**THE TRANSITORY BAUBLES OF THIS WORLD**

**AND OUR TRUE ABODE,**

**THE HEREAFTER**

Now, take a deep breath!

Who knows? It may be the last you ever take in this world...

Because you can never know when death, which inevitably comes to everyone, will come to you.

But have you made any preparations for this event, which will happen suddenly, probably when you least expect it, and from which there is definitely no way back?

You make preparations for getting up at a particular time in the morning, setting your alarm clock and going to bed early the night before.

You get ready before you even step out of your house.

You prepare yourself in different ways, whether for a daytime business meeting or perhaps, for dinner in the evening.

You may sometimes spend days or weeks working and preparing for a business project or an exam.

Calculating every little detail and possibility.

But what kind of preparations do you make for your true life in the Hereafter, that will last for all eternity?

What kind of detailed plans do you make?

Human life is very short, an average of just 60 or 70 years.

And that lifespan shortens with every passing day, just like sand in an hour glass.

Everyone is constantly going through a countdown toward the Hereafter.

This world is a place of testing to distinguish those who fear Allah from those who are ungrateful to Him.

People are tested in all kinds of ways in order to bring out their faith.

Those who properly know and appreciate Allah will be distinguished from those who deny Him and they will attain happiness.

Life is very short. But by Allah’s will, the soul will live for ever.

Compared to all eternity, a life of 60 or 70 years is insignificant .

And the sum total of those moments during those 60 or 70 years when one can say, “I am alive” is shorter still.

Yes, that is right. Our whole lives in fact last just a few short years.

How is that possible?

People spend at most 18 of the 24 hours in a day awake, the rest, a minimum of 6 hours, being spent in a state of unconsciousness, asleep.

That means that at least a quarter, or 15 years, of the average life span of 60 years goes by “unconsciously.”

Five to 10 years of the remaining 40 to 45 years are also spent in an unconscious state stemming from infancy to childhood.

In other words, perhaps half the life of a 60-year-old is spent in a state of unconsciousness.

He will spend much of the remaining years doing things like cooking food and eating it, looking after his body and surroundings and trying to get places while stuck in traffic.

The result is that all one is left with out of a “whole lifetime” is perhaps just 4 or 5 years.

And what importance could such a short space of time have compared to eternal life?

Moreover, the very short life of this world is also filled with various deficiencies, imperfections, troubles and difficulties.

THE DECEPTIVE BAUBLES OF THE LIFE OF THIS WORLD

Wherever one looks one sees much beauty in this world we live in.

The human body with its perfect structure, millions of types of plants, the boundless sky with its clouds weighing many tons and many other things are all created with an esthetic appearance that delights the soul.

As well as what they see, people also take pleasure in other details perceived through the other senses.

Such as a pleasant smell, a delicious taste, or rhythmic music.

Fruit hanging from the tree delights everyone with its lovely fragrance and taste.

In the same way, the patterns of a flower, made up of different tones and hues, is utterly delightful.

Or a pleasant house, or perhaps the latest model automobile...

Everyone likes and wishes to possess many things during the course of his life.

But after a while, one looks back on all these things with great wonderment.

These delights lose their meaning, and most of them turn into things we no longer even want to see.

Because every beauty in this world is only temporary.

No matter how lovely a place may be, it may become unrecognizable in just a few years, or maybe even a single season.

For example, fruit starts to spoil soon after being plucked from the tree and loses its pleasant fragrance . Then it rots and starts to smell very bad.

People take flowers, whose bright colors and pleasant aromas please them, home and put them in a vase; but after just a few days these colors fade and the flowers wilt and droop.

3- or 4 days later, those flowers turn black and rot.

Nothing remains of their delicate fragrance.

If you see someone with the most attractive face in the world after 60 years have gone by, you may find it hard to even recognize them.

That beautiful person has grown old, their face is covered in wrinkles and their hair has turned white.

Nothing remains of their former beauty. Everything in this world, living or not, tends to fade as time passes.

Most people think of this as a “natural process.”

But a profound meaning is actually hidden inside it.

It actually gives us a very important message that everything around us is constantly fading, aging and decaying.

This message is the fact that this world is a temporary and deceptive dream.

