

الحمد لله التَّافِعُ الضَّارَّ، خَلَقَ الدَّاءَ وَالْدَّوَاءَ وَالْمَنَافِعَ وَالْمَضَارَّ، بِيَدِهِ التَّفَعُّ وَالضَّرُّ، وَالْخَيْرُ وَالشَّرُّ،
وَالنَّهْيُ وَالْأَمْرُ، الْحَكِيمُ الْقَهَّارُ.
وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى أَشْرَفِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ، وَأَفْضَلِ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ، الْمُسْتَسْلِمِ لِلْقَضَاءِ وَالْأَقْدَارِ، وَعَلَى آلِهِ
وَأَصْحَابِهِ أُولِي السَّمَّاحِ وَالرَّبَّاحِ وَالنَّيْفِظِ وَالْإِعْتِبَارِ.

INTRODUCTION

With the coronavirus taking the world by storm, a desire was formed in the heart to gather some of our elder's teachings in these moments of difficulties and present it to my Muslim bretheren. My younger brother, Moulana Imraan Kajee, had prepared some material which he had given in a bayan. I therefore took this material and expanded on it. May Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى accept and make it a means of encouragement to our Muslim brothers, a means of turning our attention to Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and repenting, and a means of our salvation in the hereafter. Aameen

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CHAPTER ONE: ALL CONDITIONS ARE FROM ALLAAH تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى

As Muslims, we should understand that all conditions, whether favourable or unfavourable, are only and solely from Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. Nothing in the world can occur without His will.

“And with Him are the keys of the unseen; none knows them except Him. And He knows what is on the land and in the sea. Not a leaf falls but that He knows it. And no grain is there within the darkness of the earth and no moist or dry [thing] but that it is [written] in a clear record.” (Surah Al-An'aam verse 59)

“Allaah is He who raised the heavens without any supports that you can see. He then established Himself on the throne. He subjected the sun and the moon [to run their course]. Each one runs its course at an appointed time. He regulates all matters. He expounds the signs, perhaps you may be convinced with the meeting of your Sustainer.” (Surah Ra'd verse 2)

Ibn Abbaas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrates, “Once, I was seated behind Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, who said, ‘O son! Remember Allaah, He will remember you. Remember Allaah, you will find Him before you. When you ask, then only ask Allaah. When you seek assistance, then seek assistance only from Allaah. Know that if all the people of the world gather to benefit you in any way, they cannot benefit you in the least, except that which Allaah has written in your favour; and if they all gather to harm you, they cannot harm you at all, except to the extent which Allaah has written against you. The pens have been raised and the books have become dry.” (Tirmidhi no. 2516)

CHAPTER TWO: DEFINITION OF TAA'OON (PLAGUE)

Taa'oon refers to a specific sickness which would come in the form of a plague (widespread disease with a high mortality rate).

Ibn Sina explains it as follows: Taa'oon is when cancerous cells cause fatal (poisonous) sores to form in the body, normally on softer areas of the body and at the armpits or between the thighs. It most frequently occurs under the armpits, behind the ears or at the tip of the nose. It is caused by dirty blood which is potentially septic and rotten, which transforms into a poisonous (cancerous) substance. It damages the limbs, affects everything near it and it leads the heart to a terrible state. This results in vomiting, nausea, unconsciousness and rapid palpitations (heart-beat). It affects those organs or limbs which are weakest by nature. The worst type is when it affects the main organs. The black sores are such that it is rare for someone to survive after it. The safest forms are the red sores, and then the yellow sores. At the time of plague, such Taa'oos spread rapidly. Therefore, Taa'oon is sometimes referred to as wabaa (plague) and vice-versa. (Fathul-Baari v.10 pg.180, Lama'atut Tanqeeh v.5 pg.25) As such, there are great similarities between cancer which many suffer from today and taa'oon as explained above.

Shah Abdul-Haq Dehlawi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ states, "The meaning of taa'oon in the narrations wherein we have been prohibited from fleeing from it is actually any plague and epidemic. Similar is any widespread disease. The Hadith does not refer to only that specific disease which has been defined by the doctors as taa'oon. Whoever understands it to only refer to that, and allows people to flee from any other plague or epidemic based on the definition of the doctors, is wrong. If it only referred to that, what explanation will such people give to those narrations which specifically state the words

‘al-wabaa’ (plague) and ‘al-mautul aam’ (epidemic). The summary of the discussion is that it is prohibited to flee from all plagues, and taa’oon specifically. The ruling is not confined to taa’oon... (Lama’aatut Tanqeeh v.4 pg.26)

So taa’oon is more specific and wabaa (plague and epidemic) is general. Ibn Hajar made this distinction to confirm the authenticity of the Hadeeth which states that taa’oon will never enter the city of Madinah Munawwarah. While taa’oon will never enter Madinah Munawwarah, a wabaa (epidemic) may enter it.

CHAPTER THREE: CAUSE OF EPIDEMICS

Many doctors have stated that the cause of these epidemics is the environment which has become contaminated and polluted due to certain factors, either in the atmosphere or due to brackish water or abundance of carcasses.

