

Viral Lockdown 2020:
Prophetic Guidance on Public Policy during the COVID-19 Pandemic

The Holy Qur'an and the words of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ are proven to influence public policy during the COVID-19 Pandemic. This will be explained across four sections:

- A. WHO's Advice on COVID-19 for the Public
- B. National & International Policies during COVID-19
- C. Eschatology & the Unseen during COVID-19
- D. Allah's Decree & the Departure of COVID-19

A. WHO's Advice on COVID-19 for the Public

The World Health Organisation has published recommended precautions for the public to protect themselves from infecting or spreading COVID-19, all of which match Prophetic teachings:

WASHING YOUR HANDS WITH WATER

“O you who believe! When you intend to offer the Salat Prayer (a minimum five times a day), wash your faces and your hands (forearms) up to the elbows, rub (by passing wet hands over) your heads, and (wash) your feet up to ankles.”
(Holy Qur'an, 5:6)

“When one of you wakes up from sleeping, he should wash his hands thrice before putting them into the water vessel.”
(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as narrated by Abu Hurayrah, Muslim)

“Being clean and pure is half of faith.”
(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as narrated by Abu Malik al-Ash'ari, Muslim)
(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, Muslim)

WHO Recommendation Precaution from COVID-19: *Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water. Why? Washing your hands with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand rub kills viruses that may be on your hands.*
<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>

SPEAR-LENGTH SOCIAL DISTANCING

“When you speak to someone (who is afflicted) with a contagious disease, there should be between you and them a space of the length of a spear (1.8-2-4 metres).”
(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, Musnad Ahmad)

“Those with contagious diseases should be kept away from those who are healthy.”
(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, Al-Bukhari, Muslim)

“Do not introduce infectious livestock into a healthy herd”
(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as narrated by Abu Hurayrah, Al-Bukhari)

WHO Recommended Precaution from COVID-19: *Maintain at least 1 metre (3 feet) distance between yourself and others. Why? When someone coughs, sneezes, or speaks they spray small liquid droplets from their nose or mouth which may contain virus. If you are too close, you can breathe in the droplets, including the COVID-19 virus if the person has the disease.*

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>

QUARANTINE

“Do not quarantine the healthy with the infected.”

(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as narrated by Abu Hurayrah, Al-Bukhari, Muslim)

“Do not introduce infectious livestock into a healthy herd”

(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as narrated by Abu Hurayrah, Al-Bukhari)

“Flee from leprosy (or any highly contagious disease) as you flee from a lion!”

(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as narrated by Abu Hurayrah, Al-Bukhari)

“I seek refuge in You from leprosy, madness, communicable disease, and evil diseases.”

(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as narrated by Anas bin Malik, Abu Dawud)

WHO Recommended Precaution from COVID-19: *Avoid going to crowded places. Why? Where people come together in crowds, you are more likely to come into close contact with someone that has COVID-19 and it is more difficult to maintain physical distance of 1 metre (3 feet).*

AVOID TOUCHING FACE UNLESS WASHED HANDS

“When one of you wakes up from sleeping, he should wash his hands three times before putting them into the water vessel, because nobody knows where his hands were during sleep.”

(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as narrated by Abu Hurayrah, Muslim)

WHO Recommended Precaution from COVID-19: *Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth. Why? Hands touch many surfaces and can pick up viruses. Once contaminated, hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose or mouth. From there, the virus can enter your body and infect you.*

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>

SHIELDING THE SNEEZE OR COUGH & FACE-MASKING

“The Messenger of Allah ﷺ, while sneezing, would cover his face with His hand (arm, or forearm) or with his garment, and muffle the sound of it.”

(The Messenger of Allah ﷺ, as narrated by Abu Hurayrah, Al-Tirmidhi, Abu Dawud)

WHO Recommended Precaution from COVID-19: *Make sure you, and the people around you, follow good respiratory hygiene. This means covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze. Then dispose of the used tissue immediately and wash your hands. Why? Droplets spread virus. By following good respiratory hygiene, you protect the people around you from viruses such as cold, flu and COVID-19.*

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>

HOME QUARANTINE

“Those who stay at home to protect themselves and others are under the protection of Allah.”

