

Epidemics – Sign of the Hour

First Khutbah

إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ لِلَّهِ , نَحْمَدُهُ , وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ , وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا , مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ , وَمَنْ يَضِلَّ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ , وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

Verily, all praise is for Allah. We praise Him, we seek His assistance and we ask for His forgiveness. And we seek refuge in Him from the evils of our selves. Whoever Allah guides, none can misguide. Whoever He misguides, none can guide. And I bear witness that there is no deity other than Allah and I bear witness that Mohammad is His slave and messenger.

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ) [آل

عمران:102]

Al Imran 102 : O you who believe! Fear Allah as He should be feared, and die not except in a state of Islam.

To Proceed:

Be conscious of Allah, obey Him, attach your hearts to Him, submit to Him and dedicate your religion sincerely to Him. For the creation is His creation and all matters are under His command. A servant will not be afflicted except what has been written for him. The pens have been lifted and the pages have dried .

(وَإِنْ يَمَسُّكَ اللَّهُ بِضُرٍّ فَلَا كَاشِفَ لَهُ إِلَّا هُوَ وَإِنْ يَمَسُّكَ بِخَيْرٍ فَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ) [الأنعام: 17].

Al Anam-17 And if Allah touches you with harm, none can remove it but He, and if He touches you with good, then He is Able to do all things.

Oh People: From among the signs of Prophethood and evidence of the Prophet's (ﷺ) genuineness is what he (ﷺ) informed us of the trials, tribulations and the major and minor signs of the hour. Many of the things that he (ﷺ) had informed us of from the unseen have already happened. And they are still occurring and increasing to confirm the genuineness of the Prophethood and to make the believer steadfast in what he (ﷺ) informed. For believers are surrounded by tests of ease and hardship. And they are besieged by trials of desires and doubt. There is no salvation except through Allah the Most High and His religion. For whomsoever holds onto it is saved and whomsoever turns away is doomed .

And from among the matters that the Prophet (ﷺ) informed us about is that towards the end of time death will spread among people and sudden deaths will increase. This will be due to earthquakes, volcanoes, hurricanes, epidemics and drowning. Just as it will be due to strife, war and massacres.

As far as death from epidemics being one of the signs of the hour this is indicated in the hadeeth of Awf Bin Malik (raa) who said: "I came to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) during the campaign of Tabuk, when he was in a tent made of leather, Then he (ﷺ) said: 'O 'Awf, remember six things that will occur before the Hour comes, one of them is my death. Then will come the conquest of Baitul-Maqdis (Jerusalem); then a deadly outbreak will

Khutbah.info

afflict you (and kill you in great numbers) like a deadly outbreak that afflicts sheep; then there will be much wealth among you, so much so that if a man were to be given one hundred Dinars he would still be dissatisfied; and there will be tribulation among you that will not leave any Muslim house untouched; then there will be a treaty between you and the Romans, then they will betray you and march against you with eighty banners, under each of which will be twelve thousand troops.

Ibn Atheer said the deadly outbreak referred to in the hadeeth results in wide-spread death and it was compared to contagious outbreaks that occur with sheep. It is a disease that when a sheep is afflicted it quickly dies. And it is said that it is a disease affecting the chest. Certainly a lot of epidemics affect the chest and restrict breathing causing the affected person to die .

As was indicated by the various hadeeths, a lot of people in this ummah will die by killing and epidemics. These were both mentioned in the hadeeth of Aishah (raa) who said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: My Ummah will not perish except through killing and epidemics.

Ibn Khaldoon, the great scholar of urbanization and civilization, said: "The increase in death has causes such as increase in famine or an increase in strife and discord resulting in killing. Or it is due to an epidemic which is most likely caused by poor air quality from too any buildings that increase the likelihood of mold and harmful humidity. If the air quality is poor it can transmit disease. If it carries a strong acting pathogen then it will affect the lungs and this is a respiratory disease. If it carries weak acting pathogens then the mold will increase and multiply and will cause bodily diseases resulting in death.

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In the first Hijri century there were four plagues that afflicted the people. A plague occurred in the sixth year AH- the year of the treaty of Hdaybiyah. It affected Persia while the Muslims in Madinah were not affected. The second plague was called the plague عَمَوَاسَ in the Levant and a large group of the companions (may Allah be pleased with them) were martyred .