In order to encourage people to think, Allah cites various examples in the Qur’an of how people are misled by the deceptive aspects of this world:

**The metaphor of the life of this world is that of water which We send down from the sky, and which then mingles with the plants of the earth to provide food for both people and animals. Then, when the earth is at its loveliest and takes on its fairest guise and its people think they have it under their control, Our command comes upon it by night or day and We reduce it to dried-out stubble, as though it had not been flourishing just the day before! In this way We make Our Signs clear for people who reflect.** (Surah Yunus, 24)

The fact that it is made decorative and attractive is a secret of the test.

Allah has made all the things He shows us in this world very beautiful and impressive.

But in order for people to be able to compare the difference, they are also made defective in some aspects, as well as being transitory and short-lived.

The secret of the test is also hidden here.

As befits the glory of Allah, the life of this world is very beautiful, colorful and magnificent.

Living in this world and enjoying the manifestations of Allah is a blessing, and something that is to be asked from Him.

But it can never be more important than His approval and the Hereafter.

For that reason, as people make use of these blessings, they must never forget their true purpose. Allah warns people on this subject in the Qur’an:

**Anything you have been given is only the enjoyment of the life of this world and its finery. What is with Allah is better and longer lasting. So will you not use your intellect?**  (Surat al-Qasas, 60)

As revealed in this verse, all beautiful things in this world will one day lose their beauty, and even cease to exist.

Someone who grasps these facts will make preparations for his true abode, the Hereafter, and seek ways to spend his life that he hopes will be pleasing to Allah.

Otherwise, he will be punished in this world and in the Hereafter.

Someone may be rich, but not happy.

I AM FAMOUS BUT I AM DEPRESSED

DEPRESSION HAS NO RESPECT FOR STATUS

JESSICA IS DEPRESSED

LILLY ALLEN IS DEPRESSED

Hollywood is depressed

They may be attractive, but that attractiveness leads to difficulties for them.

We see such stories every day in the papers and on television.

Celebrities who smile as they accept an award but then say they are unhappy a few days later, film stars who say that nothing in life satisfies them...

It is impossible for anyone to possess “the best” of anything in this world.

Whatever station one enjoys, there is always a better or more attractive one. This world is therefore, definitely not a place in which the human soul can know true peace and contentment.

HUMAN BEINGS ARE CREATED WEAK

We see many people at home, on the streets, at work or in school during the course of our daily lives.

Many of these people are smartly dressed and well groomed, with brushed hair and immaculately pressed clothes.

But there is something else behind all these images.

How long do these people have to spend in order to look so fine?

Everyone spends a good part of the day cleaning and grooming themselves.

But now matter how much they wash and groom themselves, it is always temporary.

Someone who brushes his teeth may look as if he had never done so just an hour later.

In summer, someone who has just had a shower may need another one in a couple of hours’ time.

A man who spends a long time shaving will have to repeat the whole process when he wakes up the next day.

Have you ever wondered why our bodies require so much care and maintenance?

Why do we have to spend so much time cleaning our bodies?

Why is it that bacteria or viruses, too small to be seen with the naked eye, can do the body so much harm?

And why does the human body gradually wear out and grow old?

Without exception.

This truth applies to the richest and most attractive people in the world, all the kings, emperors and rulers there have ever been, and all the celebrities alive today.

They will all be unrecognizable if they do not take care of themselves for a few days. The changes that appear with age also apply to them.

Yes, the human body needs to be cared for and protected in all respects.

One never knows what will happen under the conditions of this world.

One may live in the most advanced city in the world or else in a mountain village with no electricity or running water; one can still face danger at the most unexpected moment.

People may contract a fatal disease or become crippled.

Everything that happens will wear away the physical strength of the body, something we imagine we will never lose, its beauty or some other feature we are so proud of.

One may become incapable of remembering one’s friends and loved ones.

Just like David Rodriguez.

He had a very busy social life, a beloved family and a fiancee.

But a traffic accident took away all the meaning it held for him.

David spent 2 weeks in a coma, and suffered brain damage, meaning he was no longer able to recognize anyone.

He even forgot people he had seen just a few minutes before.

He was in the hospital, I was going, and talk to him, he wouldn’t even call me mother or anything, and not only that, but after 5 minutes if I would go outside and come back after 5 minutes he would just think I was someone different.

A day or even an hour before the accident he would probably never have believed that was possible.

This is a famous shopping mall in South Korea.

Or rather, it was...

Everyone there just thought they were going to do some ordinary shopping.

But all their plans were wiped out in the most unexpected way.

An explosion caused by a gas leak destroyed the building in less than 20 seconds.

When the cloud of dust dispersed, the shopping center had collapsed.

A building that was once a symbol of economic prosperity in Seoul was now nothing but a mass of twisted steel and concrete.

