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‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Amr ibn al-‘Ās (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: The Messenger of Allah (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) passed by us while we were repairing a hut that we owned. He said: "What is this?" We replied: "It has become weak, so we are repairing it." He said: "I foresee that the matter (meaning death) is swifter/sooner than that."

[Authentic hadith] [Narrated by Ibn Majah - Narrated by At-Termedhy - Narrated by Abu Daoud]

Meaning: The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) passed by ‘Amr ibn al-‘Ās while he was repairing the damaged parts of his home, or working on it to reinforce it. In a narration by Abu Dawūd: “while I was plastering a wall of mine”. He said: "I foresee that the matter (meaning death) is swifter/sooner than that." He means that death is nearer to you than repairing your house for fear that it would collapse before you die, and perhaps you would die before it collapses. Hence, mending your deeds takes priority over mending your house. Someone’s appointed term in this world is too short for him to indulge in maintaining it and exerting effort in that respect. The Hadīth calls for abstinence from focusing on the worldly life and forgetting the life Hereafter, while people have gone against in all parts of the world. Al-Taybi (may Allah have mercy upon him) said: “It means that our state in this world that resembles the wayfarer or the rider resting in the shade of a tree is too short to allow you to engage in building.” Apparently repairing the building in this case was not necessary (meaning it wasn’t in such a dangerous state that it may harm someone) but he was only motivated by the hope to reinforce it or by his preference to decorate it. He clarified to him that it is more important to preoccupy himself with matters of the Hereafter than with what would not be of any benefit to him in the Hereafter.

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