

DISCLAIMER: This reminder was originally delivered in Arabic on Friday, 8th January 2010. Any meanings lost in translation are not to be attributed to the speaker as reminders are translated by volunteers. The mosque has no official translator and volunteers often have no formal qualifications to translate on the day. Please forgive any errors as they are from our human weakness and any right guidance is from God.

Recently there has been a lot of talk about the end of the world in the year 2012 – discussions about the possible emergence of a planet that will hit the earth and affecting its poles and magnetic gravity. Talk of explosions, disturbance and imbalance in the universe system taking place. Books were written, predictions were made and even movies depicting this assumption.

The strange thing was that some Muslims indulged themselves in discussions and were in a state of confusion and disorder. Some have become fearful after the events they saw in the recent movie called 2012 and the research and reports they read over the internet (facebook... etc). This is only a direct result of the effect of Hollywood culture and weak religious knowledge.

Oh Muslims, God says "They ask you, [O Muhammad], about the Hour: when is its arrival? Say, "Its knowledge is only with my Lord. None will reveal its time except Him. It lays heavily upon the heavens and the earth. It will not come upon you except unexpectedly." They ask you as if you are familiar with it. Say, "Its knowledge is only with God, but most of the people do not know.'" [Al-Aaraf 7:187]. The knowledge of the Hour is an unseen knowledge as only God, Glory be to Him the Most High (GMH) knows its exact time. He (GMH) did not tell any of His creatures about that time and He (GMH) will reveal it only in the exact time that it occurs. Instead of asking about its time, God draws out attention to how great is the event itself and calls us to be aware of it, have knowledge of what it is (rather than when) and try to get sense of the terribleness of its events. Indeed, despite it being a tremendous event, there is wisdom for it coming upon us unexpectedly! God the almighty hid the time of the Hour so that people might prepare themselves for it by fearing and being conscious of Him and doing good between themselves.

Reflect on God's saying "It lays heavily upon the heavens and the earth" - which tells us that getting ourselves prepared for the Hour has more priority over anything else - before it comes upon us unexpectedly. Talking about warnings will not benefit us if we do not take a full care of preparing for it as long as we still have time to live. No one knows when the Hour is coming so do not waste even one hour of your life before you will be surprised by the Hour! God also says "They ask you, [O Muhammad], about the Hour: when is its arrival? In what [position] are you that you should mention it? To your Lord is its finality. You are only a warner for those who fear it. It will be, on the Day they see it, as though they had not remained [in the world] except for an afternoon or a morning thereof." [Al-Naaziaat 79:42-46] and in another verse "People ask you concerning the Hour. Say, " Knowledge of it is only with God. And what may make you perceive? Perhaps the Hour is near.'" [Al-Ahzab 33:63].

Oh Muslims, The prophet, peace be upon him (pbuh) said: "If Hour arrives and one of you happens to have a palm-tree offshoot, if he can plant it before the appointed hour, he should do it". Your assumption that life is short is a very important tool to control your soul and refrain it from following its desires. The hiding of the time of death and the time of the Hour gives more space for work, more capacity to give and produce and more continuity of effort for good deeds and a straight life. That is why the wisdom is to: 'plan for this world as though you will live forever and plan for the hereafter as though you will die tomorrow' indeed, plan for the hereafter as though you will die any moment.

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This is an encouragement for every one of us to work, reform, hasten and prepare for his or her personal minor Hour –death- before the major Hour. This will not be achieved by waiting but by serious productive work which is based on lawful means and natural reasons put by God almighty. Any permissible (Mubah) deed has a reward as long as it is combined with good intention - so what about if this permissible deed brings good for people in their life as well! God (GMH) hid your personal Hour (death) from you so you do not know when you will die and your record of deeds is sealed in order for you to be always prepared to meet your Lord with your good deeds and your abandonment of bad deeds.

A man asked the prophet (pbuh): when is the Hour? And the prophet (pbuh) answered him with a practical question that benefits him more than the mere knowledge of the exact time of the Hour “what have you prepared for it?”

All of what he (pbuh) told about the Hour were its indications - its minor and major signs. The beginning of the prophet's mission (pbuh) was one of those indications as he (pbuh) was the last prophet with no book after that which was revealed to him and no legislation after that which he (pbuh) approved. He (pbuh) said: “the time that I have been sent and the Hour are like these two” he (pbuh) then pointed to his index and middle finger. This is confirmed by Quran in the verse “Then do they await except that the Hour should come upon them unexpectedly? But already there have come [some of] its indications” [Muhammad 47:18].

May God help guide us to be from those who ‘plan for this world as though we will live forever and plan for the hereafter as though we will die tomorrow’.