Some ulama have stated that many of the theories which doctors have mentioned regarding the cause of epidemics is rejected, since epidemics occur in the best of seasons, in the sparsely populated lands, and in lands where the water is fresh and sweet. If it was due to the air, all the people, animals and lands would have been afflicted. However this is not the case as can be clearly seen. We find many people and animals that are afflicted by an epidemic, whereas those nearby with a similar temperament are not afflicted. At times, the epidemic enters one area, but does not enter the surrounding area. At times, it afflicts only some people in a house, and others remain well. Therefore, the cause of epidemic is the appearance of immorality and sin. In actual fact, all calamities which befall man are due to man’s actions. (Ma yaf’aluhu alatibba wad-daa’oon bi dafi sharrit-taa’oon by Allamah Mar’i Karami Maqdisi Hambali – demise:1033)

Mufti Abdur-Raheem Lachpori رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيهِ wrote: Everyone in a plague infested area is not affected. I have myself been through three plagues but am healthy by the grace of Allaah. My grandmother passed away in a plague in the year 1325 A.H. At that time, my grandfather, my uncle, my two aunts and my parents were living with her in the same house and nursing her, but none of them were affected. Not only did they survive the plague then, but they also passed through two other plagues afterwards and, by the grace of Allaah, they all remained safe and healthy. (Fataawa Rahimiyyah)

IT IS A PUNISHMENT, BUT IT IS A MERCY FOR SOME

Aaishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا narrated, "I asked Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ about plague." He informed me that it is a punishment that Allaah sends upon whomsoever he wills. But, surely, Allah has made it a mercy for the believers." (Bukhari no. 3474)

Some so-called enlightened Islamic scholars contend that to regard an epidemic as a punishment is to be judgemental, since even pious people are afflicted by it. Their contention is incorrect, based on the above Hadith. Yes, it is a punishment. But for true believers who obey the commands of Allaah, it is a mercy and a form of Shahaadah (martyrdom). Even though it may spread through natural causes, behind those causes are the workings of Allaah, whose hidden system is super-imposed upon us, even though we may not see it as such. The Rasul of Allaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ informed us of these realities, as these are matters of the Unseen.

Another cause: Abu Moosa Ashari رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ narrates that Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "The destruction of my ummah will be by ta'n (being attacked by sharp weapons in battle) and taa'oon?" We said, "We know the meaning of ta'n? What does taa'oon refer to?" Rasulullaah

صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "It is a stabs of your enemy from amongst the jinn. Both of them are Shahaadah (martyrdom)." (Musnad Ahmad no. 19743, Bazzaar no. 2988)

We learn from the above that the cause of the sickness is due to the stabs or piercing of the Jinn in the internal body. This then becomes apparent on the outer body. This is knowledge of causes which are hidden from the eyes of man. Therefore, it is not expected from those in the medical fraternity to understand these causes. They will endeavour to understand it according to their medical theories. These are such aspects of knowledge and realities which can only be conveyed to us by the Messengers of Allaah. (A similar point has been made in Fathul-Baari v.10 pg.180, Lama'aatut Tanqeeh v.4 pg.26)

Note: It is quite possible that all these are causes. Some are external causes, whilst others are internal causes, as will be explained by Shah Waliyullaah رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ later on. Due to sinning, the jinn are allowed to attack man in certain ways, which cause an effect in the atmosphere, etc. This then causes people to become ill, by the will of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. At times, disbelievers are given the power by Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى to form these illnesses in laboratories and spread them, due to the sinning of the Muslims, just as Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى states, "In this manner, We place some oppressors over others on account of their deeds. (An'aam verse 132) And Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى knows best.

THE ACTUAL CAUSE OF THESE CALAMITIES ARE OUR SINS

Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ has written, "Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has clearly explained this manner of planning (i.e seeking forgiveness and engaging in righteous deeds) as a cure. He تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى says, "Seek

forgiveness from Your Sustainer (from your sins) and turn to Him (with righteous deeds), he will grant you goodness till an appointed time (till death.)” This means that He will protect one from calamities and worries. Most people do not turn their attention to the actual cure because they do not look at the actual cause. They look to the natural causes, which they regard to be the actual cause. They waste their time by discussing incidents, complaining, counting the number of deaths, speaking ill of the epidemic, etc. which is a waste of time.

We do not deny natural causes. However the example of these causes compared to the actual causes is like a criminal who has been shot dead by the command of the king. Others do not look at the actual cause which is the anger of the king. They only look at the natural cause, whereas the natural cause comes into motion because of the actual cause. The person who does not understand this will not abstain from his criminal activities. He will look to see how he can counter the effect of the bullet, which is beyond his control. Is this not wrong? This however is our condition.”

a.) Some people leave the area they are residing in to save themselves. There are details regarding this ruling.

b.) Some people use tawiz (amulets which contain verses of the Qur’an or duaas from the Ahaadith), sacrifice animals and give charity, recite Surah Taghabun or call out extra adhaans.

These acts are beneficial, but not sufficient, and only if they are done according to Shar’i rules. The last action is however contrary to sunnah.

c.) Some make duaa and ask the pious for duaas.

However one should not suffice on the external form, but have the soul of duaa as well. The soul of duaa is to turn to Alllaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى earnestly in repentance and to abstain from sin.

