

April 19, 2020

The Coronavirus Epidemic (Lesson #1)

In the name of Allah; the most gracious and most merciful:

Islam as an organization has always had a solution for all major problems or crises that people experience. Currently the Earth is experiencing a crisis with the spreading of the coronavirus. It started in China and has now spread worldwide. My dear brothers and sisters, our goal today is to explain how Islam as an organization can help us deal with this epidemic.

Allah (swt) teaches us that these practices are not to be altered in any shape or form. In Surat Fatir, Allah (swt) states, “You will never find any change in God’s practice; you will never find any deviation there.” Amongst these practices that Allah has taught us is the practice of dealing with a crisis or trial or test. Allah tabark wa taalah created this world for a purpose and it consists of trials and tests. And He created the akhira for the purpose of living the consequences of how you dealt with those trials and tests forever. In Surat Al-Mulk, Allah subhana wa taalah states, “Exalted is He who holds all control in His hands; who has power over all things; who created death and life to test you and reveal which of you does best - He is the Mighty, the Forgiving. The Prophet (SAW) further explains that Al Tabaree in the tafseer of Abdallah Ibn Omar the aya stating, “which of you does best” means those who do best in wisdom and are quickest to obey Allah.

It is from the wisdom of Allah (SWT) that he tests his servants with a variety of trials that are individualized. This individualized test or trial serves as a reminder for the servant to ultimately turn to Allah even after surviving the trial. These tests do not only come in the form of plagues and illnesses as what is happening today. Tests can also come in the form of blessings, wealth, or benefits given to you by Allah. The reason Allah does this is so the servant will remain steadfast in his patience, duaa, and gratitude towards Allah. Allah (SWT) states in surat Al-Anbiya’, “We test you all through the bad and the good, and to Us you will all return.” Imam Ibn Katheer, in his explanation of the aya, states that Allah tests us through the bad one time and the good another time so that He may see who will be thankful amongst us and who will become a disbeliever. He further explains the “bad” in this instance means the test or trial and the “good” is the test coming to an end. As for, “and to Us you will return”, Allah SWT will reward our good deeds.

There are many examples of ways Allah SWT tests us. 1) A test in duties Allah bestowed upon the prophets through the books (i.e. Torah, Bible, Quran) whom later passed it on to all mankind. Allah SWT states in surat Al-Ahzab, “We offered the Trust to the heavens, the earth, and the mountains, yet they refused to undertake it and were afraid of it; mankind undertook it - they have always been very inept and rash. Allah also states in surat Al-Insan, “We created man from a drop of mingled fluid to put him to the test; We gave him hearing and sight. 2) A test in disasters. In surat Al-Baqara, Allah SWT states, “We shall certainly test you with fear and

hunger, and loss of property, lives, and crops. But [Prophet], give good news to those who are steadfast, those who say, when afflicted with a calamity, 'We belong to God and to Him we shall return.' These will be given blessings and mercy from their Lord, and it is they who are rightly guided." 3) A test in blessings and good fortune. Allah SWT tells us in surat Al-Anbiya', "We test you all through the bad and the good, and to Us you will all return." 4) A test in differences between mankind in their characteristics and their deeds. In surat Al-An'am, Allah SWT states, "It is He who made you successors on the earth and raises some of you above others in rank, to test you through what He gives. [Prophet], your Lord is swift in punishment, yet He is most forgiving and merciful."

If we look to the Quran to see all the calamities that occur to mankind, we see that this is the result of human corruption. In surat Al-Rum, Allah SWT says, "Corruption has flourished on land and sea as a result of people's actions and He will make them taste the consequences of some of their own actions so that they may turn back." In a hadith narrated by Al Imam Ibn Maga wal Hakim wal Albanee on the authority of Abullah Ibn Omar (RA) The Messenger of Allah *sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "*O Muhajirun! You may be afflicted with five things. Allah forbid that you should live to see them. (i) If fornication and adultery should become widespread, then you should know that this has never happened without new diseases befalling the people which their forefathers never suffered. (ii) If people should begin to cheat in weighing out goods, you should realize that this has never happened without a drought and famine befalling the people and their rulers oppressing them. (iii) If people should withhold zakat, you should realize that this has never happened without the rain being stopped from falling; and were it not for the sake of the animals, it would never rain again. (iv) If people should break their covenant with Allah and His Messenger, you should realize that this has never happened without Allah sending an enemy against them to take some of their possessions by force. (v) If the leaders do not rule according to the book of Allah, you should realize that this has never happened without Allah making them into groups and making them fight one another.*"

Furthermore, the Quran expresses that a plague or calamity does not occur unless it is the consequence of the major sins of mankind. Allah SWT states in surat Al-Shura, "Whatever misfortune befalls you [people], it is because of what your own hands have done - God forgives much."

From this, my dear brothers and sisters, we conclude, that the coronavirus is another way of Allah (SWT) testing those servants who may have fallen short in regards to corruption, oppression (whether it be on an individual or group or state of people) and due to the lack of faith, morals, values, and/or principles. Allah (SWT) states in surat Al-A'raf, "If the people of those towns had believed and been mindful of God, We would have showered them with blessings from the heavens and earth."

We ask the Almighty Allah (SWT) to safeguard us through these challenging times and make us among those who listen and act upon the best of what we learn.