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## Thought of death demolishes desires

By Maulana Wahiduddin Khan

There is a hadith of the Prophet about death, which reads as follows: "Remember death often because it demolishes all desires." (Sunan Ibn Majah, hadith no. 4258)

Death is a sort of personal earthquake. Just as people have no control over an earthquake, they have no control over death, a unilateral attack that everyone must face, some day or the other. Death comes whenever it decides to, and man simply has to accept it, whether he likes it or not.

These days, many people live till around 70 or so. But none of us knows when our last moment in this world will arrive. This realization is enough to make every worldly pleasure unattractive for every person. Wealth, political power, fame etc.—everything comes to be seen as utterly meaningless.

This matter is not limited just to conventional material pleasures, but is wider than this. For instance, people's minds are such that if they develop differences with somebody, they derive great pleasure in doing their character assassination. Disfiguring their image becomes their favourite pastime. They begin to think that talking bad about them is a good thing, even though what they say is baseless. All this happens because they are forgetful of death. Had they the living awareness of death, they would have abstained from such negative talk because they would know that as soon as death arrives, all this talk would become so baseless that there would be no one to listen to it, so much so that even their own words would also abandon them. One's unpleasant experience with others tends to cause one to engage in negative activities. One thinks, if not plans, along the lines of creating problems for others. But the thought of death keeps in check these negativities in a person, as he realizes that the world is temporary.

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