

**Viral Lockdown 2020:
The Scholars' Perspective on the COVID-19 Pandemic**

Since the COVID-19 Pandemic was announced by WHO, Islamic Scholars globally have been providing their perspective on its nature, impact and meaning, and these perspectives are given chronologically.

SUMMARY LIST of Islamic Scholars' Views on the COVID-19 Pandemic:

Sheikh Nazim Al-Haqqani, SufiLive, August 4, 2011

<https://sufilive.com/A-Virus-Is-Coming--7213-EN-print.html>

Sheikh Imran Hosein, 'The Corona Virus and Akhir al-Zaman', February 10, 2020

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MsrVREKEbyo&t=1077s>

Sheikh Hisham Kabbani, SufiLive, February 20, 2020

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UAE Council for Fatwa issues a ruling for performing Congregational Rites in light of the spread of COVID-19, Sheikh Abdallah Bin Bayyah & Sheikh Hamza Yusuf, March 3, 2020

<https://sandala.org/congregations-and-covid-19/>

<https://sandala.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Fatwa-11-COVID-19.pdf>

Sheikh Hisham Kabbani, SufiLive, March 14, 2020

<https://sufilive.com/Advice-for-the-Coronavirus-Onscreen-Text--7207-EN-print.html>

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Habib Ali Al-Jifri, March 29, 2020

https://www.facebook.com/habibalieng/posts/2660841990680368?_tn=K-R

Al-Azhar Grand Imam Ahmed At-Tayeb, April 2, 2020,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U4iMtjUrFNU>

Sheikh Hamza Yusuf, Communities of Faith and Covid-19, April 2, 2020

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MTwmEJVcFK4>

Sheikh Abdal Hakim Murad, Cambridge Muslim College, April 7, 2020

<http://masud.co.uk/a-perspective-on-the-pandemic/>

Sheikh Hisham Kabbani, SufiLive, April 13, 2020

<https://sufilive.com/Awliya-Salvation-Onscreen-Text--7229.html>

Sheikh Abdallah Bin Bayyah, ImamsOnline, April 15, 2020

<http://imamsonline.com/recommended-reading-by-shaykh-bin-bayyah-during-time-of-upheaval/>

Sheikh Hisham Kabbani, SufiLive, April 18, 2020

<https://sufilive.com/Servants-Who-Kept-Their-Covenant-with-Allah-swt-Onscreen-Text--7230-EN-print.html>

Sheikh Imran Hosein, 'Preparing for the Post Virus World', April 19, 2020

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-RTgPQ9ZpdY>

HE Sheikh Abdallah Bin Bayyah, Ramadan Welcome Message, April 23, 2020

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d9Smn3Arj-s&t=2911s>

Sheikh Hamza Yusuf, Ramadan Welcome Message, April 23, 2020

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d9Smn3Arj-s&t=2911s>

Sheikh Hamza Yusuf, Zaytuna College, April 23, 2020

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g3dxgqPWhUI>

Imam Abdassamad Clarke, British Board of Scholars & Imams, April 24, 2020

<https://www.facebook.com/bbsionline/videos/224887882283408/>

Sheikh AbdalHaqq Bewley, British Board of Scholars & Imams, April 24, 2020

<https://www.facebook.com/bbsionline/videos/1902273199906659/>

Sheikh AbdalHaqq Bewley's Zawiya, April 24, 2020

https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=2568028910121613&id=1432806686977180

Sheikh Hamza Yusuf, 'Gateway to God's Book', May 9, 2020

<https://www.facebook.com/ZaytunaCollege/videos/568702974053957/>

FULL LIST of Islamic Scholars' Views on the COVID-19 Pandemic:

Sheikh Nazim Al-Haqqani, SufiLive, August 4, 2011

<https://sufilive.com/A-Virus-Is-Coming--7213-EN-print.html>

“O People! Make peace with Allah (swt) or your end will be awful, especially Muslims! Be careful during Ramadan to keep the orders of Allah (swt); if not, it is up to you. **He will send a virus that will overtake human beings suddenly. Not seen with the human eye, that virus will attack them making it nearly impossible to breathe, eat or drink. Doctors will be puzzled, saying, “Where is this coming from?” This comes from the bad behaviors of people who threw away the honor of being created as human beings! They’ve become so wild, killing and crushing those whom Allah created as honorable. Divine Wrath will come upon them!**”

Sheikh Imran Hosein, ‘The Corona Virus and Akhir al-Zaman’, February 10, 2020

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MsrVREKEbyo&t=1077s>

“In Akhir al-Zaman (the End of Time), when the last stage of history comes, Nabi Muhammad ﷺ said it, and they know it. It was Ghazwat al-Tabuk (“The Battle of Tabuk”), and he ﷺ was sitting in a leather tent. And this is a hadith of Sahih Al-Bukhari. He ﷺ said “Count six things before the end of the world” and amongst the six is, he ﷺ said there will be a plague, meaning an epidemic, and it will kill you in large numbers the way it kills sheep. This is what he ﷺ said, this is one of his ﷺ prophecies. So Akhir al-Zaman is a time when there will be epidemics, plagues. The word which used to be long ago plagues, but nobody uses that term anymore. Now they use the term epidemic instead of plague. In the epidemic today we have, the coronavirus, which has just attacked China.”

“My view is that Dajjal is at work in coronavirus, the one who wants to rule the world from Jerusalem. So he has to have a Pax Judaica, which will replace Pax Americana, the way Pax Americana replaced Pax Britannica. These three ... so that Israel can rule the world. And Allah speaks of this in Surah al-Mursalat: “Proceed to that shadow which come upon the world, a shadow which will have three parts” (Holy Qur’an, 77:30). My opinion, and Allah, knows best, these are the three parts. In order for a Pax Judaica to replace a Pax Americana, in order for Israel to become the ruling state in the world, the population of Arabs, Muslims and Christians Arabs, which surround Israel has to be substantially reduced. You cannot reduce that population substantially through warfare because you will get a really bad name. You can use warfare to take control of territory, which is what Israel are going to do. But in order to substantially reduce the population and not be blamed for it you need something called biological warfare.”

“This is what is happening today. They are using the coronavirus, in my opinion, it is a trial run, and they are using it with the most populous nation in the world, the Chinese. And they are using it to see how China will respond to control it. And how the World Health Organisation will respond to control it. There is exquisite monitoring going on of the coronavirus at this time [by] those who want to rule the world from Jerusalem. That’s what they are doing. Of course, they are the ones who planted it in the first place. I have no doubt about that. Dajjal uses Gog and Magog to spread fasad (corruption) all over the world. And so the coronavirus has to be located in biological warfare in Akhir al-Zaman. That is my statement.”

“How do respond? I don’t know how many people will die. That’s not important to me. What is important to me is to see how does the Chinese government deal with this problem? We know our Prophet ﷺ said 1400 years ago, that when a plague takes place, if you are located in that place where the plague is spreading, do not leave; and if you are outside, do not enter. This is called a quarantine. And he ﷺ said this 1,400 years ago, quarantine. And now the World Health Organisation has picked up that same system of quarantine.”