Rasulullaah ﷺ said, “Allaah does not accept the dua from an inattentive heart.” (Tirmidhi no. 3479)

In a lengthy hadeeth, Rasulullaah ﷺ said that Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى wil not accept the dua of a person whose food, clothing, etc. are haram even if he makes dua earnestly. (Muslim no. 1015)

This clearly shows the necessity of joining dua to tawbah (repentance). (Summarized from Asbaabul-Balaa Wal-Masaab of Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللهُ)

VERSES OF THE QUR’AN WHICH PROVIDE GUIDANCE TO MANKIND DURING EPIDEMIC

THE ACTUAL CAUSE

Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى states:

وَمَا أَصَابَكُمْ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ فَبِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَيَعْفُو عَنْ كَثِيرٍ وَمَا أَنْتُمْ بِمُعْجِزِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ
وَمَا لَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ

Whatever calamity befalls you, it is because of what your hands have earned. And He forgives many sins. You cannot tire [Allaah] by fleeing in the land. You have no one apart from Allaah as a protector nor as a helper (Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى forgives solely out of His beneficence. If He wants to punish someone for any sin, the sinner cannot hide himself by fleeing anywhere. Nor can anyone apart from Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى come to his defence and assistance.).

Allamah Shabbir Ahmad Uthmani رَحِمَهُ اللهُ عَنْهُ writes, “Just as bounties are showered in a special way, at specific times and under certain circumstances, calamities are also sent under specific causes and regulations. For example, the direct or indirect cause of any hardship or calamity befalling people is their deeds and actions. Just as a person falls ill due to not taking precautions in his diet and

other factors, and at times, he dies because of this, or just as the recklessness of the mother harms the child, or just as the brunt for the misadministration and foolishness of the residents of a place has to be borne by everyone else, the same can be understood for spiritual and internal recklessness and misadministration. In short, every calamity that afflicts people is a result of their past doings. This serves the purpose of being a warning and a test for them for the future. This is on the basis that the mercy of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى forgives many of the sins of the people. If they were seized for every single sin, not a single person would remain alive on earth. (Tafseer Uthmani)

A LESSON FROM HISTORY

وَإِذْ قُلْنَا ادْخُلُوا هَذِهِ الْقَرْيَةَ فَكُلُوا مِنْهَا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمْ رَغَدًا وَاَدْخُلُوا الْبَابَ سُجَّدًا وَقُولُوا حِطَّةً نَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ خَطَايَاكُمْ وَسَيَزِيدُ الْمُحْسِنِينَ فَبَدَّلَ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا قَوْلًا غَيْرَ الَّذِي قِيلَ لَهُمْ فَأَنْزَلْنَا عَلَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا رَجْزًا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ

When We said, "Enter this town and eat of it wherever you desire, abundantly; and enter the door prostrating and saying:

'Forgiveness'. Then We shall forgive you your faults and We shall also give more to the good-doers." Then the transgressors changed the word contrary to that which had been said to them. So We sent down upon the transgressors a punishment from the heaven on account of their disobedience.'^a

When the Bani Israaeel became weary of wandering about in that desert and tired of eating manna and salwa, the Banu Israaeel were ordered to enter a particular town whose name was Areehaa (Jericho). This town was inhabited by the Amaaliqah, a nation that was from the tribe of Aad. Some scholars are of the opinion that the place was Baytul Muqaddas. They were commanded to enter

through the gates of this town, while prostrating in gratitude (This was a physical form of gratitude). Some scholars explain that they were ordered to lower their backs as a form of humility. They were also ordered to enter while seeking verbal forgiveness from their sins (This was a verbal form of gratitude). Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى promised to forgive the mistakes of the one who carries out both these commands, and to will increase the reward of the pious servants. However, the Bani Israaeel mocked at the command of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. Instead of saying *hittah* (forgiveness), they said *hintah* (wheat). And instead of prostrating, they began sliding on their buttocks. When they reached the town, an epidemic seized them. By the afternoon, 70 000 Jews died. (Tafseer Uthmani)

DON'T BE A CAUSE OF CALAMITY FOR OTHERS

ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ لِيُذِيقَهُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي عَمِلُوا لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ
 قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلُ كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُشْرِكِينَ فَقَامَ
 وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ الْقَيِّمِ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ يَوْمٌ لَا مَرَدَّ لَهُ مِنَ اللَّهِ يَوْمَئِذٍ يُصَدِّعُونَ مَنْ كَفَرَ فَعَلَيْهِ
 كُفْرُهُ وَمَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَا نَفْسَ فِيهِمْ يَمْهَدُونَ لِيَجْزِيَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ
 إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْكَافِرِينَ

Corruption has appeared on land and sea because of what the hands of the people have earned, so that He (Allaah) makes them taste some of what they did, in order that they may return (to the right way). Say, "Go about in the land and see how was the end of those who were before. Most of them were Mushriks (i.e. those who ascribe partners to Allaah)". So set your focus towards the straight Faith before the arrival of a day that will never be deterred by Allaah. On that Day the people will be split apart. Whoever disbelieves, his unbelief will be against him; and whoever acts

righteously, then such people are paving the path for themselves, so that Allaah may reward those who believed and did righteous deeds, out of His grace. Surely He does not love the disbelievers.

