

## **DEATH AND REWARD**

***"No one can die except by God's leave, at a term appointed. He who desires the reward of this world, We shall give him thereof; and to him who desires the reward of the life to come, We shall give thereof. We shall reward those who are grateful to Us. (3: 145)."***

Every human soul, then, lives up to its appointed time. **No one dies before his time.** Neither fear, nor the desire to live longer can postpone anyone's appointed time.

Courage and adventure, on the other hand, will not shorten one's life. As this idea sinks into the minds of the believers they simply do not think of death as they go about fulfilling their responsibilities and carrying out their religious duties.

This is the reason why people, throughout the ages, have seen that those who believe in God are not encumbered by their desire to prolong their time on earth or by their fear of what lies ahead. They simply rely on God as they carry out their duties with patience and reassurance.

Since everybody dies at his or her appointed time then everyone should think of the life to come and should work hard in order to achieve the greater happiness of that life: "He who desires the reward of this world, We shall give him thereof; and to him who desires the reward of the life to come, We shall give thereof." 3:145.

The gulf between the two types of life is as wide as the gulf between the concerns of those who desire the reward of either one or the other. The length of one's life on this earth is not affected by the choice one makes. So, he who makes this life his ultimate goal and seeks only its rewards leads a life which is not greatly different from the life of animals, before he dies at the appointed time. On the other hand, he who looks up to the wider horizon leads the life of a true human being whom God has ennobled, to whom He has assigned the mission of building a happy human life on earth. Such a person also dies at his appointed time.

"We shall reward those who are grateful to Us". Those who appreciate how God has ennobled man and lift themselves above the standard of animals and show their gratitude to God will certainly be richly rewarded by Him.

This is how the Qur'an views the essence of life and death, and the end of human beings as they choose for themselves and determine their preoccupations which can be either petty like those of worms or great like those of man. **In this way, the Qur'an turns our attention from fear of death and worry about duties because we have no say with regard to our life and death.** It thus enables us to concentrate on what is of much better use, namely, the life to come.

Whichever choice he makes, he will receive from God the reward most appropriate for that choice.