“And the important thing they are doing now is monitoring the Chinese Government to see what they do now, how do the Chinese Government respond to this epidemic of the coronavirus, and secondly how does the World Health Organisation respond.”

“The second thing that is important for us to recognise is that the Arabs are going to be wiped out by plague. Our Prophet ﷺ said in the hadith about the Ghazwa al-Tabuk. So, the Arabs are the ones that have to be most concerned about coronavirus. Every Arab Government [names them], you should all be sending monitors who can go to Beijing to monitor how is the Chinese Government is dealing with this problem, how they can contain it. ..and how the World Health Organisation are dealing with it.”

“Because tomorrow, after the trial run is over, the plague is going to hit the Arab world and they will want to ensure that you are not prepared for it. And huge numbers of Arabs will die, as prophesied by the Prophet ﷺ. And so for the whole world of Islam, it is important but coronavirus is far, far more important for the Arab world because this is Akhir al-Zaman and in Akhir al-Zaman, there is a prophecy of a virus attack on the Arab world which will kill huge numbers of Arabs.”

Sheikh Hisham Kabbani, SufiLive, February 20, 2020

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It is very special in this time that you find people like this group. Now no one here is worried about corona! A tiny worm smaller than the tip of the finger, frightened the whole world. **What kind of small animal has Allah sent to the unbelievers?** Unbelievers receive the pain and problems from this world. Allah (swt) wants to show His Power by showing that such a tiny worm can frighten this whole world...

So there **are angels making it move, taking the virus around in the direction that Allah inspires ‘worms’**. In one second or less, one millisecond, He can take not only all the world but the whole universe. He gave all the universe as a gift to Prophet (s) on Laylat al-Israa wa 'l-Mi`raj which is coming to us [in Rajab]. **So this problem cannot be solved unless Allah wishes, and as it came suddenly it will go suddenly.**

Awliyaullah beg Allah (swt) through Prophet ﷺ to relieve that heavy punishment, and Awliyaullah know that already, and they gave us information from person to person, either physically or not physically. Allah put all this knowledge in the ayah that we just read:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَسْتَحْيِي أَنْ يَضْرِبَ مَثَلًا مَّا بَعُوضَةً فَمَا فَوْقَهَا فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَيَقُولُونَ مَاذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِهَذَا مَثَلًا يُضِلُّ بِهِ كَثِيرًا وَيَهْدِي بِهِ كَثِيرًا وَمَا يُضِلُّ بِهِ إِلَّا الْفَاسِقِينَ

Indeed, Allah is not shy to present an example - that of a mosquito or what is smaller than it. And those who have believed know that it is the truth from their Lord. But as for those who disbelieve, they say, "What did Allah intend by this as an example?" He misleads many thereby and guides many thereby. And He misleads not except the defiantly disobedient. (Surat al-Baqara, 2:26)

No one can understand, except previously they know there is a virus. Allah might demolish it. Some people decline that theory and say, “No, no, no, we know what this means!” They say they know better. What do you know better? Our `ilm is in this Way is like our shoelaces. It is in the Hands of Allah, He can send anyone to Heaven in the blink of an eye. Islam is to forgive the people; Allah wants to show His Mercy. He gave Prophet ﷺ all kinds of power to bring people to Islam and clean everything from them. **How to cure, how to finish this problem (the virus)? It is coming but in its time.**”

UAE Council for Fatwa issues a ruling for performing Congregational Rites in light of the spread of COVID-19, Sheikh Abdallah Bin Bayyah & Sheikh Hamza Yusuf, March 3, 2020

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On the basis of the statements of God, the exalted, “**He has chosen you and placed no hardship in your religion**” (Qur’an 22:78) as well as “**You who believe, obey God and the Messenger, and those in authority among you**” (Qur’an 4:59); the hadith of the Messenger of God ﷺ, “**Whatever I command you, do to the extent of your ability**” (Bukhari and Muslim); the legal maxims (qawaid shariyyah), “**Aversion of harm takes priority over acquisition of benefit,**” and “**Risk of individual harm is endured in order to repel public harm**”; the consideration of **public welfare in light of the spread of COVID-19** and the need for all segments of the country to cooperate to combat this disease and halt its dissemination; and in light of the obligation to obey governments in their directives and instructions, the UAE Council for Fatwa issues the following fatwa:

1. It is a religious obligation for all segments of society to **strictly adhere to all public health directives** and regulations provided by the dedicated state agencies as well as to take all necessary measures to prevent the transmission and spread of the illness. It is impermissible according to sacred law to disregard such directives and measures under any circumstances.

Such directives include frequently washing hands with soap and water, for cleanliness is part of the teachings of Islam based on the agreed upon hadith narrated by Abu Hurayrah in which the Prophet ﷺ said, “**When one of you wakes up from sleeping, he should wash his hands thrice before putting them into the water vessel**”; limiting greeting others to verbal salutations and avoiding shaking hands and hugging; observing proper etiquette when sneezing, including covering the mouth and nose with the elbow or a tissue; and others.

2. It is **forbidden** by shariah for anyone infected with this illness or even one thought to be at risk for infection **to enter public places** or go to the mosque for all congregational prayers, including Friday prayers and the Eid prayers. It is an obligation for such a person to take all necessary precautions as outlined by medical authorities, such as observing quarantine and adhering to any prescribed treatment. This is so that one does not transmit the illness to others.

3. There is a **religious concession** (rukhsah) for the elderly, children, anyone suffering from respiratory conditions, and those with compromised immunity to **not attend all congregational prayers**, including Friday prayers, Eid prayers, and tarawih prayers. Such

people may pray in their homes or wherever they are and can pray Dhuhr in place of the Friday congregational prayer.

4. Regarding the hajj, umrah, and visiting the Messenger of God ﷺ, it is obligatory to **adhere to all directives** issued by the government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which are rooted in their governmental and religious responsibilities for the welfare of all pilgrims. Adhering to these directives helps them in ensuring the well-being and safety of all.

5. It is a **religious obligation** for all parties to **cooperate with the appropriate agencies**, each within their respective capacity, to limit the spread of disease and to work to eradicate it. They should also not circulate misinformation or rumors and should rely only on official statements from the appropriate agencies. Those committed to the safety and stability of society should ignore all unfounded rumors and prevent their spread.

6. All **groups and individuals** should extend help and support to one another in whatever capacity they are able to do so and not capitalize on such situations by raising prices, particularly as it pertains to pharmaceuticals and healthcare.

7. The basis for this fatwa is derived from several sources, including verses from the Holy Qur'an, the prophetic way (sunnah), scholarly consensus, and analogical reasoning. Here are a few:

Qur'anic Verses

- **“Do not kill each other, for God is merciful to you”** (Qur'an 4:29).
- **“Do not contribute to your destruction with your own hands”** (Qur'an 2:195).
- **“And when some matter of security or alarm comes to them, they broadcast it; whereas had they only referred it to the Messenger, and to those of them with authority, their investigators would have found out about it”** (Qur'an 4:83).

Prophetic Sunnah

- On the authority of Abu Hurayrah, the Messenger of God ﷺ said, **“Flee from leprosy (judhum) as you flee from a lion!”** (Bukhari).