(The Messenger of Allah ﷺ, Musnad Ahmad)

“If you hear of a plague in a land do not enter it; and if it breaks out in the land where you stay, do not leave.”
(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, Al-Bukhari, Muslim)

“[In periods of tribulation] Stay in your homes and hide yourselves.”
(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, Al-Tabarani)

WHO Recommended Precaution from COVID-19: *Stay home and self-isolate even with minor symptoms such as cough, headache, mild fever, until you recover. Have someone bring you supplies. If you need to leave your house, wear a mask to avoid infecting others. Why? Avoiding contact with others will protect them from possible COVID-19 and other viruses.*

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>

SEEK MEDICAL TREATMENT IF ILL, DON'T HARM OTHERS

“Do not kill each other, for Allah is All-Merciful to you”

(Holy Qur'an 4:29)

“Allah has sent down the disease and the cure, and has made for every disease, its cure. So, treat sickness, but do not use anything lawfully prohibited.”
(The Messenger of Allah ﷺ, as narrated by Abu'l-Darda', Abu Dawud)

“Do not cause harm or reciprocate harm.”
(The Messenger of Allah ﷺ, as narrated by Amr b. Yahya al-Mizini, Malik, Ibn Majah)

“You have better knowledge and expertise in the material affairs of the world.”
(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as narrated by Anas bin Malik, Muslim)

WHO Recommended Precaution from COVID-19: *If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical attention, but call by telephone in advance if possible and follow the directions of your local health authority. Why? National and local authorities will have the most up to date information on the situation in your area. Calling in advance will allow your health care provider to quickly direct you to the right health facility. This will also protect you and help prevent spread of viruses and other infections.*

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>

ADHERE TO THOSE IN AUTHORITY

“You who believe, obey God and the Messenger, and those in authority among you.”

(Holy Qur'an 4:59)

“It is obligatory upon you to listen to and obey the authorities during prosperity and adversity; whether you are willing or unwilling,

even when someone is given undue privileges over you.”
(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as narrated by Abu Hurayrah, Muslim)

“Do not contribute to your destruction with your own hands.”
(Holy 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”
(Holy Qur’an 4:83)

“Whoever practices medical treatment
when he is not known or qualified for it, will be held liable.”
(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as narrated by ‘Amr ibn al-‘As, al-Nisai, Abu Dawud)

WHO Recommended Precaution from COVID-19: *Keep up to date on the latest information from trusted sources, such as WHO or your local and national health authorities. Why? Local and national authorities are best placed to advise on what people in your area should be doing to protect themselves.*

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>

B. National & International Policies during COVID-19

DIVINE LICENSE TO USE CONCESSIONS

“He has chosen you and placed no hardship in your religion.”
(Holy Qur’an 22:78)

“Whatever I command you, do it to the extent of your ability.”
(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, Al-Bukhari, Muslim)

“Allah loves that His concessions are used,
in the same way He likes His commandments to be upheld.”
(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as narrated by Abdallah ibn Abbas, Ibn Hibban)

TRAVEL BAN LOCKDOWN

“If you hear of a plague in a land do not enter it;
and if it breaks out in the land where you stay, do not leave.”
(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as narrated by Usama bin Zaid, Al-Bukhari, Muslim)

ENFORCED STAYING AT HOME

“There will come after me a tribulation like the dark of night ... ‘What shall we do in that case, O Messenger of Allah?’ Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said,
“Stay in your homes and hide yourselves”
(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as narrated by Jundub ibn Sufyan, al-Tabarani)

LAWFUL PREVENTION OF ACCESS TO THE MOSQUE

‘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 Allah ﷺ smelled their odour 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 odour by cooking them.”
(Muslim)

CLOSING MOSQUES, AS THE WHOLE EARTH IS A MOSQUE

“The whole Earth has been made a Mosque, except graveyards and washrooms.”
(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, Al-Tirmidhi)

PRAYING AT HOME, DURING TRIBULATIONS

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 (prayer proclaimer) 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 [The Messenger of Allah ﷺ] is better than me did this!
(Abdullah ibn Abbas, Al-Bukhari, Muslim)

WASHING (BIDET) AFTER RELIEVING, NOT JUST TISSUE PAPER

“A mosque founded on fear of Allah from the first day has a greater right for you to stand in it. In it there are men, who love to purify themselves.

Allah loves those who purify themselves.”

(Holy Qur’an, 9:108)

“The Prophet ﷺ came to the people in the Mosque of Quba, and said,

“Allah Almighty has praised you well for purity in His Reference to your mosque. What is this purification you practice?”

They said, “By Allah, Messenger of Allah ﷺ, we do not know anything but that we have Jewish neighbours who used to wash their behinds after defecating, and so we wash as they wash.”

