

# CORONAVIRUS

## A TIME TO REFLECT

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at-tazkiyah

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The coronavirus pandemic has affected the lives of many people throughout the globe. It has caused drastic changes to the lifestyles, social life, financial stability, education, mental condition and religious activities of millions and billions of people. We should take this as an opportunity to ponder over what has happened and derive lessons. Hereunder are a few lessons we can derive from the coronavirus:

1. Allāh ﷻ states in the Glorious Qur'ān,

وَلَنُذِيقَنَّهُمْ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ الْأَدْنَىٰ دُونَ الْعَذَابِ الْأَكْبَرِ  
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ

*And We will certainly make them (i.e. those who reject and disobey) taste the lesser punishment (in this world) before the greater punishment (in the Hereafter), so that they may return (to the path of Īmān and righteousness). (32:21)*

From this verse, we learn that the calamities and difficulties we face in this world are at times inflicted upon us as ‘lesser punishments’, so that we change our negligent ways and thereby save ourselves from the ‘greater punishment’ of the Hereafter. Thus, the first lesson we learn from this pandemic is that we need to turn to Allāh ﷻ and mend our ways through sincere tawbah and resolve to live in accordance with the Pleasure of Allāh ﷻ.

2. During this pandemic, every person has been careful not to contract the virus. Even those who displayed a careless attitude towards the virus made sure to wear masks, sanitise their hands and keep a distance in situations where they felt in danger of contracting it. We adopted all precautionary measures needed to save ourselves from the virus. Thus, the coronavirus has taught us that we have the ability to refrain from doing things that bring us harm in this world or the Hereafter, when we resolve to do so. Therefore, just as we stay away from the things that cause coronavirus out of fear of pain or death, we should stay away from all sins out of fear of the Displeasure of Allāh ﷻ and His Punishment. Let

us take a lesson from the coronavirus and resolve to save ourselves from the far more dangerous virus of disobedience to Allāh ﷻ. Furthermore, just as when we touch something with possible effects of coronavirus, we wash our hands or sanitise them immediately; if we slip and commit a sin, we must wash our hearts from the effects of this sin immediately through tawbah.

3. During the national lockdowns, people have been required to confine themselves to the four walls of their homes and to not leave except for genuine needs. For those habituated to hours of gossip and idle leisure in shopping centres or get-togethers with friends, this proved to them that they can stay at home and do without such futile activities. When Sayyidunā ‘Uqbah ibn ‘Āmir ؓ asked, ‘O Rasūlullāh, what is (the means of) salvation (in this world and the Hereafter)?’, one of the things Nabī ﷺ said in reply was:

وَلْيَسَعَكَ بَيْتُكَ

*Your home should become spacious for you.  
(i.e. you should remain within the confines of  
your home). (At-Tirmidhī)*

Remaining within the confines of the home and

not leaving without a genuine need saves one from the many evils of this world. Whilst previously we would say that this is ‘too boring’ and ‘not possible’, we now find ourselves remaining at home for weeks and months. If we can do this for our physical wellbeing, can we not do it for our spiritual wellbeing? Let us learn to spend more time at home and avoid going out without necessity.

4. Due to coronavirus implications, the masājīd had to close wuḍū and toilet facilities to all worshippers. In this period, all of us are performing wuḍū at home and then proceeding to the masjid. This shows that previously we had been using the facilities of the masājīd more than we actually needed. These facilities are in essence for those who have a genuine need to use them, e.g. mu‘takifīn, travellers, those who have come for ṣalāh during a work break, etc. In the era of our Beloved Nabī ﷺ, there was no concept of a wuḍū and toilet area with each masjid. Thus, even after the pandemic comes to an end, as far as possible we should perform wuḍū at home and avoid using the masjid facilities. This will bear two benefits: firstly, the masājīd will make huge savings, as the

usage of heating, water and cleaning resources will decrease considerably. Secondly, we will acquire the virtues mentioned in the Aḥadīth. Rasūlullāh ﷺ said,