Leprosy is a communicable disease, and the reason for the prophetic command to flee from it is so that its transmission can be stopped. This is a proof that we believe diseases do transmit to others by God's leave and one should distance oneself from their sources.

- On the authority of Usamah b. Zayd, the Messenger of God ﷺ said, **“If you hear of an epidemic afflicting a land, do not enter it, and if it afflicts the land you are in, do not leave it”** (Bukhari).

One of the reasons that an infected person is prohibited from leaving the area of the epidemic is so that such a person does not transmit the illness to others. Instead, he should quarantine himself from even the healthy people of that region. Ibn Athir (d. 630/1233) mentions in his Al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh (The Complete History),

Amr b. al-'As fled Emmaus with the people when they were afflicted with the plague and went up into the mountains until God removed it from them. News of this reached 'Umar b. al-Khattab, and he did not censure it [meaning, as caliph, he deemed Amr's actions as appropriate and hence sanctioned by him].”

- On the authority of Abu Hurayrah, the Messenger of God ﷺ said, **“Do not introduce infectious livestock into a healthy herd”** (Bukhari).
- On the authority of Amr b. Yahya al-Mizini, who related on the authority of his father, the Messenger of God ﷺ said, **“Do not harm or reciprocate harm”** (Al-Muwattaa of Imam Malik).
- The numerous hadith in Muslim and elsewhere regarding the obligation to obey government authority are evidence of the obligation to adhere to their directives and instructions. The leader has the prerogative to act in the interest of the nation as determined by the appropriate agencies of the state. Al-Sarkhasi says in his Al-Siyar al-Kabir (The Major Compendium of Methods), “If the leader commands the people to do something and they are uncertain as to whether or not it is beneficial, they must obey him. This is because the obligation to obey leaders is well established with unambiguous texts. As for their doubts as to whether or not it is beneficial, that is no justification to contradict unambiguous source texts.” And so, that which is permissible in the sacred law becomes an obligation if ordered by the government. This position is noted by Ibn Abidin in his commentary under the chapter of the Rain Prayer.

Scholarly Consensus

- The scholars unanimously agree that **“harm is to be removed”** and held this to be a universal legal maxim. It is under this maxim that we would include the avoidance of regions afflicted with epidemics in order to protect human life and the health of the body.

Analogous Reasoning

- It is a well-established dictate in sacred law that a person with an offensive odor is to avoid the mosques and that such a person should leave the mosque in order to prevent harming others. It is narrated in Sahih Muslim that ‘Umar b. al-Khattab delivered the sermon one Friday and said, **“O people, you eat from two 6 substances that I deem repugnant: onions and garlic. For I saw that if the Messenger of God ﷺ smelled their odor from someone, he ordered that he be removed from the mosque, and he was taken to al-Baqi. So whoever eats them should neutralize their odor by cooking them.”** If a person was removed for merely an offensive odour, what about the harm of a contagious disease that could be fatal? In this vein, al-Hafiz Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr said in his Tamhid, “If the ratio legis (‘illah) for his expulsion from the mosque was his harming others, then by extension it would be the same for all that harms the congregation in the mosque, whether a foul odor or a medical condition, such as leprosy or the like, and anything else that harms people if they are in proximity. If the people would want such a person removed from the mosque and kept away, that is their right for as long as the cause for harm is present. When it is no longer present, the ruling no longer applies, and the person may now return to the mosque.”

In conclusion, the Council for Fatwa calls on **all Muslims to turn to God through supplication (dua’) and plentiful petitions for forgiveness (istighfar). Seeking forgiveness relieves tribulations and leads to an increase in strength.** We see this in the Qur’an, where God, the exalted, quotes the words of Prophet Hud alahi salam: **“My people, ask forgiveness from your Lord, and return to Him. He will send down for you rain in abundance from the sky and give you added strength”** (Qur’an 11:52). So we ask God, the exalted, to perpetuate His gentle care, protection, and well-being on the

nation of the United Arab Emirates; its people; and all its institutions, both leadership and citizenry, and that He remove this illness from the Muslims and the entire world.

And God, the exalted, knows better.

Sheikh Hisham Kabbani, SufiLive, March 14, 2020

<https://sufilive.com/Advice-for-the-Coronavirus-Onscreen-Text--7207-EN-print.html>

“That is the decree of (Him), the Exalted in Might, the All-Knowing (Surah Yaseen 36:38). That problem will dissolve by itself. That is what Grandshaykh Abd Allah ad-Daghestani taught us in the previous good years. Now we are in the bad years. Bad years but insha Allah the khalaas is coming, the safety is coming. The conclusion, Islam will be spreading peace everywhere and we [Muslims] don't spread [anything] except peace.”

Sheikh Hisham Kabbani, SufiLive, March 17, 2020

<https://sufilive.com/Stay-in-Your-Homes-Onscreen-Text--7208-EN-print.html>

“We are going to be brief concerning **the problem that has arisen for humanity. This is the state of war against an unknown (enemy) and we have to be careful to follow whatever the government says to us.**

Grandshaykh and Mawlana Shaykh Nazim have said that **during a state of war, be in your home and don't do other than Dhikrullah and Khatm [to try to change it], and we are likewise saying this. We don't enter into politics, we listen and we do what is required of us. And we recommend that everyone not mingle in public places but rather to be in their homes and reciting [reading] from Holy Qur'an and Dalaa'il al-Khayrat.**”

Sheikh Hamza Yusuf, Zaytuna College, March 18, 2020

<https://zaytuna.edu/articles/presidentsmessage-march2020>

“We should keep in mind that **plagues, wars, and natural disasters have vexed our species throughout human history** and that these will remain a part of life on earth. In fact, epidemics are mentioned at least twice in the Qur'an—in the second chapter, Al-Baqarah (The Cow), and in the seventh chapter, Al-Araf (The Heights).

These are **indeed strange times**: our authorities are telling us to wash several times a day, a lot of frivolous entertainment has been cancelled, bars have been shut down, interest rates are at zero, and the president of the United States is telling us to pray. In other words, for Muslims, this means keep practicing your religion!

It also means that this is **an opportunity to get closer to God** and to become more acutely aware of and grateful for God's bountiful gifts that we so often take for granted and that for some are now threatened: security, sustenance, mobility, family, friends, and faith.”

Sheikh Mustafa Umar, California Islamic University, March 22, 2020

<https://eshaykh.com/sunnah/guidelines-coronavirus/>

In this fatwa: Here are some Islamic guidelines on dealing with coronavirus:

- 1- A Muslim **must avoid harming others** if they are affected with a disease that has a likelihood of harming another person/people.
- 2- A Muslim must be **careful not to get harmed**, and must protect themselves appropriately.

- 3- It is **fine to use medicine**, and even encouraged, and this does not violate the concept of trusting in Allah.
- 4- The Messenger of Allah ﷺ has **encouraged the discovery of treatments** for diseases.

Taher Siddiqui, EShaykh.com, March 28, 2020

<https://eshaykh.com/dreams/dream-after-rajab-prayers/>

“This is the understanding of *Awliya* because **humans have gone so far in wrong doing this virus sent to remind and to warn of further punishment if humans don't turn back to the Lord**. And only salvation as Mawlana is saying is *Rahmatullah* which is actually Rasoolullah ﷺ.”

