

MYM LITERATURE

Deathly Reminders

by Nadia Farooqi

Where Muslims come home to reflect

Deathly Reminders

By Nadia Farooqi

February 29, 2012

I saw death coming right in front of me, and all I felt was fear.
What will happen when it comes for me?

Or you?

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She lay there, weak, taking the last breaths of her life. Her lungs were suffering to exchange oxygen, her body emaciated due to weight loss. Her hair was gone, leaving only a few strands, and her eyes were shut, as she escaped in her own mind.

I was thinking of how her soul would rise from her body, and prayed it would do so with ease. As she lay there, I started to wonder what she could see – perhaps the Angel of Death?

I asked myself, “Is she scared?” Even though her eyes were shut, Allah was preparing her for death. No pill, no IV tube, not even the best doctor in the world could stop her inevitable death from coming.

As everyone surrounded her, I knew the angels were there too, repeating “ameen” after the duas we were silently whispering.

I could not bear to look at her, my emotional stability quickly falling every moment. I thus went to another room to try and figure everything out, looking for duas and verses that should be recited at the time of death.

Time was flying by and death was near, but the only thing that kept on popping up in my mind was the degraded and obscene

behavior of our ummah. I just couldn't shake off that troubling feeling of seeing fellow Muslims making fun of one another, criticizing their own brothers and sisters, and saying that they love Allah but then contradicting that statement with their own actions. We keep complaining about the things we don't have, don't turn back to the things we do have, and so the never-ending list goes on.

We take the slightest thing for granted, and not once does it occur to us that we can die any second. When that happens, will we have time to fix our mistakes? Will we have time to ask all those that we hurt to forgive us? Unfortunately, due to many of us having high egos, we just can't find ourselves saying sorry, especially since we feel it has always to be the other way around. But what if death just happened to chance upon us in that one instant of our many silent treatments? The next thing we know, the whole situation could be completely reversed on us. Everyone could be lowering us into the grave, not hearing a single scream or yell emanating from our lips.

All they would see is our dead body.

Thankfully, Allah is the most merciful, and it is by Allah's blessing that He continues to forgive us and remind us in His unique and majestic way. It may be that a heavy burden, causing much pain and tears, is the very mercy from Allah to help us escape from the prison we constructed for ourselves. It could be only then that we open our eyes and see the world in its true color and form. That's when we finally realize that what we have been doing is wrong and that we need to improve and ask Allah to forgive us. The most Wise, Allah (glorified and exalted be He) creates pain and tears for a reason. Pain is to make us realize that what we were doing wasn't beneficial for us. Tears are a part of His mercy so that we may let out some of that pain that is flowing from our hearts.

These tears and pain, whether due to the loss of a loved one or

otherwise, should continually remind us that we're here for one purpose, and that is to be the best servant to our Lord, the High and Mighty Allah. Our goal should never be to impress others and have all the jewelry, the clothes, the fashion, the friends and the money. We should continually ask ourselves what is it in those clothes that will help us on the Day of Judgment – a day when we will be without any at all. We should carefully consider our use of time and spend less of it in the aim of money and luxury, especially since none of it will be of any help on that Last Day when we are all regretting and begging for another chance at life.

We aren't perfect, and that is precisely why we need more constant reminders of who we really are and why we're here. Death is one of these many reminders; it should make us really remember and understand “Inna lillahi wa inna ilahi raj’iun”: “To Allah we come from, and to Allah we will return”. Every single one of us. This should really reinforce our belief that everyday is a second chance at life. This could be the day that we finally take heed of these many reminders and make a change for the better.

I'm not perfect. No one is. However, if we can't be perfect, we can try to be something close to it. Insha'Allah, this way, we will be rewarded by the Creator who observes and records all of our efforts. Glory be to Him.