مَنْ تَطَهَّرَ فِي بَيْتِهِ، ثُمَّ مَشَى إِلَى بَيْتٍ مِّنْ بُيُوتِ اللَّهِ  
لِيَقْضِيَ فَرِيضَةً مِّنْ فَرَائِضِ اللَّهِ، كَانَتْ خَطْوَتَاهُ إِحْدَاهُمَا  
تَحُطُّ خَطِيئَةً، وَالْأُخْرَى تَرْفَعُ دَرَجَةً

*One who purifies himself (i.e. performs wuḍū) at home and then walks to a house from the Houses of Allāh to perform one of the farā'id of Allāh, one step of his erases a sin whilst another elevates him by a rank. (Muslim)*

Rasūlullāh ﷺ also said,

مَنْ خَرَجَ مِنْ بَيْتِهِ مُتَطَهِّرًا إِلَى صَلَاةٍ مَكْتُوبَةٍ فَأَجْرُهُ  
كَأَجْرِ الْحَاجِّ الْمُحْرِمِ

*One who leaves his home for a farḍ ṣalāh in the state of wuḍū, his reward is like that of a ḥājjī in the state of iḥrām. (Abū Dāwūd)*

5. Another lesson we learn from the pandemic is the good habit of filling the front rows of the masjid

first. Previously, as worshippers would enter the masjid, they would sit scattered in different parts of the masjid. Even somebody who arrived early to the masjid would sit near the back and deprive himself of the rewards of performing farḍ ṣalāh in the front row. Ever since the pandemic has started, each worshipper who enters the masjid proceeds straight to the front and takes the first place available. Let us endeavour to continue carrying out this virtuous act for the rest of our lives. Rasūlullāh ﷺ said,

لَوْ يَعْلَمُ النَّاسُ مَا فِي النِّدَاءِ وَالصَّفِّ الْأَوَّلِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَجِدُوا  
إِلَّا أَنْ يَسْتَهْمُوا عَلَيْهِ لَأَسْتَهْمُوا عَلَيْهِ

*If people knew what (reward) lies in calling out the adhān and (performing farḍ ṣalāh) in the first row, and they had no choice but to draw lots over it, then they would surely draw lots over it.” (Al-Bukhārī)*

6. Another important lesson we have learnt from this pandemic is that we can remain silent and avoid socialising in the masjid. As social distancing rules are in place, silence is maintained and each worshipper focuses on his own ‘ibādah. This is

the behaviour we need to adopt in the masājid throughout our lives. Rasūlullāh ﷺ said,

يَأْتِي عَلَى النَّاسِ زَمَانٌ يَتَحَلَّقُونَ فِي مَسَاجِدِهِمْ وَلَيْسَ  
هِمَّتُهُمْ إِلَّا الدُّنْيَا لَيْسَ لِلَّهِ فِيهِمْ حَاجَةٌ فَلَا تُجَالِسُوهُمْ

*Soon a time will come when people will group up in their masājid and their only worry and concern will be (affairs of) the world. Allāh has no need for these people, so do not sit with them. (Al-Hākim)*

7. Due to the restrictions on gatherings, we are seeing smaller wedding ceremonies which are free from extravagance and disobedience to Allāh ﷻ. We have learnt that on this joyous occasion, it is possible to adopt simplicity and save ourselves from incurring the Displeasure of Allāh ﷻ. Thus, we should continue to do so even after the restrictions are uplifted, as it is a means of immense barakah. Rasūlullāh ﷺ said,

إِنَّ أَعْظَمَ النِّكَاحِ بَرَكَهً أَيْسَرُهُ مَوْنَةً

*Indeed, the most blessed nikāḥ is that which is the least burdensome (i.e. most simple). (Aḥmad)*