Sheikh Gibril Fouad Haddad, EShaykh.com, March 28, 2020

<https://eshaykh.com/hadith/pandemic-adhan/>

“It is a permissible *sunna* according to Shafis and Hanafis in particular contexts such as **the pandemic the world is presently experiencing**, as the Prophet (upon him blessings and peace) said: الطاعون وخز أعدائكم من الجن / “**Pandemics are from a jab by your enemies among the jinns**” (Musnad Ahmad, Tabarani, Hakim), and adhan is recommended at the time of **tamarrud al-jinn (mass jinn hostility)**, as stated by Imam al-Haytami in Sharh al-Minhaj, in Hashiyat al-Ramli and others, and endorsed by the Hanafis such as in Ibn `Abidin's Hashiya, as it disables them for as long as Allah wishes as well as reminds people to read the Mu`awwidhat (last three Suras) and other verses the Prophet ﷺ recommended against them such as Ayatul Kursi and the end of al-Baqara, make istighfar, rise and pray voluntary prayers, make dhikr, and trust in Allah.”

Dr. Aziz Hussein, EShaykh.com, March 29, 2020

<https://eshaykh.com/dreams/evil-jinn-army-attacking/>

“The **current Jinn particles** (as explained by Mawlana Shaykh Hisham in his recent video) **roaming the earth have invaded the entire planet** but they cannot penetrate holy places such as Mawlana Shaykh Hisham's dergah *en masse*, despite their intense desire to do so, and that they are **sensitive to heat and to many forms of light**, especially that of the sun that comes from space and the lightning that also comes from space (sprites). This is because these are **a type of jinn from beyond this dunya and they have already wrecked havoc**, and where many of Mawlana Shaykh's *mureeds* and *Awliya* are fighting them with lightning and energy weapons. Your dream shows that the **evil Jinn particles roaming the earth cause more damage at night**. While scientists don't know this, the contagion happens very often at night, when all lights are low and the sun has set at which time these jinns have more power. **Awliya know this secret and thus sent inspiration to heads of state and governments to impose curfews**. This has prevented those jinns from attacking more people at night. *w'Allahu alam.*”

Habib Ali Al-Jifri, March 29, 2020

https://www.facebook.com/habibalieng/posts/2660841990680368?_tn=&_r=K-R

“You who believe, obey God and the Messenger, and those in authority among you.” (4:59) If **governments, centres of fatwa, and health institutions are not “those in authority among you”** when it comes to taking the means to overcome this pandemic then who are “those in authority”?

Bukhari and Muslim both relate on the authority of Abdullah ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) that one day he said to the mu'adhin on a day of heavy rain: "After calling 'Muhammad is the messenger of Allah' do not proceed and say 'hasten to the prayer.' **Instead, say: 'Pray in your homes.'**" The mu'adhin said, **"the people will disapprove of this."** Ibn Abbas replied, **"Are you surprised [at my order]? The one who is better than me did this! (He was referring to the Allah's Messenger ﷺ)."** If this was the command of Ibn Abbas in relation to heavy rain - and the jurists have said that it qualifies as a reason for suspending daily and Friday congregational prayers as do reasons of fear for one's life, family, or wealth - then how about a pandemic that spreads rapidly?

Even if a person doubts that he will contract the virus, **the experience of societies in which the virus has spread is an unequivocal affirmation of it being easily contractable by any person.** In that case, the harm it causes is raised from being a harm that afflicts a person to a harm that can afflict an entire community. Islamic legal maxims state: "harm may neither be inflicted nor be reciprocated"; "harm is to be removed"; and "preventing harm takes precedence over acquiring benefits."*

Note: there are two issues related the impact of the coronavirus that need to be differentiated.

First, the sadness a believer experiences over his inability to attend daily and Friday congregational prayers in the mosque, the pain he feels from being deprived of the light that emanates from the Allah's houses, and the compassion he feels from realising that this deprivation is a divine form of discipline for His servants.

The second issue relates to the **stirring up of rumours and chaos, the spreading of scepticism and worries, refusal to obey authorities, and throwing accusations at decision makers and those who support them for taking decisions in the best interest of society and people.**

The experience of the first issue is from the inner core of faith and love of Allah. One who does not feel it, even partially, should question whether their heart has a life. **As for the second issue, that is tantamount to causing strife (fitna) in the earth and dividing the ranks of society at a time of great test at a time when people are in the greatest need of standing together to face this pandemic. To spread lies and false rumours during a calamity is a trait of the hypocrites, may Allah pardon us all!**

It is imperative that we obey Allah's command to take the means and do it to a high degree of perfection for the sake of attaining Allah's love, for the Prophet ﷺ said: **"Verily, Allah loves that should anyone of you do an action, you perfect it."** Let us have tranquility in our hearts through Allah's remembrance, experience the light of reliance on Him, trust in Him, and have contentment with His decree, without worry, trouble or objection.

O Allah we ask you for an urgent deliverance and an all-encompassing generosity, O One who is gentle with His creation, O One who knows His creation, Be gentle with us, Ya Latif, Ya Alim, Ya Khabir."

* Further notes:

In his book "Badhl al-Ma'un", the erudite scholar of Hadith science, Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, may Allah have mercy on him, affirms that to supplicate for protection from an epidemic does not conflict with one's belief in Allah's ultimate decree. However, to gather a congregation for this purpose - in the manner people do for the rain prayer - is an innovation that began during the great plague that afflicted Damascus in 749 AH. Ibn Hajar further **references a source who rebukes the congregating of people in one place during a plague as they did in 749 AH because it caused the plague to spread more than it currently had.** Ibn Hajar then states a similar case from a plague in Cairo in

833 AH, where people gathered to pray against the epidemic but this only resulted in more deaths due to its spreading.

Al-Azhar Grand Imam Ahmed At-Tayeb, April 2, 2020,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U4iMtjUrFNU>

“As you know, our world today lives in sheer panic and great distress, as a result of the fast spread of the new epidemic, COVID-19, which has hit hundreds of thousands of people, killed thousands, disturbed the normal course of life and isolated countries all over the globe. **In such hard circumstances, we as countries, nations, individuals, institutions, organisations, have to shoulder our responsibilities, and to do our best to fight this epidemic, stop it, and protect people from its dangers.**

We have also to mention with pride, gratitude and appreciation, the great sacrifices made by the physicians, nurses, and the rest of the medical staff at the health sectors, who risk their lives, in order to ward off this danger threatening the entire humanity. The great efforts made by officials to contain this virus do strengthen our trust in our ability to overcome this epidemic virus and defeat it.

However, our success in this battle, depends largely on our intention to continue to **shoulder our responsibilities in stubborn determination and great urgency. I, as Al-Azhar Grand Imam, making use of the juristic rule: “warding off dangers is prior to gaining benefits” and the rule “The greatest danger is warded off by the lesser danger”.**

We, Al-Azhar Al-Sharif, confirm that abiding by the hygiene instructions and regulatory rules issued by the concerned official departments are absolutely necessary. These instructions include personal hygiene, social distancing, staying at home, halting the Friday prayers, and the other congregational prayers in the mosque and performing the prayers at home on time, without big gatherings.

