

Life in a state of emergency

By Maulana Wahiduddin Khan

One of the most important teachings of the Quran concerns death. Death is the end of the life of every man and woman, but no one knows when it will come. The Quran refers to this fact in the chapter entitled Luqman: "No soul knows what it will earn tomorrow, and no soul knows in what land it will die. Surely, God is all-knowing, all-aware" (31:34).

Death is like an individual earthquake. Everyone is doomed to die, but no one knows when he is going to face this fateful moment. Death means complete detachment from the present world. It is like compulsory eviction from the world he has built for himself.

This being so, everyone is living in a state of emergency. Every moment is his last moment. Every breath may prove to be his last. At any time he may face the fatal

verdict of destiny — he may reach the point of no return in his life.

This situation is very serious; it is a great teacher for every man and woman. It creates a new kind of ethics that is based on death. This concept, if taken as a living concept, may change the whole way of a person's life. It may indeed revolutionise the course of his life. It can bring about a sea change in every human being.

The concept of inevitable death makes you very sincere. It saves you from all kinds of distractions. It nullifies all kinds of lust and exploitation. It tells a person that negative planning is pointless because before its fulfilment, one may die — and death is for all eternity. One may think against his fellow men, but no one has the power to fulfil his evil desires against others.

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