

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ، حَيْثُ عِبَادَةُ عَلَى خَيْرِ الْأَعْمَالِ، وَأَحْسِنِ
الْأَقْوَالَ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ
سَيِّدَنَا وَنَبِيَّنَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولُهُ، فَاللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ
عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا وَنَبِيَّنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ، وَعَلَى مَنْ تَبِعَهُمْ
بِإِحْسَانٍ إِلَى يَوْمِ الدِّينِ.

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds. He urges His servants to perform good deeds and speak the best of speech. I bear witness that there is no deity save Allah, having no associates. I also bear witness that our Master Muhammad is the Servant of Allah and His Messenger. May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, his pure blessed family and companions, and all those who follow them in righteousness till the Day of Judgment.

- We plan for births, events, achievements, holidays, pensions and life, but not death?
- Pain, suffering, difficulty, medicine, tubes, needles, surrounded by nurses, ambulance, ER room, doctors, in a random hospital bed with rushed goodbyes by family. Despite all the advancements in medical science – the human race is still remarkably bad at dying.
- A “Good Death” – the very term seems like the **ultimate oxymoron**, after all, what can be good about death? A good death Islamically is one in which the person dies with Allah ﷻ being pleased with him, or engaged in an action or time that is considered pious.
- A good death is a peaceful and content one, in accordance to your wishes, location and loved ones, when you’ve completed your mission, not just spiritual, but emotional, physical and financial.

SO HOW DO WE ACHIEVE A GOOD DEATH?

- **1. THINKING AND TALKING ABOUT DEATH** - We need to be prepared, just like any other part of your life, in a way that empowers you rather than paralyses you, we need to make it less of a taboo and negative experience.

- The Prophet ﷺ was the master of this, he used to think and talk about death often, but was never accused of being morbid. He taught us, **“Remember often, the destroyer of pleasures.”**
- By talking about death in family life, we remove it from being solely the domain of the Mosque and Imam. Take your kids to a Janaza and graveyard and talk about those who recently departed.
- **2. THE WARNING SHOT** - A warning shot is the first difficult discussion that people have about an impending death. Doctors are trained to do this by lowering the tone of their voice, pausing, appearing concerned and saying **“I’m afraid I have bad news”**
- Allah ﷻ gave several warning shots to the Prophet ﷺ. Surah al-Nasr was revealed, Makkah was conquered, Jibreel عليه السلام went through the Quran with the Prophet ﷺ twice instead of once during Ramadan & when Allah ﷻ revealed that religion had been **“Perfectured”**
- In turn, the Prophet ﷺ passed on these warning shots to us, his community at various opportunities including at Hajj Al Wida and in his Khutbas at Masjid Nabawi.

We too hear and see the warning shots, but conceal or ignore them!

- **3. CHOOSING WHERE AND HOW YOU'D LIKE TO BE CARED FOR-** No one truly knows, but you CAN prepare, especially for natural deaths. The sad truth is, we will spend more time thinking about other mundane things than where we would like to see our final days.
- The Prophet ﷺ was concerned about where he would be during his final illness. He asked rhetorically, **“Where shall I stay tomorrow?”** multiple times until his wives understood that he wanted to choose where he wanted to stay rather than switching rooms every evening as was his usual custom. He chose for himself the room of Aisha RAH.
- **4. HOW SHOULD YOUR FUNERAL BE CONDUCTED?** Funerals are fairly specific in Islam, but there is room for some personalisation, like preparing your own **KAFAN** from **HAJJ** or **UMRAH**. Choosing whom you would like to lead your Janazah, at which mosque, and who should lower you into the ground can give people a sense of peace and happiness.
- The Prophet ﷺ did the same, he asked that his body be washed using water from the well of Ghars, presumably because he liked the sweet taste of the water there, and shrouded with his clothes on. Amr ibn Al As رضي الله عنه asked to be buried with fragments of the Prophet ﷺ nails and hair. As long as it remains within the boundaries of accepted tradition, it can be comforting to know that you had some say in how your funeral would be conducted.

- **5. WHERE SHOULD YOU BE BURIED?** Far away from family and friends, where no one visits, or where you lived. The Sahabah became very anxious and stressed, and did not know where to bury the Prophet ﷺ. Until they discovered that the Prophet ﷺ had mentioned to Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه that all messengers are buried where they die.
- **6. HOW SHOULD YOUR ESTATE BE DIVIDED AFTER DEATH?** Inheritance laws in Islam are strictly governed and regulated. But unfortunately, most Muslims living in non-Muslim countries, do not have formal wills written up. This means that their estates are at risk of being divided according to the law of the land they die in and not the way Allah declared.
- The Prophet ﷺ was concerned about what would happen to his estate after he died, but his estate was not just the physical objects he left behind. It included the spiritual legacy of the Islamic faith. Therefore, he repeatedly mentioned for Muslims to **guard the prayer, look after the women, to take care of the orphans and hold onto the Qur'an...**
- While you should definitely prepare a will for your physical possessions, **also consider your legacy beyond that.** Who should educate your children? What advice do we have for them when they grow up? What should happen to your collection of books? Which charities would you like some of your endowments to go to and for what cause?

- Your life is so much more than just the money and materials that gets divided up after you die. If you are lucky, those who survive you may try and keep your legacy alive. But they will all find it much easier if you gave them some directions beforehand!

CONCLUSION

- In the end, the best way to attain a good death is to live a good life.
- A life that is lived in the service of others for the sake of Allah ﷻ, a life in which there is real meaning and purpose, and a life in which death is remembered often.
- As the old poem goes - we all have a rendezvous with death, so why not make it a good one?