All those plans lay beneath that mass of concrete.

Through such examples, Allah shows us the transitory nature of this world, and that death can come at any moment.

Binding ourselves to this brief life is like locking oneself in a building that is about to collapse. No sensible person could be so mistaken.

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**Make a metaphor for them of the life of this world. It is like water which We send down from the sky and the plants of the earth combine with it but then become dry chaff scattered by the winds. Allah has absolute power over everything.** (Surat al-Kahf, 45)

Christopher Reeve was Superman for millions of people when he played the cartoon superhero in a film.

Everyone regarded him as very strong, and he was very famous, but…

One day everything changed. He fell from a horse.

He broke many bones in his body, including his neck, and was paralyzed; he couldn't even breathe without mechanical assistance.

Nothing remained of his former strength.

He was only able to move with the help of others.

He lived like that for 9 years, before dying in 2004.

He had his fans during his life.

He had money and plans for the future.

CHRISTOPHER REEVE DIES AT THE AGE OF 52

THE END OF SUPERMAN

He may have been mistaken into thinking he had a splendid life in this world.

Just like other famous people who died many years before.

But, just like everyone else, he was buried all alone below the ground.

**“You have come to Us all alone just as We created you at first, leaving behind you everything We bestowed on you.”** (Surat al-Anam, 94)

The body, a mass of “flesh and bone” weighing an average of 70 to80 kilograms is covered with a thin layer of skin.

That delicate skin is, of course, easily damaged, torn or bruised by the slightest blow.

It cannot remain very long under the Sun.

If it stays there too long it first turns red and then swells up and fills with water.

It is similarly unable to withstand water for too long of a time.

Allah has created human beings in the finest form and equipped them with perfect systems.

But in order to show the transitory nature of this world and prevent people from being caught up in their earthly desires, He also created the body out of materials such as flesh and fat that are easily damaged.

One of human beings’ main weaknesses is the fact that their “raw materials” are so prone to decay.

People often feel the weakness of their bodies, as a reminder from Allah.

There are no such concepts as flawless beauty, an ageless face or a disease-free body in this world.

Because this world is a place we stay in on a temporary basis to be tested. Our true home lies in the Hereafter.

Let us consider another example. The effects of cold weather makes the weakness of the human body crystal clear.

Cold weather gradually paralyzes people’s defense physiology.

The gradual collapse of the body can be observed in such weather.

At first, the heart rate rises, the blood vessels contract and arterial pressure rises.

The body begins shivering to warm itself.

When body temperature falls to 35 degrees Centigrade, a serious danger reveals itself.

The heart rate begins slowing down, blood pressure falls, and the blood vessels in the arms and legs, and particularly the fingers, begin shrinking.

Someone with a body temperature of 35 degrees Centigrade begins to display confusion, sleepiness and loss of concentration.

His mental processes slow down.

Without any doubt, the most important point here is how a drop in body temperature of just 1.5 degrees can lead to such significant consequences.

If a person remains exposed to cold for a prolonged time and body temperature falls below 33 degrees, loss of memory and consciousness follows.

When body temperature falls to 24 degrees, respiration ceases. Brain activity ceases at 20 degrees, and at 19 degrees the heart stops and death inevitably follows.

It is most important to understand the reason for human physical weakness.

Because these weaknesses show us that we can never know true contentment in this world, no matter what we do.

The reason why all things are created is for us to realize our helplessness before Allah, our Creator, and that this world is a transitory domain.

Someone who realizes this will look toward his true abode, Paradise, and remember that one must not be blindly devoted to this world,

because we are promised an eternal life of Paradise.

There are no defects, flaws or physical weakness in Paradise.

There, one will have all his earthly desires and will be entirely free of such physical deficiencies as fatigue, growing old, thirst, hunger and sickness.

THIS FILM IS BASED ON THE WORKS OF HARUN YAHYA (ADNAN OKTAR)

THE LOWEST POINT OF LIFE: OLD AGE

This woman is about 70 years old.

She first attended school, then sat at her desk at work, and then spent time playing with her children in the park, and again with her grandchildren a few years later, never counting the passage of the years.

But the body that was so good at sport and running grew too weak for her even to stand up.

Her sharp eyes clouded over, and her radiant skin became riddles with deep lines.

When she looks at old photos she can clearly see the changes the years have brought.

No matter how much she would love to run and play, walk fast and enjoy herself, her body will not let her.

She probably has no idea where the last 70 or 80 years went.