All these instructions are necessities entailed by the Shariah (Islamic Law) whether in Egypt or in any other country where the prayers may be performed. Conforming to such rules is obligatory and disobeying them is against the Islamic teachings and against Allah’s instruction: **‘Do not throw yourselves with your own hands into destruction’** (Qur’an, 2:195).

According to the Islamic Shariah, **it is unlawful to make up rumours, propagate them, confuse or frighten people, or make them lose confidence in the measures taken by the governments to protect their homelands and citizens.** My message to our brethren, who have been afflicted by this disease in Egypt or elsewhere in the world, is that we sympathise with them and we pray to Allah, Glory Be To Him, that they may have a speedy recovery. We also pray to Allah to show mercy to those who have died of this disease and to bestow patience and solace on their families.

I do express Al-Azhar’s solidarity with all the countries and nations that are fighting the outbreak of this pandemic. I affirm that the Islamic Shariah invites those who can afford to help the afflicted wherever they are on the earth. This is a humanitarian duty and a practical application of fraternity, which has been put to test by this crisis. The test would reveal to what extent we believe and confirm to

the sublime human principles. My advice to everyone who would like to survive this ordeal and stick to the medical and scientific measures ordained by the Islamic Shariah.

We have to **spend plenty of money in charity, to resort to supplication to Allah, our Lord, in our prayers, so that He may end this disaster, assist His servants, and inspire the researchers and scholars to discover a cure to this dangerous virus soon.** For Allah Almighty is our Patron and He is Capable of doing everything.

O Allah, let not those rule over us, because of our sins, those who do not fear You and do not show mercy to us by Your Mercy, O Most-Merciful of those who have mercy. O Allah, the Most Compassionate, O Giver of All Good, O Thou Full of Benefactions, O Most Merciful of this World and the Hereafter, O Refuge of the fearful; O Protecting Neighbour of those that seek Thy neighbourhood, O Helper of those that seek Thy help, O Thou that raiseth from the pitfalls, O Averter of calamity. O Allah, we ask you to pray upon Muhammad ﷺ and upon the family of Muhammad ﷺ, and we ask You to save us from the harm that we know, the harm we do not, for You are Almighty, Most Generous.

May the Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon His Messenger Muhammad ﷺ, and on his family and companions!"

Sheikh Hamza Yusuf, Communities of Faith and Covid-19, April 2, 2020

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MTwmEJVcFK4>

“And so when the Prophet ﷺ was asked about plagues as in “What were they?”, and he ﷺ said, “They are an invasion of the Unseen world upon you.” But then he ﷺ said, they are a mercy for believers.”

Sheikh Abdal Hakim Murad, Cambridge Muslim College, April 7, 2020

<http://masud.co.uk/a-perspective-on-the-pandemic/>

“The world is fasting, in a certain way, this is an *imsak* of capitalism, whose Belshazzar’s Feast has abruptly broken up; as for the daytime visitor to a stunned city centre, much is off-limits; as a Ramadan hadith tells us, the devils are chained, *sufidat al-shayatin*. The wary shoppers are interested not in nice things but in survival; old habits of absentminded browsing seem absurd. Our Prime Minister, baring his hedonist’s soul, has closed the bookshops but kept the off-licenses open; but even they do not seem to be busy. Many people are polite and caring, but everyone is chastened, subdued, sober, watchful.”

Of course **this sudden crash is falling differently upon different heads.** For the old, my absent-minded sneeze may bring a terrible death; for the young men who are standing together and laughing, waiting for their bus, the risk seems trivial; and what young blade worth his salt shuns a risk: this game of Russian Roulette that they play every day is new and edgy, and they feel immortal, blithely confident that they at least will be standing for the same bus next year.

So Heaven has given us to live in interesting times; we are entering the gravest global crisis in many decades; and it is right for Muslims to reflect, taking advantage of these newly long and quiet days. But before we do so, let us self-quarantine from the panicky and sensational media, let us click away and block up

our ears against the second-rate fumbling politicians; let us look from our windows upon the eerie emptiness of the streets, and consider what God might mean by this. Even the atheist brain knows ours for a time of hubris: we madly ravage and violate nature and walk upon the moon; every other species cringes from us as ecosystems die; our gamed financial system is increasingly parasitical upon the poor. From our human perspective Covid-19 is an infection which disorders our world; but seen from the world's perspective humanity itself has, over the past age, become a still more deadly disease: like a fungus or a hookworm we suck the blood of the host, multiplying insanely until the ecosystem itself, the planet which we vampirize, starts to sicken and die. Bani Adam, released from the natural restraints urged by religion, has itself become a disease, in its planning and its wisdom no more intelligent than a microbe. We have become a Qarun-virus.

And now God's world is paying us back with this invisible miasma which makes us afraid even to inhale. Putin and Trump, masters of nuclear arsenals, are staggering back from its influence, discovering, perhaps, the Naqshbandi rule of *khush dar dam*, mindfulness in every breath. So small an enemy to have overthrown our world: too tiny to see, the corona literally a crown: this microscopic flimsy protein, this almost nothing, is now king of the world.

In this divine irony we remember old fables in the mouse and the elephant genre. The Holy Prophet ﷺ, whose entire message is a challenge to the love of *dunya* and fear of death, was born in the Year of the Elephant; how often we repeat that *sura*, as though it were a nursery rhyme: **but Abraha the tyrant remains a perennial symbol of the arrogance which seeks to displace the things of God: the *Sira* writers tell us that the birds which rained clay pellets upon him and his army also brought a disease, so that their flesh started to rot on their bones while they still lived. It was a kind of terrible Ebola, eating them alive. *Faja'alahum ka-asfin ma'kul*.**

Microbes, then, which are part of the symphony of the world's balanced ecosystem, also belong to the army of God. At times they serve us through the Divine names *al-Razzaq*, *al-Latif*: our stomachs and intestines are crawling with them, and without them we could not digest our dinners; on the land they then break down dead matter and return it to the soil; they limit populations naturally, maintaining the balance, *mizan*, of creation, in which every species has the right to its space. But at other times, no less necessary for the balance, they serve the Divine names *al-Qabbar* and *al-Muntaqim*, the Compeller, the Avenger, and thus did Allah use them to strike down the oligarch Abraha and his elephant, his commandos and his marines.

Allah says that He is with the poor and broken-hearted: *ana 'inda'l-munkasirati qulubuhum*. The Qur'an makes us uneasy with its uncompromising prophetic arguments against status, pride and the hoarding of wealth. The Sharia, with its Zakat and its inheritance laws, aims to break up fortunes, smashing them with the hammer of God's justice; by contrast the parasitic modern schemes of *homo economicus* have led to a historically unequalled hoarding of wealth by the global one percent.

And so the great Qur'anic stories of truth confronting power tell us, again and again, that Pharaoh is overthrown not by another superpower, but by a mere prophet in rags, a member of a despised subject race made up of imported labourers and immigrants, a man who has even doubted his ability to speak clearly. Barefoot he stands before the throne of Memphis, defying the magicians of the autocratic state whose wealth is directed insanely to the creation of marble mausoleums for the rotting dead; the autocrat turns away in scorn, and the plagues of Egypt fall upon his land. What power can his minister of defence marshal against

the frogs, the blood, and the infection which covers him and his people with festering boils? Again, the smallest members of nature's kingdom are used by Providence to strike against a destructive and unjust megastructure of oppression and pride.