“Corruption has appeared on land and sea because of what the hands of the people have earned” - The author of Ruhul-Ma’ani has explained that the word ‘fasaad’ (translated in the text as corruption) means all sorts of calamities, such as famine, epidemic diseases, frequency of the incidents of fire, drowning, lack of Allaah's blessing in everything, reduction in profits and incurring of losses in lucrative businesses. It can also be deduced from this verse that the cause of calamities in the world is commission of sins and other evil acts by people. Shirk (association of partners with Allaah) and infidelity are the most severe of them all, and other sins follow after them. The same subject has appeared in another verse with a difference, “Whatever troubles you are inflicted with are due to your own wrong doings (as mentioned above).” The essence of this verse is that whatever troubles and tribulations people face in this world are brought about by their own sins, despite the fact that many of these sins are pardoned, and many are punished but slightly, and yet some others are left unpunished. There are only a few sins that are punished by way of calamities. If all sins were punished with the intensity they deserve, no one would have been left alive in the world. But it is our good fortune that Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى forgives so many of our sins and those which are not forgiven are dealt with very mildly, as stated at the end of the verse (so that He (Allaah) makes them taste some of what they did) that is, He lets them taste a little of their evil deeds. After that, it is pointed out that whatever trouble and tribulation is sent down to them in this world, though as a result of their misdeeds, is in fact a blessing and grace from Him, if only one could ponder. The purpose of these worldly

troubles is to awaken them from their slumber, so that they get rid of their evil acts. This would naturally result in their favour and bring them blessings, as stated at the end of the verse, "In order that they may return (to the right way)".

Big calamities fall upon the world because of the sins of people. It is in this backdrop that some scholars have declared that if a man commits an evil deed, he harms the entire human kind, beasts, birds and other animals, because whatever calamities fall upon earth due to his sins, all others are also affected by it. Therefore, each one of the sufferers from these calamities will lodge a claim against the sinner on the Day of Qiyaamah. Shaqeeq Zaahid رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ has said that whoever acquires something unlawfully, he does not harm only the person whom he has taken it from, but also the entire human kind. It is because this opens up the door for others to follow, and thus the whole humanity gets involved in the practice. Secondly, this evil practice invites calamities which in turn bring about troubles for every one.

ANSWER TO A DOUBT

We learn from the Ahaadith that this world is a prison for the believers. The disbelievers get the reward of their good deeds in this world only in the form of wealth and health, whereas the reward of the believers is saved up to be awarded in the Hereafter. Worldly difficulties afflict the Ambiyaa the most severely, and then those who are closest to them in piety.

But the above verses seem to state that difficulties, afflictions and calamities come to mankind as a result of their sins. It is clear that the sins of the disbelievers are far more and of a much greater

degree, as they indulge in kufr etc. Further, many Muslim believers live a difficult life, whereas many disbelievers and sinners live a comfortable and easy life. If the troubles and difficulties were because of sins, as mentioned in the verse, the situation should have been exactly opposite.

Answer: a) Sins are not the only cause, nor do sins always bring about calamities:

Sins are a cause for difficulties and afflictions, but do not always bring about this effect due to certain other factors. A day-to-day example of this is when a person takes a tablet which is supposed to have a certain effect (like a sleeping tablet should cause one to fall off to sleep), but does not bring about its effect due to some other medication or medical condition which one may be undergoing.

Similarly, it needs to be understood that sins are not the only cause of difficulties and afflictions. Some difficulties and afflictions may come about without commitment of sins. The verse does not negate that. Therefore, in the case of the Ambiyaa and pious persons, difficulties may afflict them without sins. In such situations, the cause of difficulties is not sins, but they are put through a test to upgrade their status.

b) Sins bring about general and wide-spread calamities:

The Noble Qur'aan has declared sins to be the cause of general afflictions and calamities, where these calamities engulf the whole world or an entire city, and all humans and animals are afflicted with that. Normally such calamities only fall when sins are committed openly and freely. In the case of individual difficulties, this rule does not apply, because sometimes such calamities are a trial and test.

When the individual passes the test successfully, his position is raised in the Hereafter. In fact, such calamities prove to be blessings and graces of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى.

Hence it is not correct to call a person sinner if he is afflicted with calamity. In the same way, it is not appropriate to consider someone pious and righteous if he is affluent. However, the main reason for the affliction of major troubles and calamities, such as famine, storms, epidemics, inflation and lack of Allaah's blessing is commission of sins openly and defiance of Allaah's rule. (condensed from Ma'ariful-Qur'an)

c) The cause of calamities for Muslims and for non-Muslims are not the same:

Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى - the creator of causes – has created separate causes for the worldly progress of Muslims and non-Muslims. It is wrong to maintain that the very thing which is a cause of progress for non-Muslims is also a cause of progress for Muslims. It is also wrong to believe that those things which are not an impediment or hindrance to their progress will also not hinder the progress of Muslim.

Please understand this well: the real place of punishment for the disbelievers is the hereafter. Sometimes, for the sake of expedience, it is meted out to them in this world. Whatever good works and position they have in this world, are solely as a result of the returns given to them by the Owner of this world, the Most Just King. There is nothing for them in the Hereafter.

The cause of the worldly success for the non-believers is Allaah's postponement of punishment and their own worldly good deeds. When any individual non-believer or group of non-believers do deeds of righteousness, they will prosper and attain some measure

of worldly success. Even their evil deeds will go unpunished, while even the seemingly insignificant evils of a Muslim will bring punishment.

From many ahaadeeth, it is understood that the major share of punishment for the sins of this ummah come in this world. This is indeed a mercy to them. Were it not so that in spite of their sins, they were not afflicted with calamities and trials, it would be frightful indeed. So the only manner in which this ummah, which is enjoying Allaah's mercy, can save itself from misfortunes, catastrophes, worries and humiliation of this world, is to avoid sin completely and prevent others from sin as well. When, by chance, sins do occur, they should weep in sorrow, seek forgiveness and repent to Allah. There is no other way out. **It is not possible at all for a Muslim to remain as a Muslim and gain worldly prosperity, while at the same time living a sinful life!!** As much wrong doings as Muslims are guilty of, whether individual or collective, Muslims will suffer sorrow, ordeals and hardships accordingly.