The Prophet ﷺ said, “That is it. You must do it too.”

(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as narrated by Umaywir ibn Sa’ida, Ibn Khuzama & also last sentence narration by Al-Bazzar)

PASTORAL DUTY AS A CITIZEN

“All of you are guardians and are responsible for your duties.

The ruler is responsible for his subjects, the man is in charge of his family, the woman is responsible for her husband’s house and their children.

All of you are guardians and are accountable for your responsibilities.”

(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as narrated by Abdallah ibn Umar, Al-Bukhari, Muslim)

KINDNESS TO SPOUSES

“The believers who show the most perfect faith are those who have the best conduct,

and the best of you are those who are the best to their wives.”

(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as narrated by Abu Hurayrah, al-Tirmidhi)

KINDNESS TO FAMILIES

“I have never seen anyone more kind to one’s family and children than Allah’s Messenger.”

(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as narrated by Anas bin Malik, Muslim)

KINDNESS TO NEIGHBOURS

“Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should do good to his neighbour. Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should show hospitality to his guests, and whoever who believes in Allah and the Last Day should either convey goodness or remain silent.”

(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as narrated by Abu Shuraih al-Khuza’i, Al-Bukhari, Muslim)

NO HOARDING

“No-one hoards except for the crook.”

(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as narrated by Ma’mar bin ‘Abdallah, Muslim)

“None of you becomes a true believer until he likes for his brother what he likes for himself.”

(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as narrated by Anas bin Malik, Al-Bukhari)

GRATITUDE TO PEOPLE

“Whoever doesn’t express thanks to people, has not shown gratitude to Allah.”
(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as narrated by Abu Sa’id, al-Tirmidhi)

BENEFICIAL TO PEOPLE

“The best person is the one most useful to others.”
(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as narrated by Jabir bin Abdallah, al-Tabarani)

THE CURE EXISTS

“Servants of Allah! Make use of medical treatment,
for Allah has not made any disease without creating a cure for it.”
(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as narrated by Usama bin Sharik, Ibn Hibban)

C. Eschatology & the Unseen during COVID-19

NAVIGATING STRANGE TIMES

“Be in this world as if you were a stranger or a traveler along a path.”
(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as narrated by Ibn Umar, Al-Bukhari)

AVOIDING TRIALS

“The believer should not humiliate himself.”
They said: “How could he humiliate himself?”
He ﷺ said: “By taking on a trial that he cannot deal with.”
(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as narrated by Hudayfah, Ibn Majah)

ACCELERATING THE AGENDA

“But they plan, and Allah plans. And Allah is the best of planners.”
(Holy Qur’an, 8:30)

NEO-PLAGUE FROM THE UNSEEN

“Pandemics (*tawun*) are a jab from your enemies among the jinn.”
(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, Musnad Ahmad, Tabarani, Hakim)

“Every *tawun* (epidemic) is a *waba* (pestilence), but not every *waba* is a *tawun*.”
14th Century Maxim of the Islamic world

DEVASTATING PLAGUES

“And He made them like eaten straw.”
(Holy Qur’an, 105:5)

THE MODIFIED PLAGUE

“There are angels guarding the entrances (or roads) of Madinah,
neither plague nor Ad-Dajjal will be able to enter it.”
(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as narrated by Abu Hurayrah, Al-Bukhari)

BIO-ENGINEERING

“Indeed, I will order them to change the nature created by Allah.”
(Holy Qur’an, 4:119)

THE PLAGUE OF SHEEP

“Count six signs before the Hour: my death; then the opening of Jerusalem; 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).”
(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as narrated by Auf bin Malik, Al-Bukhari, Musnad Ahmad)

RAMADAN DIMINISHES MASS JINN HOSTILITY

“When the month of Ramadan starts, the gates of the heaven are opened and the gates of Hell are closed and the devils are chained.”

(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as narrated by Abu Hurayrah, Al-Bukhari)

THE GEOPOLITICAL TRANSITION

“Proceed to a shadow [of smoke] having three columns.”

(Holy Qur’an, 77:30)

IN TRIBULATIONS, BREAK YOUR SWORDS

“Before the Last Hour there will be tribulations like pieces of a dark night in which a man will be a believer in the morning and an infidel in the evening, or a believer in the evening and infidel in the morning. He who sits during them will be better than he who gets up and he who walks during them is better than he who runs. So break your bows, cut your bowstrings and strike your swords on stones. If people then come in to one of you, let him be like the better of Adam's two sons.”