And again, let us recall the heroic standing of Abraham in the court of Nimrod. This comes in the surat al-Baqara:

"Have you not beheld the one who argued with Abraham about his Lord; God having given him the kingdom. And Abraham said: My Lord is He that gives life and death; And he replied: I give life and death."

The commentators record Nimrod, at that point, displaying his power by proudly and hard-heartedly pardoning a prisoner, and executing another: a ruler's godlike power of amnesty.

"And Abraham said: Allah brings the sun from the east, so bring it, you, from the West; and thus the one who disbelieved was refuted; and God does not guide the unjust people."

The *tafsir* authors mention that the populace would come to Nimrod, and affirm him as their Lord, *rabb*; he would then give them food.

And then Abraham comes, and when he is asked the same question, he says, "*Rabbij alladhi yuhyi wa-yumit*", My Lord is He that gives life and death.

Thrown out from the tyrant's presence and returning to his family, Abraham fills his food sacks with sand, so that at least for a while they will think that he has brought them something, and be consoled. He falls asleep; and when Sara his wife opens the sacks she finds them miraculously filled with the finest grain.

As for Nimrod, the chronicles mention that while he was dispensing this form of justice, a mosquito or a gnat crawled into his nostril: *faba'atha'Llabu 'alaybi ba'uda, fadakhalat fi mankharibi*. It bit him, and this caused him such excruciating torment that he started to hit the walls of his palace with his head, until, after years of pain, he died.

The point, of course, is again that the smallest creatures can overthrow the proudest human hubris. And in our time, it is the virus that wears the crown, and the mighty who are helpless and humbled. Look at the politicians across Europe who have persecuted the honourable traditions of Islam: it is they, now, who are forced to wear the *niqab*.

Plague and pestilence are nothing new or surprising for Islam. Look in our texts, and we find that *waba'* defined as an epidemic, and *i'da'* as contagion, and medieval Islam knew perfectly well that the result could be a massacre. Ibn Battuta, describing the Black Death in Cairo, records that twenty thousand people a day were dying; and the imams would cry out: *Shahada, Shahada!* The reference, no doubt, was to the Bukhari hadith that says that those who stay in a plague-stricken land, reckoning that nothing can befall them save Allah's decree, will receive a reward equal to that of martyrs.

Premodern Muslim medics, and ulema who thought about contagion, assumed a social world in which human expectations from life and *dunya* were modest. Terrors about death and a love of abundance are more the *sunna* of Nimrod and Pharaoh; they are the way of Abu Jahl, not that of the Seal of the Messengers ﷺ; as the poets say, they reflect the materialism of the donkey, not of the Jesus who rides it. Our modern attitudes to death are very unrealistic, evasive and stressful: atheist beliefs, which have themselves spread like a virus thanks to the unclean matter which has accumulated in our hearts, persuade many that clinical death is the end of ourselves. As the Qur'an describes such people: "*They say, it is only our life of this world, we were dead, and we live, and only Time kills us.*"

“For Tyssen, and for the forerunners of our British Muslim community, Islam is quintessentially the religion of submission: not only to God’s *amr taklifi*: the commandments of Sharia, but His *amr takwini*: His command which shapes every event in the world, including the command which says that we must die. Ours is pre-eminently and proudly the religion of *tawakkul*, of *rida*, of *taslim*.

Thus the *wali*, the truly Muslim person, is of those whom “*la khawfun ‘alayhim wa-la hum yahzanun*”: they fear not, neither do they sorrow. For God has commanded us to say: “*lan yusibana illa ma kataba’Llahu lana*”: nothing will afflict us other than what God has written for us.

So we mourn our dead, and this is a natural and a healing reflex; and we believe in medicine; but we do not panic. Death is a natural part of the glorious system of God’s universe, with its cycles of birth, growth, flourishing fertility, and death, a creation which contains *jalal* as well as *jamal*, Rigour as well as Beauty.

Our product-addiction is murdering Mother Earth; hence our idea that humanity is itself a disease killing its planetary host: we are all the Qarun virus. But it is killing our souls and our societies as well. The believer is not much given to shopping, although she or he takes pleasure in treating guests well; the Holy Prophet’s home was so simple that his door was not made of wood, but of a simple length of sackcloth. *Kun fi’d-dunya ka’annaka gharibun aw abira sabil*, he says: “Be in this world as though a stranger or a traveller”.

So the believer, in isolation, is further from *dunya*, there is a detachment, and he revives some of the key benefits of *khalwa* or ‘*uzla*, remembering the possibility of experiencing clear-heartedness when distractions and worldly pleasures are at arm’s length: the Blessed Virgin saw the angel when she was on her own in the desert, and the same angel came to the Best of Creation when he was alone, *yatahannath*, in the Cave of Hira.

Our moment, then, is an opportunity to reactivate the honourable and richly-rewarding Islamic customs of *khalwa* and *I’tikaf*. Perhaps, if Mr. Hancock’s predictions of an unlocking at the end of April come true, it will be a forty-day retreat. Literally, a true quarantine, an *arba’in*, a *chilla*. During this time the atheist materialist world will be suffering from boredom, fear and financial anxiety: its dilemma is clear: either leave people in their homes, or revive the economy: the fear of death and the fear of poverty are two agitated giants clashing in their hearts.

To the extent that we have internalised our Islam, we will not suffer much from such clashes or from such fears. The future is God’s, not man’s; all is His, and we travel into it as He decrees.

For many people, the confinement is irksome and the purity of spiritual concentration seems like an unrealistic hope: children fight and need exercise, we miss our friends, and, this the greatest pain, in Ramadan we are likely to miss the timeless majesty of our Tarawih prayers. Our hearts miss the mosques, and in this distance we learn how much we need the beautiful and healing forms of our practices, and we realise with sorrow how impoverished must be the life of the Godless.

But Islam has no priesthood and no consecrated churches; the Chosen One tells us that one of the *khassat*, the special characteristics, of his Umma is that “the whole earth has been made a mosque for me”. In almost every home there is someone who can lead the prayer, even in a basic way; the fasting can proceed in a fully Sharia-valid manner; our *zakat al-fitr* can still be paid: Islam is entirely doable in our seclusion.

So let us relearn the traditions of seclusion, ‘uzla. And let us not waste time, but seize the opportunity. We can read books more than we ever did before:

Ni'ma'l-anisu kitabu / in fataka'l-ashabu

“How good a friend is a book, when friends are unavailable.”

As we spend our days in peaceful detachment, and our hearts calm down, in an uncanny way we can establish a feeling of connection with the souls of scholars of past ages, by respectfully engaging with their works; we can in some mysterious sense become their disciples, we can enjoy their company.

In the same way we must establish the prayer strongly in our homes, remembering the Prophetic commandment that our houses must not become like graves, but must be brought to life by *salat*. The *adhan* should be recited loudly and on time. We should log on to live Qur'anic recitation, rather than simply listen to recordings. We can take online Islamic classes and systematically learn things we should have known long ago, especially the basic obligations, *fard a'yan*. This can be a lifetime opportunity to increase in *ilm*, to catch up on what we should have done before, and to taste the unique blessings of increased *'amal*.