If asked, she will say, “they all went by in the blink of an eye.”

In her early 20's, she probably never imagined she would one day grow old.

But now she is coping with the reality of old age.

And now she understands how wrong she was.

If you ask her to write down, or speak of everything she did in her life, she could at most fill one notebook or talk for perhaps 5 or 6 hours.

She would find it difficult to remember the good or bad things that happened in her childhood and youth, the important decisions she took, her desires, the aims she spent years trying to achieve. The things she used to imagine were so important are now no more than memories.

That is the sum total of her “70 long years.”

But the destructive effects of time are visible everywhere.

People witness the worst decay in their own bodies.

As the years go by, the bodies that are so important to people suffer irreversible damage.

This change that people go through as the years pass is revealed as follows in the Qur’an:

**It is Allah Who created you from a weak beginning, then after weakness gave you strength, then after strength ordained weakness and gray hair. He creates whatever He wills. He is All-Knowing, All-Powerful.** (Surat ar-Rum, 54)

Old age is described as a “second childhood” in medicine,

because the decay that takes place in the human body leaves people in need of care and protection, just like a child.

Everyone starts life as a child, and ends that life by returning back to childhood once again after a certain period of time.

This process is definitely not a random one. If Allah so wished, He could keep people young until they die, and could have created the body free of disease and deficiency.

But by creating various physical defects in old age, Allah once again reminds us that this world is only a temporary abode.

This verse reveals the temporary nature of this world and that people will come to old age after attaining a certain wisdom:

**Allah created you and then will take you back again. And some of you revert to the lowest form of life so that after having knowledge, you know nothing at all. Allah is All-Knowing, All-Powerful.** (Surat an-Nahl, 70)

Skin is one of the most important elements of human beauty.

If this tissue, just a millimeter in thickness, is lifted off, the resulting picture is a most unattractive one.

In fact, it is too horrible to be able to look at easily.

Therefore, “what people are so proud of and show off to other people in fact consists of 2 kilograms of skin covering the entire body.”

The striking thing, however, is that skin is where the damage caused by old age is most apparent.

People who were once known for their physical beauty, who attained power and fame, who were so intelligent and healthy, will be no different from what you are seeing on the screen now.

All the cosmetic products people use, the vast sums of money spent on them, all the different forms of plastic surgery, may delay this process for a few years, but cannot change the inevitable outcome.

The evident truth is this: the life of this world is worthless compared to the eternal life. It is only faith in Allah that can lead one to eternal happiness in the Hereafter.

WEALTH AND PRESTIGE IN THIS WORLD WILL DEFINITELY CEASE TO EXIST

Many people make the error of thinking they can lead perfect lives in this world.

But the fact is that nobody who forgets Allah and the Hereafter can ever have the life they seek or dream of.

Because when they achieve one thing, they immediately want a better one, or more of it.

When they have money, they demand and try to make more.

They buy a house, but do not like it; they see one they like more and begin trying to acquire that.

Since their tastes change every year, they no longer like their decor at home, or their wardrobe, and constantly dream of getting better clothes and furniture.

Of course, it is perfectly legitimate and excellent for a believer to ask Allah for blessings in order to thank Him and remember Paradise more.

However, such people’s situation is very different to that of unbelievers who forget Allah and the Hereafter and seek blessings for their own earthly pleasure.

These people’s situation is revealed as follows in the Qur’an:

**“Leave the person I created on his own to Me alone,**

**him to whom I have given great wealth**

**and sons who stay with him,**

**and whose way I have smoothed.**

**Then he wants Me to add yet more!”** (Surat al-Muddaththir, 11-15)

One very important fact emerges here.

There is a limit to how many houses, expensive cars, clothes, rooms to sit in, types of food and beds to sleep in a person can have.

Can someone who lives in the greatest palace sit in more than one room at once?

Or can someone who owns the finest clothes in the world wear more than one set at a time?

Even if someone owns palaces containing vast numbers of rooms, he cannot use them all at once, and can only sit in one at any given time.

Even if he has wardrobes full of clothes, he can only wear one suit at a time.

Even if he has thousands of different foodstuffs created by Allah, he can only eat 2 or 3 platefuls at one sitting; any more, and it will be like torturing himself …

One could no doubt cite many other examples.

However, more important than all of this is the fact that everything one imagines one has unlimited access to, such as people, possessions and property, is in fact limited.

So what is true wealth like?