The major cause for a Muslim's success is acting upon the injunctions of deen and avoiding sin, for as much as they indulge in sinful acts, they will face calamities. For a Muslim to look at non-Muslims and to see them committing the same sins and still enjoy progress with no misfortune – and then to become fearless of these sins, is indeed wrong and only entangles him in more misfortunes. When Muslims, indulging in sins, are not visited by calamities, it is so much more dangerous. In such a case, it is merely a temporary postponement of punishment. Revenge will come quickly and suddenly.”

From the ahaadeeth we come to know that in Allaah's sight, this world has no value at all. Because the disbelievers have, as their

major aim in life, the attainment of this world, they are given the world according to their treasure of good deeds. The Muslims on the other hand, since having accepted Islaam, have their eyes on the success and permanent well-being of the hereafter to which they have a special right. Not matter how sinful a Muslim is, he will eventually enter Jannah, after being punished or pardoned of his sins. Hence because of his wrongdoings, he will be made to suffer the sorrow and hardships of this world. If he is not made to suffer here, there is indeed a dangerous path ahead of him...

Uqbah ibn Aamir رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrated that Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "When you see Allaah granting to a slave whatever he desires (prosperity, progress, wealth, position) in this worldly life, inspite of incessant sins which he commits, then understand that this is istidraaj (a trap which Allaah lures one into gradually). Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ then recited the verse: 'When they forgot (ignored) the reminders sent to them, we opened unto them the doors of all things (enjoyments of this worldly life). When the time came that they became conceited over that which they had been given, We suddenly gripped hold of them (punished them), leaving them despondent (of ever regaining the bounties they had lost).'" (Ahmad no. 17311, Al-Awsat no. 9272)

But how is it that disbelievers also face destruction and calamities, like epidemics etc.? This is because of their injustices, tyranny and oppression and comes about when immorality and promiscuous behaviour have reached overwhelming heights or because of their mockery of the messengers of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. For these sins, there is no relaxation or postponement of punishment. For these sins, all-encompassing, general calamities descend upon them... (Condensed from Al-E'tidaal)

d) A unique explanation regarding natural causes and hidden causes: Shah Waliyyullaah رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has commented in Hujjatullahil-Baalighah: There are two types of causes in this world, for good or evil, trouble or comfort and difficulty or ease. Causes of the first kind are visible or outward, while causes of the second type are latent or inward.

Outward causes are the material causes which are seen by all and normally regarded as the actual cause; whereas the inward causes are those based on human actions, which lead to either help from the angels or to their curse and hate. For example, the causes of rain according to the scientists and philosophers are the formation of vapors in the form of clouds over the oceans due to heat, then their drift toward the land by the breeze, then their ascent to heights because of the heat of land, and then freezing of vapors after attaining heights into the cooler strata, and after being defrosted by the heat of sun, their ultimate fall from the height in the form of water drops. But the ahaadeeth on the subject tell us that this whole process is an act of the angels. In fact, there is no contradiction in the two statements as there could be many causes for any one process. Hence the outward cause in this case is the scientific explanation referred above, while the inward cause could be the action of the angels. When both these causes are combined, the rain falls according to need and expectation, and if both the causes do not combine, the rainfall may be interrupted.

Explaining the subject further, Shah Waliyyullaah رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has said that some causes of the tribulations of the world are physical or biological, which do not recognize good or bad. For instance, it is the characteristic of fire to burn, without considering whether some one is pious or sinner, unless it receives a Divine command to act otherwise, as was the case in the fire of Namrud, which was

commanded to cool down and be tranquil for Ibrahim عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام. The attribute of water is to drown heavier bodies. So it will always act to perform this duty. Similarly, other elements are also performing their assigned jobs. For some, they become troublesome and arduous, but for others they bring in comfort and ease. Like the outward physical causes, the good or evil deeds of a person are also effective in bringing troubles and tribulations or ease and comfort. When both outward and inward causes of ease, happiness and comfort join together, the person or a group of people enjoy ease and comfort in life. As against this, if the natural causes bring in distress and problems for an individual or a group of people and his or their actions also call for troubles and tribulations, then the calamities fall as a rule. Sometimes it happens that whereas the material outward causes are working to bring about troubles and calamity, but the good actions of a person require and necessitate ease and comfort. In such a conflicting situation, the inward causes are consumed in countering the influence of the outward causes. As a result, the full benefit of his sympathetic inward causes is not reaped. Likewise, it happens sometimes that the material causes demand ease and comfort, but the inward causes or his actions invite troubles and tribulations. In this conflicting situation also, neither full comfort and ease is attained, nor do the calamities take their full toll. In a similar manner, the material causes are sometimes made unfavorable for a Nabi, wali or a righteous person to put him to test. If this explanation is understood properly, then the mutual harmony and consistency between the Qur'anic verses and the referred ahaadeeth becomes apparent, and any doubts about inconsistency or conflict are removed. (condensed from Ma'ariful-Quraan Surah Room)

WHEN IS A CALAMITY A TEST AND WHEN IS IT A PUNISHMENT

When calamities fall, they are meant as a trial and test for good people in order to atone their sins or raise their status, and for others to punish them for their sins. In both cases, the form of the calamities look alike. Then how can they be differentiated?

a.) Shah Waliyyullaah رحمہ اللہ has said that calamities are a test for good people when they endure it with contentment, which is a gift of Allah. They remain happy and contented in troubles and calamities like a patient, who remains contented on his treatment by medicines of bitter taste or by a painful surgery. Not only does he not complain of the pain he faced during treatment, but he also pays fees for it and utilizes all his resources for getting himself treated in such a painful manner. As against this, the evildoers, on whom the calamities fall as punishment, take it to heart and cry and moan against the sufferings they are placed in. Sometimes they utter words of ingratitude to the extent of blasphemy.

