That tightening in your heart, that rush of clarity — that is not morbid fear. That is your soul waking up.

Here is the truth that letter would only make visible: you *are* living your final year. So am I. We simply do not know which year it is. It might be this one. It might be many years away. But every single one of us is walking, with absolute certainty, toward an appointment we cannot cancel and cannot postpone, and not one of us knows the date. The only thing hidden from us is the timing — and that one hidden detail is the reason most of us live as though we will never die at all.



We live as if time were unlimited. We postpone the prayer, the repentance, the phone call, the change of heart — always to a later that we assume is guaranteed. We chase things that will not fit in the grave and neglect the only things that will. We pour our one irreplaceable life into distractions, and tell ourselves there will be time for what matters later. But *later* is the great illusion, the lie that has quietly stolen more good deeds than any sin. Later assumes a tomorrow that was never promised to anyone.



كل نفس ذائقة الموت

“Every soul will taste death. And you will be given your full reward only on the Day of Resurrection.”

Sūrah Āl ‘Imrān 3:185



Why has Allah hidden the hour of our death from us? Not to torment us with uncertainty, but as a profound mercy and a test. If you knew the exact date, you might waste every year but the last, then scramble at the end. By hiding it, Allah invites you to live *every* day as though it could be among your last — awake, intentional, prepared. The hidden hour is not meant to make you anxious. It is meant to make you ready, always, the way a wise traveller keeps their bags packed because the call to depart could come at any time.

This is why the Prophet ﷺ encouraged us, again and again, to remember death — not to darken our days, but to illuminate them:



HADĪTH

أَكْثَرُوا ذِكْرَ هَازِمِ اللِّذَاتِ الْمَوْتِ

Akthirū dhikra hādhimi-l-ladhdhāti: al-mawt.

Remember often the destroyer of pleasures — death.

Sunan at-Tirmidhī (ḥasan)

Notice he did not say to fear death constantly, or to live in dread. He said to *remember* it — to keep it in view, the way a deadline keeps a procrastinator focused, the way the knowledge that a journey ends makes the traveller use the road well. Remembering death is the most clarifying act a human being can perform. It cuts through the noise instantly. It tells you, in a heartbeat, what actually matters and what never did. The companions who remembered death most were not the gloomiest among them; they were the most awake, the most grateful, the most alive.

That is what this book is for. Over the pages ahead, we are going to live, together, through an imagined final year — auditing your life, releasing what does not matter, repairing what is broken, returning to Allah, and preparing, with hope rather than terror, to meet Him. We will look honestly at death, the grave, and the accounting — not to frighten you, but to free you, because nothing liberates a person from the tyranny of trivial things like the clear sight of what is real. You will not finish this book feeling depressed. You will finish it feeling awake, grateful, focused, and full of hope in the mercy of a Lord who is calling you home.

So before we begin, let the imagined letter do its work. Let it strip away, just for now, the assumption of endless time. And answer

♦

honestly the one question this entire book is built around, the question that has the power to change everything if you let it:

If your final year began today — if you knew, truly knew, that these were your last twelve months — what would change?

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What was the very first thing that came to your heart when you imagined one year left?
2. What are you currently postponing to a 'later' that may never come?
3. If awareness of death is meant to wake you up rather than weigh you down, what would 'waking up' look like for you?

ACTION STEPS

- ♦ Tonight, write at the top of a page: *If I had one year left, what would change?* Then write freely for ten minutes. Keep it; we will return to it.
- ♦ Choose one thing you have been delaying — a prayer, an apology, a tawbah — and do it today, not later, as your first act of living awake.
- ♦ Begin a simple practice this week: once a day, pause and quietly remember that this day is a gift, not a guarantee.



A CLOSING REFLECTION

You are already living your final year — you simply do not know if it is this one. That is not a reason for fear; it is a reason to wake up. Death is not the end of your story but the doorway to meeting your Lord, and the wise prepare for the journey before the call to depart arrives. Let this book be the letter you needed — and let today be the day you begin to live as though your time is precious, because it is.



CHAPTER ONE

The Letter Nobody Wants

The shock that wakes a sleeping heart

“Say: The death from which you flee will surely meet you.”

— Sūrah al-Jumu‘ah 62:8

A woman sits in a doctor's office, and in a single sentence her entire world rearranges itself. The diagnosis is serious; the time may be short. She walks out into the same street she walked in from — the same traffic, the same sky — but nothing looks the same. The argument she was having that morning suddenly seems meaningless. The promotion she was chasing evaporates in importance. For the first time in years, perhaps in her whole life, she sees clearly what matters and what never did. People who have received such news almost always say the same astonishing thing: that the diagnosis, terrifying as it was, woke them up — that they had been asleep, and now, finally, they were alive.

This is the letter nobody wants and almost everybody needs. We spend enormous energy avoiding the thought of our own death. We treat it as distant, abstract, something that happens to other people,



somewhere far in an unimaginable future. We fill every silence with noise precisely so we never have to sit with the one fact that would change everything. And in doing so, we sleepwalk through the only life we have, postponing what matters, chasing what does not, until the letter — in whatever form it comes — finally arrives and shakes us awake. The tragedy is how long we slept. The mercy is that we can choose to wake up before the letter, rather than after.

Why does death feel so distant, even though it is the single most certain fact of our existence? Partly it is mercy — we could not function in constant terror. But largely it is denial, a deep human refusal to look at the one thing we cannot control. We know, intellectually, that we will die. We attend funerals, we bury those we love, we read the obituaries. And yet some stubborn part of us quietly exempts itself, living as though the rule that applies to every human who has ever lived will somehow not apply to us. Allah addresses this denial directly, and removes every escape from it:



قل إن الموت الذي تفرون منه فإنه ملاقيكم

“Say: Indeed, the death from which you flee — it will surely meet you. Then you will be returned to the Knower of the unseen and the witnessed, and He will inform you of what you used to do.”

Sūrah al-Jumu‘ah 62:8



It will surely meet you. There is no outrunning it, no diet or surgery or wealth that cancels the appointment, no corner of the earth where it cannot find you. The very thing we spend our lives fleeing is the one thing guaranteed to catch us. And the verse does not stop at death; it