True wealth belongs to believers who have faith in Allah, who attach no undue importance to the temporary things of this world and who know that all things come from Allah alone.

The believer has exchanged the life of this world for that of the Hereafter. He wants goods and possessions in order to earn Allah’s approval and uses them for that purpose. He gives thanks to Allah both for the blessings bestowed on him and also for what may look like imperfections in this world.

He has therefore made the best possible bargain, choosing eternal wealth over temporary riches.

This fact is revealed in the Qur’an in these words:

**Allah has bought from the believers their selves and their wealth in return for the Garden. They fight in the Way of Allah and they kill and are killed. It is a promise binding on Him in the Torah, the Gospel and the Qur’an and who is truer to his contract than Allah? Rejoice then in the bargain you have made. That is the great victory.** (Surat at-Tawba, 111)

DEATH CAN COME AT ANY MOMENT

Everyone has endless plans regarding his own life.

Such as graduating from school, going to university, finding a job, buying a home, getting married and having children, bringing those children up, retiring and enjoying a peaceful life...

But none of these plans are certain to come to fruition.

You may never do the job you planned on since childhood.

You may promise to meet someone for dinner tonight, but never make that appointment.

There is no guarantee you will even see the end of this film.

There is only one certainty in this world.

Death!

The only thing we can be sure of in the life of this world is death.

Most important of all, all animals, plants and human beings, all living things on Earth in other words, are mortal.

Some people fail to grasp the importance of this.

The reason for this is that new people and animals are born to replace the ones that die.

If there were no new births but deaths continued to happen, imagine what kind of a world that would be.

People, animals and plants become fewer and fewer...

In no time at all , everyone would abandon their jobs and everything else, and just think about death and start waiting for it to happen.

Thinking about these examples makes the fact of death perfectly clear.

A student who spends years trying to get into university may die on his way to class.

Or someone who starts a new job may die on his way to it...

A successful businessman may prefer to fly somewhere in order to save time, resolve the matter at hand as quickly as possible and squeeze as much into his day as possible.

But his plane may crash, and his life may come to an end in a way he never imagined.

A few hours, a day, a year, 30 years or 70 years...

There is one certain fact, and that is that all things will one day end.

Whether a person lives 80 years or 100, every passing day is taking him closer to the inevitable end.

For example, how much life remains to every person watching this film, be it a few days or minutes or hours, is already determined.

For that reason, everyone must use the time appointed for him by Allah in the best possible way.

Everyone who realizes that death is inevitable can clearly see that neither property nor possessions, nor brand name shoes nor the people around him will be of any value in the grave.

Everyone, rich or poor, beautiful or ugly, will be wrapped in a shroud a few meters long and buried in the ground.

**Mankind! Allah’s promise is true. Do not let the life of this world delude you...** (Surat al-Fatir, 5)

What any rational person must do is to stop ignoring the facts.

Because death will come, in all probability, at a time when you never imagined it would come even a moment before.

The people attending this funeral will one day be in the same position as the person being buried.

In the same way, the body will dissolve into the earth, and the lifeless body will go through all the stages of decay its owner once could never bear to contemplate.

People must realize they come into this world naked and will leave it naked.

The only thing one can take with one to the Hereafter is belief, or lack of belief, in Allah.

The renowned Islamic scholar Imam Gazali describes the transitory nature of this world and the fact of death as follows in this passage:

There are many breathing things that death has come to before they can give back their last breath. So all you really possess is a single breath; not a day or even an hour! Obey Allah and repent before another breath passes. Death may come to you before you can take a second breath! That means that all a person’s efforts for the sake of a second day, a second hour or a second breath are all in vain. Because there is no guarantee they will attain them." (Imam Gazali, Toward Paradise, (Seven Crossings), Minhajul al--Abidin, p. 118)

BELIEVERS’ TRUE ABODE IS IN THE HEREAFTER

The life of the Hereafter is described as our true abode in the Qur’an.

This term reveals that everything thought to be real in the life of this world is in fact very different.

The rank that people spend their lives pursuing and all the wealth they strive to acquire are in fact “false,” not “real,” compared with the Hereafter.

Everyone will eventually return to Allah and encounter the originals of all things in the Hereafter.

So people must honestly reflect on the Hereafter, described as their true abode in the Qur’an.

They must live by the moral values of the Qur’an, giving thanks to our Lord for all His blessings in this world.

**The life of this world is nothing but a game and a diversion. The abode of the Hereafter – that is truly Life if they only knew.** (Surat al-Ankabut, 64)