2.) Hakeem-ul-Ummah Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رحمہ اللہ has given another method of distinguishing between the two: If one becomes aware of his sins and faults and finds greater inclination toward seeking pardon from Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى, then it is a sign of His kindness and favour. But if one gets frustrated and indulges more in sins and evil, then it is a sign of Allaah's wrath and torment. (condensed from Ma'ariful-Quraan Surah Room)

SPECIFIC ACTIONS WHICH CAUSE EPIDEMICS AND PLAGUES

Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: "If ever immorality spreads in a community to the extent that it is openly committed (and people talk about it as if nothing wrong has taken place), plagues and

diseases which were not present in the previous generations will spread among them.” (Ibn Majah no. 4019, Mustadrak of Haakim no. 8623, Shuabul Imaan no. 3042)

Rasulullaah ﷺ said, “Whenever immorality becomes apparent in a nation, Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى lets loose death upon them.” (Musnad Bazzar no. 4463, Mustadrak of Hakim no. 2577, As-Sunanul-Kubra of Bayhaqi no. 18850)

Immorality (fawaahish) refers to either:

- a.) sins which: are lewd and obscene. This could be in speech or language (as in uttering foul, evil, lewd or obscene speech) or any indecent act as per the Qur’aan like pornography, fornication , adultery or homosexual act, bestiality, incest and other perversions.
- b.) Any major sin for which Shariah has prescribed a Hadd (specific punishment). Examples are: Disbelieving in Allaah after having believed in Him, killing an innocent soul, dealing in riba (usury, interest), treating one’s parents harshly, drinking, stealing, giving false testimonies, etc.

3 SPECIFIC TYPES OF FAWAAHISH WHICH LEAD TO THE OUTBREAK OF EPIDEMICS

a.) Fornication: Ibn Mas’ood رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, “When fornication becomes rife, killings will increase and epidemics will occur.” (Mustadrak of Haakim no. 8536)

Ibn Abbaas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ quotes Ka’b Ahbaar who said, “When you see that rain has stopped, then know that zakat has been withheld. When you see swords drawn, then know that the law of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has been destroyed, so some are taking revenge on others. When you

see an epidemic breaking out, then know that fornication has spread.” (Shuabul-Imaan no. 4061)

b.) Intermingling of men and women: Hafiz Ibn al-Qayyim رَحِمَهُ اللهُ writes in at-Turuq al-Hukmiyyah (page 239)

ولا ريب أن تمكين النساء من اختلاطهن بالرجال أصل كل بلية وشر، وهو من أعظم أسباب نزول العقوبات العامة، كما أنه من أسباب فساد أمور العامة والخاصة، واختلاط الرجال بالنساء سبب لكثرة الفواحش والزنا، وهو من أسباب الموت العام، والطواعين المتصلة

There is no doubt that enabling women to mix freely with men is the basis of every calamity and evil, and it is from the greatest causes for the descending of wide-spread punishments, just as it is from the causes of destroying public and private dealings. Mixing of men and women is a cause for the increase in immoral actions and zina (adultery & fornication), and it is one of the causes of widespread death and continuous plagues.

c.) Drinking:

وفي مرآة الزمان: لما كان سنة ثمان عشرة اصاب جماعة من المسلمين بالشام الشراب ، فجلبدهم ابو عبيدة بأمر عمر رضي الله عنه ، وقال رضي الله عنه عند ذلك : ليحدثن في هذا العام حادث. فوقع الطاعون (أي طاعون عمواس) (الإشاعة لأشراط الساعة ١٢٠)

In the eighteenth year of Hijrah, a group of Muslims in Sham were engaged in drinking alcohol. Abu Ubaidah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ lashed them by the command of Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. On this, Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ remarked, “Some major event will happen this year.” The plague of Amwas then occurred.

In 449 (1057-8 CE), there was a major epidemic in the Middle East and Asia. Most of the houses became empty. Doors were locked and people died in their homes. People were forced to eat carcasses, due to scarcity of food. The foreleg of a dog which had turned green (rotten) was found by a woman (she had no other food to eat). A

man roasted a child in a furnace and ate her. It is stated that a dead bird fell from a wall. Five men rushed to it. They divided it amongst themselves and ate it. A letter from Bukhara states that 18000 people passed away in one day. It was estimated that at least 1.65 million people passed away just in the region of Bukhara alone. People would pass this city. They would see nothing but empty market places, bare roads, locked doors, desolation and no humans. News arrived from Azerbaijan and surrounding areas that they were afflicted with the epidemic, and very few were saved in those cities.

