

# HOW DOES ISLAM VIEW DEATH

Amongst the fundamental Articles of Faith a Muslim believes in Resurrection, the Day of Judgment, Accountability and Heaven & Hell. The present life is considered to be only a temporary period of time in order to prepare for the hereafter. All the Prophets of Allah (God) called the people to worship Allah (God) and to believe in life after death. Much emphasis was placed on the belief in life after death and preparing for it, by carrying out good actions and abstaining from bad deeds.

*“Every (soul) shall taste death” [Qur’aan: Surah Aale Imraan: Ch3:v185]*

When a Muslim dies, he or she is washed usually by a family member, shrouded in plain white sheets of cloth, after the funeral prayer has been offered upon the deceased. Muslims consider this as one of the final services they should do for fellow believers, and an opportunity to remember their own brief existence here on earth. The body of the deceased is considered as a trust from Allah (God) which must be returned. Therefore, Muslims make haste in making burial arrangements and try to avoid post mortems (autopsy) unless necessary. Burial of any deceased is the responsibility of the whole community, many of whom may not be related to the person who has passed away but may attend the funeral prayer. This also acts as a comfort for the family and friends of the deceased.

The Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) taught that three things can continue to help a person even after death; charity which they had given, knowledge which they had passed on to others and prayers on their behalf by a righteous child. Each individual will be judged according to his or her own actions and not that of others. However, if a deceased person has inspired someone to conduct good actions, they will also reap the reward for those deeds.

*“Allah burdens not a soul beyond what it can cope with. For it, (is only) that which it has earned, and against it, (only) that which it has deserved.”*  
Qur’aan: [Surah Al Baqarah: Ch2:v286]

*“Whoever guides towards a goodness, will get virtues equal to the one who performs that goodness.” [Muslim]”*

Muslims are also encouraged to pray for, give charity on behalf of and visit the grave as a mark of remembrance of the person who has passed away. It is highly recommended that the family of the deceased maintain contact and a courteous relationship with close friends of the person who has passed away. This helps in the grieving process not just for the family but also for those who were close to the deceased.