(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as narrated by Abu Musa al-Ash'ari, Abu Dawud)

I asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, “How can salvation be achieved?”

He ﷺ replied, “Control your words, keep to your home, and weep over your sins.”

(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as narrated by ‘Uqba b. ‘Āmir, Al-Tirmidhi, Musnad Ahmad)

IN TRIBULATIONS, BE LIKE A PIECE OF FURNITURE

[In response to tribulations at the End of Time]

“Be like furniture in your house!” /

“At such times of instigation, do not depart from your homes!”

(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, Abu Dawud and Tirmidhi)

IN TRIBULATIONS, STAY AT HOME

“There will come after me a tribulation like the dark of night, in which a man will awaken as a believer and enter evening as a disbeliever, or awaken as a disbeliever and enter evening as a believer.” A man among the Muslims said, ‘What shall we do in that case, O

Messenger of Allah?’ Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said,

“Stay in your homes and hide yourselves”

(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as narrated by Jundub ibn Sufyan, al-Tabarani)

D. Allah's Decree & the Departure of COVID-19

EXPLANATION OF ALL THINGS

“And We have sent down to you the Book as clarification for all things and as guidance and mercy and good tidings for the Muslims.”
(Holy Qur'an, 16:89)

THE DIVINE DECREE

“That is the decree of (Him), the Exalted in Might, the All-Knowing.”
(Holy Qur'an, 36:38).

“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)

“Young man, I shall give you some words of advice:
Be mindful of Allah and Allah will protect you.
Be mindful of Allah and you will find Him before you.
If you ask, then ask Allah alone;
and if you seek help, then seek help from Allah alone.
Know that if the entire world comes together to benefit you in any way, they would not be able to do so except with what Allah has already prescribed for you; and if they were to come together to harm you in any way, they would not be able to do so except with what Allah has already prescribed against you.
The pens have been lifted and the pages have dried.”
(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as narrated by Abdullah bin Abbas, Al-Tirmidhi)

THE BUG PARABLE

“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.”
(Holy Qur'an, 2:26)

ANCIENT PLAGUES

“So, We sent down on those who were wrongdoers a plague from the sky because of the transgressions they used to commit.”
(Holy Qur'an, 2:59)

“So, We sent upon them the flood and locusts and lice and frogs and blood as distinct signs, but they were arrogant and were a criminal people.”
(Holy Qur'an, 7:133)

PANDEMIC AS PUNISHMENT OR MERCY

I asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ about plagues and he said, “They are a punishment which Allah sends upon whomsoever He wills, but Allah has made it a mercy to the believers. Anyone who remains in a town which is plagued with an epidemic, remaining

patient and anticipating Allah's reward, while firmly believing that nothing will befall him other than what Allah has preordained for him, then he will receive a reward of a martyr.”

(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as narrated by Sayyida Aisha, Al-Bukhari)

“Five are regarded as martyrs: They are those who die because of plague, abdominal disease, drowning or a falling building, and the martyrs in Allah's Cause.”

(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as narrated by Abu Hurayrah, Al-Bukhari)

“Whoever dies of a plague is considered a martyr.”

(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as narrated by Abu Hurayrah, Muslim)

ANGELS ATTEND MARTYRS' BURIAL

“Indeed, those who have said, ‘Our Lord is Allah’ and then continued to have integrity and be morally upright - the angels will descend upon them, [saying], ‘Do not fear and do not grieve but receive good tidings of Paradise, which you were promised.’”

(Holy Qur'an, 41:30)

“This is a righteous servant for whom the Throne shook and for whom the gates of heavens were thrown open and whose funeral was witnessed by 70,000 angels who had never descended to the earth until that day.”

(Prophet Muhammad ﷺ on the death of the martyr, Sa'ad ibn Mu'adh, as narrated by Ibn Umar, Muslim)

DIVINE SUCCOUR

“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.”

(Holy Qur'an 11:52)

DIVINE HELP IS NEAR

“If my Servants ask you about Me, I Am Near.”

(Holy Qur'an, 2:186)

Additional source material with appreciation from Tariq al-Tamimi, Islam21C and Islam-Port:

<https://www.islam21c.com/islamic-thought/40-hadith-for-pandemics/>

<https://www.facebook.com/IslamPortCom/posts/3128534100501527>

Lawrence Conrad, Tā'ūn and Wabā', Conceptions of Plague and Pestilence in Early Islam

Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient

Vol. 25, No. 3 (1982), pp. 268-307 (40 pages)

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/3632188?>