In times of *fitna*, particularly amid the seditions and sorrows of the end-times, the Prophetic instruction is, firstly, to break your swords: “*wa'dribu bi-suyufikum al-hijara*”, and to become a piece of furniture in your house: “*kun hilsan min ahlas baytik*”. The intention should be to avoid the distractions of the tumultuous outside world: in many countries, for instance, the temptations of the treacherous glance in the underdressed summer months, the risks of improper conversations, of backbiting and slander, or pointless shopping expeditions and extravagant restaurant meals; but our imams, including Imam al-Ghazali, emphasise that the intention must primarily be to keep others safe from our own evils, not to be safe from theirs. By self-isolating, we avoid infecting other people with our bad habits and our poor *adab*. We now inflict less harm upon the world.

So we ask Allah, perhaps on the night of the middle of Sha'ban itself, that this opportunity for retreat be for us a blessed time, of *sabr* and of *shukr*, of *tawakkul* and *taslim*, and that He decree a blessed outcome. We were all running too fast after *dunya*, and we need to stop, and draw breath for a while. May we enter Ramadan, therefore, in a calm and well-prepared state of prayer and attentiveness to our duties and to the presence of Almighty God. May it be the best Ramadan of our lives, free of laziness and full of constructive family love, forgiveness, prayer and the gaining of knowledge. May this self-isolation end, as Ramadan always ends, not with a sense of release, but with a sense that a spiritual and special time has been experienced, and will be missed.

And we will pray, too, for strength for medical staff, for mercy upon our dead, and for greater *taqwa* in our hearts. And we will pray that the mighty will be humbled, that the dead hand of materialism will be lifted from a frantic and greedy and stressed Bani Adam, and that this be a time of *tawba* and reflection and return to *Haqq* not only for the Umma, but for all of humanity, which has suffered from its own sins for too long, and craves the merciful guiding restoration of its heart, by the grace of Heaven.”

Sheikh Hisham Kabbani, SufiLive, April 13, 2020

<https://sufilive.com/Awliya-Salvation-Onscreen-Text--7229.html>

“The Prophet ﷺ mentioned six tremendous signs that would precede the Day of Judgment. 'Awf Ibn Mālik related that the Prophet ﷺ said: “Count six signs before the Hour: my death; then the opening of Bayt al-Maqdis; then death in huge numbers, like

the plague of sheep; then there will be such an excess of money, such that a man would give one hundred dinars to a (needy) person and he looks at that with disgust; then a confusion that will enter every house of the Arabs; then a truce between you and the non-Muslims (because) they will be exceedingly powerful against you, coming to you with eighty different groups (of soldiers or eighty different compelling excuses); under each group twelve thousand (soldiers or twelve thousand explanations).”

This hadith mentions that in the Last Days a great number of people will also die in this way, that is by the spread of a harmful substance into the respiratory system. Influenza is spread in this manner and produces similar symptoms. There are yearly epidemics of influenza and occasional pandemics in which a new strain of the virus sweeps over the world, killing millions. **In today’s world of travelers rapidly criss-crossing the globe a pandemic of influenza could spread like lightning, leaving massive death in its wake.”**

Sheikh Abdallah Bin Bayyah, ImamsOnline, April 15, 2020

<http://imamsonline.com/recommended-reading-by-shaykh-bin-bayyah-during-time-of-upheaval/>

The below is a litany reading recommended by Shaykh Abdallah Bin Bayyah during this time of upheaval due to the global spread of the Coronavirus.

Sheikh Hisham Kabbani, SufiLive, April 18, 2020

<https://sufilive.com/Servants-Who-Kept-Their-Covenant-with-Allah-swt-Onscreen-Text--7230-EN-print.html>

“However, from another side, **they created this microbe and it backfired on them.** They came up and they setup that microbial virus and it backfired on them.”

Sheikh Imran Hosein, ‘Preparing for the Post Virus World’, April 19, 2020

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-RTgPQ9ZpdY>

“I have hesitated, so far, to offer a mature opinion about the virus and **the universal lockdown around the world which is an absolutely unique phenomenon in human history. It never happened before, that all the Masajid around the world, are locked down. There is no Salat al-Jumuah anywhere in the world. This never happened anywhere before in human history.** Correct me, please, if I am wrong! I don’t have any shortage of critics. This is my opinion, that this is an absolutely unique phenomenon in human history and therefore, it needs to be analysed. The Qur’an has declared that it has been sent down to explain all things. **Allah has sent down this Qur’an on Muhammad that this Qur’an may explain all things (Holy Qur’an, 16:89).** And what is the explanation?”

“My analysis, alhamdulillah, is credible that Dajjal is the mastermind. He has given us a dramatic and absolutely stunning demonstration of his capacity at this time to rule the world. That’s what’s happening today, and the virus is merely the means through which he’s demonstrated that capacity. If he can do it with the virus, what is coming after the virus? That’s a good question. Today I’m going to offer to you my analysis. But I think the most important area for us to direct our attention to is

the economy and money. I believe there is more opportunity for Dajjal to advance his agenda with an attack on money, rather than an attack on other things.”

HE Sheikh Abdallah Bin Bayyah, Ramadan Welcome Message, April 23, 2020

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d9Smn3Arj-s&t=2911s>

“It was a Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ to congratulate his Companions when the month of Ramadan came, and he would remind them that this is a month Allah Subhan Wa Ta’ala has opened up the Gates of Heaven, and closed the Gates of Hell. Allah Subhan Wa Ta’ala has **also locked up those Shayateen and the rebellious jinn** during the time; that they are shackled during this time, so much more limited than what is normal. There is a cloud over the Muslims in the coming of this Ramadan and that is the coronavirus. This is a **calamitous event** due to the critical nature of it, and it has affected the **very nature of the obligation** of some of our devotional practices and in the way we actually perform them.

People should not allow for their religious emotions to dictate their actions. I am not faulting them for those emotions, as those emotions come out of their religiosity very often, and out of their piety, and so they are not negative instincts. But, we cannot really allow our religious emotions to override the reasonableness of our religion. **It is very important that we should be following the guidelines of the experts. This is our tradition.** The governments and epidemiologists, the guidelines they set forth, it is very important to follow them. It is very important to make du’a (supplication). It is extremely important that people make du’a as in Ramadan the Gates of Heaven are open, and is one of the times when du’a is particularly effective. **So ask Allah Subhana Wa Ta’ala to remove this tribulation on humanity, not just for the Muslims, but for all of humanity, because we are an Ummah for all humanity.** Especially on the Night of Power, this is a very important night for du’a.

It is extremely important **do not suspect the Decree of God or judge the Decree of God.** Don’t think you can understand what’s behind all of these things. The human perspective is limited. We have a certain limitation on our view. Even when we look out, we can only see what is in front of us, we don’t see what’s behind us. So, we don’t have this ability to see the whole picture. And because of that, just in the case of right and wrong, Allah has given us a normative understanding of right and wrong, so we can determine on the basis of things, but we can’t penetrate the right and wrongness of circumstances. The only thing that can determine that is the consequences of those situations.