The epidemic spread to Ahwaaz, Bawaat, etc. Hunger was a major cause. The poor people were roasting dogs, digging graves and roasting the deceased before eating them. People were only engaged day and night in washing the deceased, preparing them for burial and then burying them. Large graves were dug and 20-30 people were buried in one grave. A person would be sitting. His heart would split, and blood would emerge from his mouth. He would immediately pass away.

The copy of a letter written from Samarkand to Balkh arrived at Baghdad stating that each day 5,000, 6,000 or more righteous Muslims are being buried, and the stores are shut, and the people are engaged night and day in burying their dead, and bathing them and shrouding them.

People then repented. They gave most of their wealth in charity. They could not find anyone who would accept it from them. A poor person would be given abundance of gold, silver and clothing. He would say, "I want a slice of bread. I need that which will satiate my hunger." However he could not find food.

When this epidemic broke out, people responded by pouring away the alcohol, breaking the instruments of music and entertainment,

attaching themselves to the Masjids, reciting the Qur'aan and worshipping Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. The women in the homes were doing likewise.

The residents of homes that had alcohol would all die within the same night. In one residence, 18 corpses were found, and upon searching the house, alcohol was found therein. Another example of an ill person is cited who was in the agony of death for seven days, but his soul would not leave his body. His suffering continued until he pointed to the alcohol in his home. It was only after it was removed that his soul left his body and he passed away. Before this, whoever entered these houses (with alcohol) also passed away. Whoever was engaged with a woman in a haram relationship, would pass away immediately. All Muslims who had broken ties, and had not repaired them, would pass away at the same time. Whoever entered a house to take anything left behind, would be found dead together with the goods.

A man passed away in the masjid. They found fifty thousand dirhams with him. People were offered to take it, but none did so. It was left for nine days in the masjid. After this, four men entered the masjid to take it, but they all passed away immediately.

It has been said from the start of Shawwal to the end of Dhul-Qa'dah, the caskets (janaazahs) that came out of the doors of Samarkand were counted, and they came to 236,000. (This is besides the mass burials). This pandemic originated in Turkistan, a land of disbelievers, and then came from there to lands of Saaghunn, Kaasghar, Shaash, Farghaanah and those regions and reached Samarkand on the 27th of Ramadaan of this year. (al-Bidayah wa al-Nihaayah, vol. 13 page 130; al-Muntazam vol. 16 page

17; Badhl al-Maaoon fi Fadl al-Taaoon page 365, Mir'aat al-Zamaan, 19:12-14).

CHAPTER FOUR: ACTIONS TO BE DONE DURING EPIDEMICS

Why can we not run away from these epidemics?

قَالَ ابْنُ الْمَلَكِ: فَإِنَّ الْعَذَابَ لَا يَدْفَعُهُ الْفِرَارُ، وَإِنَّمَا يَمْنَعُهُ التَّوْبَةُ وَالِاسْتِغْفَارُ

Ibn Malak states, "This is because punishment cannot be averted by running away, only seeking forgiveness and repenting can prevent it." (Mirqaat vol. 4 page 28)

Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللهُ said, "The sad reality is that we don't look to the real cause, but we look towards natural causes. We then complain, discuss or worry ourselves, which is a waste of time."

Our solutions are:

1.) SEEKING FORGIVENESS FROM ALLAAH تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى

وَأَنْ اسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّكُمْ ثُمَّ تُوبُوا إِلَيْهِ يُمَتِّعْكُمْ مَتَاعًا حَسَنًا إِلَى أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى وَيُؤْتِ كُلَّ ذِي فَضْلٍ فَضْلَهُ ۖ وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنِّي أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ كَبِيرٍ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ ۖ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

That you ask your Sustainer to forgive you your sins. Then turn towards Him, that He may grant you wonderful enjoyment till an appointed time, and bestow His grace on every one who deserves it. If you turn away, I fear for you the punishment of a great day. It is to Allaah that you have to return. And He has power over everything.

The person who has his past sins forgiven and turns with his heart towards Allâh for the future will live an enjoyable life. This is because, irrespective of the state in which an obedient servant may be, he has high hopes and aspirations of Allaah's grace and kindness. He is so lost in his vision of gaining Allaah's pleasure and great

enjoyment in the future that he does not even bother about the greatest of hardships of this world. When he thinks that he is fulfilling the obligations of his life in the proper manner whereby he will definitely have to meet the Lord of the universe, then upon his reliance on his good deeds and the promises of Allaah, his heart begins to jump with joy. He experiences such tranquillity and internal peace with the paltry wealth of this world that cannot be acquired by kings who own unlimited wealth and resources. In fact, at times he experiences delight in the hardships and difficulties of a few days which the affluent people and kings cannot experience in their life of comfort and luxury. Assuming a patriotic political prisoner is fully convinced that through his imprisonment, his country will be freed from the colonization of a foreign power and that no sooner he is released from prison he will be made the president of the republic, will he not experience more joy and tranquillity in that tiny cell of his than that king [who is living in his palace]? – who has all the comforts of life at his disposal but harbours that fear that he will be disgracefully removed from the royal seat within a week? One can gauge the life of an obedient servant [of Allaah] in this worldly prison in the same light. (Tafseer Uthmani)

وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَأَنْتَ فِيهِمْ ط وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ مُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَهُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ

Allaah will never punish them as long as you are among them. And Allaah will never punish them as long as they continue asking for forgiveness.” (Surah al-Anfaal verse 33)

