

296690 - Can telomeres prevent death?

the question

It is said that telomeres (the elixir of life) can turn back the aging process in humans and make them young again, and can renew nerve cells which it was assumed could not be renewed, and thus achieve the idea of immortality and overcome what our Lord has decreed of death for human beings. Please note that in a video on some channel the doctor says that this medicine has become available in the form of pills. What is the ruling on that?

Detailed answer

The most that can be said about telomeres, if it is true and proven scientifically, is that they work to renew nerve cells and prevent the cells aging; they reduce the speed of telomere loss, and thus increase the rate of cell renewal even in old age.

Even if this is proven scientifically, it means that youthfulness is preserved and aging is avoided.

But that has nothing to do with preventing death, because death happens to young and old, strong and weak; it is something that Allah has decreed for all humans and jinn.

Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And We did not grant to any man before you eternity [on earth]; so if you die – would they be eternal?”

Every soul will taste death. And We test you with evil and with good as trial; and to Us you will be returned”

[al-Anbiyaa' 21:34-35]

“Indeed, you are to die, and indeed, they are to die”

[az-Zumar 39:30].

Al-Bukhaari (7383) and Muslim (2717) narrated from Ibn ‘Abbaas that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) used to say: “...I seek refuge in Your glory – there is no god but You Who will never die, but jinn and men die.”

No matter what strength, youthfulness or good health a person attains, he has an appointed time that Allah, may He be exalted, has decreed for him, and he will inevitably taste death, then he will be resurrected for the reckoning and requital.

Among the polytheists there are those who deny the resurrection and the requital, but there is no one who denies death, for it is the reality that is seen by all, and no one can ward it off.

Renewing cells, or preventing them from advancing in age, will be of no avail to the human being when the time of his death comes. You see the sturdiest of people, the best in health, the most youthful of them, dying when Allah wills it, and no one can ward off death from him.

“Then why, when the soul at death reaches the throat,

And you are at that time looking on –

And Our angels are nearer to him than you, but you do not see –

Then why do you not, if you are not to be recompensed,

Bring it back, if you should be truthful?”

[al-Waaqi‘ah 56:83-87].

Glory be to the One Who subjects His slaves to death, whilst He alone remains for eternity.

“And He is the subjugator over His servants, and He sends over you guardian-angels until, when death comes to one of you, Our messengers take him, and they do not fail [in their duties].

Then they His servants are returned to Allah, their true Lord. Unquestionably, His is the judgement, and He is the swiftest in calling to account”

[al-An‘aam 6:61-62].

We do not know of anyone who has claimed to discover a medicine or a means of preventing death. No one will ever be able to do that, even if he seeks the help of all the people on earth, for the One Who created man created death, and has decreed people’s lifespans, and He ordained that in a Book with Him fifty thousand years before He created the heavens and the earth. None can put back His decree or overturn His decision.

So forget about dubious matters; focus on yourself and prepare to meet Allah, may He be exalted, for the appointed time decreed by Allah is surely coming.

And Allah knows best.