So, something can actually look like it’s a horrible thing, but in the end, you realise, “Oh!”, there was actually a great reason for that. You can give many examples of this but the most obvious examples are things that outwardly appear, like you can have the exact same situation where one person burns down a piece of land in order to make it more fertile and prepare it for growth, and another person burns it down as a destructive act. So, in the very same act, if you look at those two acts, they would be identical, but one is for good and the other is for evil. And the same is true in that a surgeon can cut off a hand to save a life from gangrene, whereas another person can cut off the hand in an act of aggression. So, there is the exact same form, but two completely different meanings based on the intentions behind it. Only God knows these things. We just don’t know these things. We have to trust in our Benevolent and Merciful Lord that what He is doing is for the good

of humanity and not to harm us. Allah Subhan Wa Ta'ala wants good for us. So, it's very important for us not to do that.

Finally, the last dimension that people, especially often due to the materialistic world we are in, miss out is the other-worldly dimension of these events. So, people die, but very often somebody could be in great immuno-compromised conditions, very sick and suffering a lot and this becomes a great blessing for them when they leave the world and go a much better condition. So, again, we can't judge things, especially the other-worldly dimension. Ibn Hajar Al-Asqalani wrote a book called 'Help during the Time of Plague' and in that book, he mentioned the virtues that come out of plagues and pestilences, and these things that affect human beings. **One of the hadith he mentions in there is, "When the plague sometimes may involve great harm, the Prophet ﷺ said, that somebody who believes in God and trusts in God, the plague is actually a mercy for them.** God is not asked about what He does and He cannot be taken to account or to court: He is the Judge of Judges. We can't question the way that the Universe and its Laws that are working in it have been set up by God. We cannot question why they are the way they are, other than that we trust that God has described Himself as Merciful and Benevolent. We trust in God, and what He does is for His Creation."

Sheikh Hamza Yusuf, Ramadan Welcome Message, April 23, 2020

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d9Smn3Arj-s&t=2911s>

"These are unprecedented times. As far as I can tell, I don't think ever in human history, there has ever been a situation like this. People that are young, like yourself, your grandchildren – may Allah give you a long life – they are going to say, "You lived through the COVID-19?!" These are historical and unprecedented times in human history. We are all navigating new waters. Sheikh Abdallah Bin Bayyah comes out of a classic Islamic tradition, he is not a modernist. He is somebody who is really rooted in the classical tradition, he is somebody who believes in tajdeed (renewal) and believes in ijihad (deductive reasoning). But he's not a modernist, he's a traditionalist, and so it is very important to understand that we are obliged by our religion to obey the people in authority. This is something that is very important because the negative consequences of not doing that ends up creating much more human suffering. The Prophet ﷺ said, "A believer should not humiliate himself". He ﷺ was asked how does he humiliate himself. He ﷺ said 'By exposing himself to a situation or trial that they cannot bear.'" Ahmed al-Zarruq said one of the best examples of that is opposing government, and then the government humiliating and abasing you because of that. These are important aspects of the religion. We do have a tradition of speaking truth to unjust tyrants, and those are very important aspects of the tradition and that is undeniable. But that's the role of the scholars. Ahmad ibn Hanbal said it should be done in private. Those are important, we can't deny that."

Sheikh Hamza Yusuf, Zaytuna College, April 23, 2020

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g3dxgqPWhUI>

"I think a lot of us are feeling the strangeness of having COVID-19 hovering over us, during this time. So, all over the world, people are being told to be sheltered in place ... Obviously, this is going to affect our Ramadan. Ramadan is a communal time, it's a time of gathering, it's a time of coming together, it's a time of sharing food with one another, that is not going to be the case this Ramadan for most of us, which is to find

other ways of sharing. One of the most important things we can do **is focus on our families**. Many of us are blessed to have families, and in those cases, it is very important that we recognise that this a blessed time to reconnect with our families with our children. Alhamdulillah, Ramadan does not change. Nobody can change Time, and so Suhour is Suhour, Iftar is Iftar, and we can always pray. In our tradition, prayer, whilst it is communal, it's also solitary and one of the **most important prayers for spiritual development is the solitary prayers that we do, the Sunan**; they are outside the communal prayer. These are extraordinarily important for human development, and Taraweeh according to the Maliki school is actually preferred in your house, over doing it in the Masjid, as long as there is a group doing it in the Masjid, fulfilling the sunnah kifayah.”

Imam Abdassamad Clarke, British Board of Scholars & Imams, April 24, 2020

<https://www.facebook.com/bbsionline/videos/224887882283408/>

“As we endure the lockdown, and we enter the cave of Ramadan, may we remember and go into it with the spirit that all of this is from Allah. **The lockdown is from Allah, directly by means of His Creation, that it is directly the Decree of Allah. And may Allah make us grateful for it, and benefit from it, and make us emerge from the cave, and from the cave of Ramadan, as fitya, as the People of the Cave of futuwwa (chivalry), to engage with the world again, with smiling faces and good hearts.**”

Sheikh AbdalHaqq Bewley, British Board of Scholars & Imams, April 24, 2020

<https://www.facebook.com/bbsionline/videos/1902273199906659/>

“Clearly, this Ramadan is going to be a different one from the one we usually have. We will not be able to enjoy in it the social interaction, that is usually an important part in it for us. But that doesn't mean to say that we can't or won't gain a huge benefit from it. **Among the ayats about fasting in Surah al-Baqarah, Allah Subhana Wa Ta'ala says to us, "If my Servants ask you about Me, I Am Near."** May Allah enable us, during this Ramadan, to come ever closer to him, and enable us to experience His Closeness to us in a greater way than we ever have before.”

Sheikh AbdalHaqq Bewley's Zawiya, April 24, 2020

https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=2568028910121613&id=1432806686977180

“Say: ‘Nothing can happen to us except what Allah has ordained for us. He is Our Master. It is in Allah that the believers should put their trust.’” (Holy Qur'an, 9:51) Given the global circumstances surrounding the spread of the COVID-19 virus I would like to advise our community. The worst outcome from this situation is that we forget that Allah is always powerful over all things and that "Allah is Latif with His slaves, He provides whomever He wills.”

Sheikh Hamza Yusuf, 'Gateway to God's Book', May 9, 2020

<https://www.facebook.com/ZaytunaCollege/videos/568702974053957/>

“Ramadan Mubarak. May Allah Subhana wa Ta'ala give you a blessed Ramadan. It's a very interesting Ramadan for all of us. **I think these are unprecedented circumstances we find ourselves in. I don't ever think in the history of our species have the vast majority of people on the planet been put into a type of house arrest, basically. So,**

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it's a very unusual situation, and because it's Ramadan, it's particularly difficult for a lot of Muslims because we've been deprived of the Masjid, and also even just gatherings and things like that in many places. Despite that, there's always silver lining in the cloud and we should always see the blessings of 'public haunt', as Shakespeare says ... **So, we should see the blessings that are hidden amongst the tribulations.** Allah Subhana wa Ta'ala tells us throughout the Qur'an that He is going to try us, and in fact, it's one of the reasons for our existence."