The third plague is called الْجَارِفِ and it occurred during the rule of Ibn Zubayr (may Allah be pleased with him) in the year 69 AH and was called "the scrapper" due to the great number of people that died. The fourth plague was in the year of 87 AH .

The plagues and epidemics continued over the centuries just as the Prophet (ﷺ) informed about the occurrence of many deadly outbreaks. And in our time epidemics occurred that were not known before like AIDS, SARS, Mad Cow Disease, Avian Flu, Swine Flu, Ebola, Corona among others. So much so that in a period of five years, the World Health Organization recorded more than 1100 epidemics across the globe .

It is through Allah's permission that outbreaks can be controlled or vaccines developed. If Allah permits an outbreak to overtake a people they will be unable to control it .

Verily, to Allah belongs the command before and after, and He is Able to do all things .

(وَإِنْ يَمَسُّكَ اللَّهُ بِضُرٍّ فَلَا كَاشِفَ لَهُ إِلَّا هُوَ وَإِنْ يُرِدْكَ بِخَيْرٍ فَلَا رَادَّ لِفَضْلِهِ يُصِيبُ بِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ وَهُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ) [يونس: 107].

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Yunus 107- And if Allah touches you with harm, there is none who can remove it but He; and if He intends any good for you, there is none who can repel His Favor which He causes it to reach whomsoever of His slaves He will. And He is the Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

أَقُولُ مَا تَسْمَعُونَ وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ لِي وَلَكُمْ مِنْ كُلِّ ذَنْبٍ فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ
الرَّحِيمُ

I say what you have heard and I seek forgiveness from Allah for me and you from every sin. So seek forgives from Him, Verily He is Oft-Forgiving, the Most Merciful.

Second Khutbah

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ , وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ , وَ أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ
لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

All praise is to Allah, and peace and blessings upon the Messenger of Allah, and I bear witness that there is no deity other than Allah and I bear witness that Mohammad is His slave and messenger.

Oh Muslims:

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Plague and epidemics are trials from Allah and a punishment. If it afflicts a believer upholding Allah's commands then it is a trial. If they are patient and seeking the reward then they will have an immense reward. For the one who dies from an epidemic has the reward like a martyr as related by Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her). She asked Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) about plague, and he (ﷺ) informed her, "Plague was a punishment which Allah used to send on whom He wished, but Allah made it a blessing for the believers. None among the believers remains patient in a land in which plague has broken out and considers that nothing will befall him except what Allah has ordained for him, but that Allah will grant him a reward similar to that of a martyr".

And the guidance of the Prophet (ﷺ) "If you hear about a plague in a place do not go to it, and if a plague befalls a place that you are in, do not leave it fleeing it" Related by Al Bukhari and Muslim

This Hadeeth indicates to not put oneself in harm's way. Also, taking preventative measures such as vaccines and not mixing with ill people does not negate tawakul/reliance on Allah. The hadeeth in which "no contagiousness" is mentioned was to correct and negate the false beliefs of the ignorant people who thought that epidemics spread disease through their own accord. The correct belief is that epidemics pass from one person to another only by the will and decree of Allah. This explains how a person may have contact with someone who is ill and not get affected. It also explains how someone may take every precaution to distance themselves from the causes of the epidemic but still catch it .

It is incumbent for people to repent to Allah and turn to Him. And to stop wronging themselves through sins and indecencies. And to stop wronging

Khutbah.info

one another by transgressing on each other's rights. For the afflictions only come down because of sins and are not removed except through repentance .

(وَتُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا أَيُّهَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ) [النور: 31].

An Noor 31- And turn to Allah in repentance, all of you, O believers, that you might succeed.

عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَى وَيَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ
وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ، يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ

أذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ الْعَظِيمَ يَذْكُرْكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا يَزِدْكُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا يُغْفِرْ لَكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا يَجْعَلْ
لَكُمْ مِنْ أَمْرِكُمْ مَخْرَجًا ، وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ

Servants of Allah. Indeed, Allah orders justice and good conduct and giving to relatives and forbids immorality and bad conduct and oppression. He admonishes you that perhaps you will be reminded.

Remember Allah, the Great - He will remember you. Thank Him for His favors - He will increase you therein. And seek forgiveness from Him - He will forgive you. And be conscious of Him - He will provide you a way out of difficult matters. And, establish the prayer.