8. Since wearing face coverings has become mandatory, our mothers and sisters who were previously wearing only the headscarf are virtually wearing niqāb now. They have proven to themselves that they can easily wear the niqāb if they want to, thus they should take this opportunity to begin covering the face for the pleasure of Allāh ﷻ and continue to do so for the rest of their lives.
9. The coronavirus has reminded us of the Complete and All-Encompassing Control and Power of Allāh ﷻ. The world is compelled to fall to its knees and confess that there is none dominant besides Allāh ﷻ. Efforts are taking place at an international level; the World Health Organization and countries throughout the world are working together to overcome this single virus; and despite all modern-day advancements, they are left helpless even after months. Events like this demonstrate how helpless and weak mankind truly is in front of the Power of Allāh ﷻ, the Almighty. Allāh ﷻ states,

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ فَعَّالٌ لِّمَا يُرِيدُ

*Indeed, Your Rabb does whatsoever He intends.*  
(11:107)

## إِن الْحُكْمَ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ

*Decisions rest only with Allāh. (12:40)*

وَإِن يَّمْسَسْكَ اللَّهُ بِضُرٍّ فَلَا كَاشِفَ لَهُ إِلَّا هُوَ وَإِن يُرِدْك  
بِخَيْرٍ فَلَا رَادَّ لِفَضْلِهِ يُصِيبُ بِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ

*If Allāh brings some harm to you, there is none to remove it except He. And if He intends to bring some good to you, there is none to turn His Grace back. He brings it to whomever He wills from among His servants. (10:107)*

قُلْ لَا أَمْلِكُ لِنَفْسِي نَفْعًا وَلَا ضَرًّا إِلَّا مَا  
شَاءَ اللَّهُ

*Say, 'I have no power to bring any benefit or harm to myself, except that which Allāh wills...' (7:188)*

Rasūlullāh ﷺ states,

وَأَعْلَمُ أَنَّ الْأُمَّةَ لَوِ اجْتَمَعَتْ عَلَى أَنْ يَنْفَعُوكَ بِشَيْءٍ لَمْ  
يَنْفَعُوكَ إِلَّا بِشَيْءٍ قَدْ كَتَبَهُ اللَّهُ لَكَ وَلَوْ اجْتَمَعُوا عَلَى  
أَنْ يَضُرُّوكَ بِشَيْءٍ لَمْ يَضُرُّوكَ إِلَّا بِشَيْءٍ قَدْ كَتَبَهُ اللَّهُ

عَلَيْكَ رُفِعَتِ الْأَقْلَامُ وَجَفَّتِ الصُّحُفُ

*And know that if the whole Ummah were to get together to benefit you, they would not be able to benefit you except with that which Allāh has decreed for you; and if they got together to harm you, they would not be able to harm you except with that which Allāh has decreed for you. The pens have been lifted and the pages have dried (i.e. every benefit and harm has been predestined and cannot be altered). (At-Tirmidhī)*

10. Finally, we have witnessed a large number of deaths during this pandemic and many have also lost their near and dear ones. The coronavirus has not discriminated between the old and the young, the ill and the healthy, the weak and the strong or the poor and the wealthy. The pandemic has taught us over the last few months to never become complacent regarding our death. Due to the comforts we are enjoying, we should not remain in neglect and continue to think that death is still a distant reality. We should continuously remind ourselves that we will also have to leave this temporary world and its comforts sooner rather than later. Let us take the death toll from

this virus of over two million worldwide in the last 10 months alone as an eye-opener and embed in our hearts and minds the temporary nature of this world and the reality of death.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ said,

أَكْثَرُوا ذِكْرَ هَازِمِ اللَّذَاتِ يَعْزِي الْمَوْتَ

*Remember excessively the crusher of desires, i.e. death. (Al-Hākim)*

By remaining conscious of death, we will be able to suppress our unlawful desires and make preparations for the everlasting life of the Hereafter.

May Allāh ﷻ grant us the ability to pay heed to these few lessons derived from the coronavirus outbreak. May Allāh ﷻ remove the virus from the face of the earth, return life back to normality and may He, most importantly, enable us to turn to Him in repentance and remain obedient to Him till the last breath. Āmīn.

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