Rasulullaah ﷺ said, “Should I not show you your sickness and its remedy?” Your sickness is sinning and your remedy is to seek forgiveness (istighfaar).” (Shuabul-Imaan no. 6746)

Istighfaar- Rasulullaah ﷺ said, “Whoever holds firm onto istighfaar, Allaah will make for him an opening from every grief, an exit from every difficulty, and Allaah will grant him sustenance from where he never imagined.” (Abu Dawood no.1518)

Rabee’ ibn Khath’am رَحِمَهُ اللهُ told his companions, “Do you know what is the sickness, the medication and the total cure?” When they replied in the negative, he said, “The sickness is sins, the medication is istighfaar, and the cure is repenting and then not returning (to a life of sin).” (Hilyatul-Awliya vol. 2 no. 108)

Rasulullaah ﷺ said, “تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى says, ‘O man! As long as you continue supplicating to Me and having hope in Me, I will forgive you no matter what evils are in you, and I will not bother [i.e. no matter how big a sinner you are, it will not be a serious issue for Me to forgive you]. O man! Even if your sins reach the height of the skies and then you seek forgiveness from Me, I will forgive you. O man! If you come to Me with the earth filled with sins, and then you meet Me without having ascribed any partner with Me, I will come to you with the earth filled with forgiveness.’” (Tirmidhi no. 3540)

Rasulullaah ﷺ said, ““All the people of my ummah will be forgiven except those who publicise their faults. An example of publicising faults is that of a person who commits a sin at night. Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى concealed it [from the public] but the next morning this person goes around saying: ‘O such and such person! I committed such and such act last night.’ He spent the night while Allaah had concealed his sin. But the next morning, he exposes this veil which Allaah had placed [over his sin].” (Bukhari no. 6069, Muslim no. 2990)

Hazrat Shaikh Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ once mentioned, “My beloved friends! Going on discussing one’s difficulties and problems will not bring about any solution, nor will it help you. In the face of hardships and difficulties, nothing benefits a person except istighfaar and earnestly turning to Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى in du’aa. Mention this advice of mine to your friends and associates and frequently remind them of it as well. We should understand that all the difficulties and calamities that we experience are actually the result of our evil actions. In reality, the difficulties that we face on account of our sins and wrongs are much less than what we are deserving of. My beloved friends! Each person should look into his own heart to introspect over his condition and see what sins he is involved in. The truth of the matter is that we are only continuing in our present condition due to the mercy of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and the blessing of Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ as we are definitely deserving of far greater punishments and difficulties. When difficulties and calamities overcome us then falling into anxiety and depression will not help us. It is crying to Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى in repentance that will help us. (Qutbul Aqtaab Hazrat Shaikhul Hadeeth Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya page 421-422)

On another occasion, he mentioned: I have mentioned the following verse of the Quraan Majeed many times in the past:

وَمَا أَصَابَكُمْ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ فَبِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَيَعْفُوا عَنْ كَثِيرٍ

Whatever calamity afflicts you is because of that which your hands have earned (evil deeds), and He forgives many (of your sins). (Surah Shura v30)

By Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى, one will be dealt with according to his actions. At times, the result of one’s actions is not seen immediately. However,

it does not mean that if one does not see the result of one's actions immediately, there is no result that is forthcoming. The consequence of one's actions will definitely be seen sooner or later. Similarly, if we experience some difficulty, the difficulty we experience may not always be due to the apparent cause that we see before us. Sometimes, there is another hidden cause (i.e. our sins) which we don't consider, whereas this is the actual cause for the difficulty. It is for this reason that you should make istighfaar constantly and make a habit of reciting Aayat-e-Kareemah (لا إِلَهَ إِلَّا) in abundance. (أنت سبحانك إني كنت من الظالمين) We should turn to Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى at all times for He is the only source of help. (Qutbul Aqtaab Hazrat Shaikhul Hadeeth Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya page 429)

2.) SALAWAAT ALAN NABI ﷺ

عن أبي بن كعب قُلْتُ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ إِنِّي أَكْثِرُ الصَّلَاةِ عَلَيْكَ فَكَمْ أَجْعَلُ لَكَ مِنْ صَلَاتِي؟ فَقَالَ: "مَا شِئْتَ". قَالَ: قُلْتُ: الرَّبِيعُ، قَالَ: "مَا شِئْتَ فَإِنْ زِدْتَ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكَ"، قُلْتُ: النَّصَفُ، قَالَ: "مَا شِئْتَ، فَإِنْ زِدْتَ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكَ"، قَالَ: قُلْتُ: فَالثَّلَاثِينَ، قَالَ: "مَا شِئْتَ، فَإِنْ زِدْتَ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكَ"، قُلْتُ: أَجْعَلُ لَكَ صَلَاتِي كُلَّهَا قَالَ: "إِذَا تَكْفَى هَمَّكَ، وَيُغْفِرَ لَكَ ذَنْبَكَ (رواه الترمذی) وفي روايةٍ لاحمد عنه قَالَ: قَالَ رَجُلٌ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَرَأَيْتَ إِنْ جَعَلْتُ صَلَاتِي كُلَّهَا عَلَيْكَ؟ قَالَ: «إِذْنٌ يَكْفِيكَ اللَّهُ مَا أَهَمَّكَ مِنْ دُنْيَاكَ وَآخِرَتِكَ» (و اسناد هذه جيد) - (حم) ٢١٢٤٢

Ubay bin Ka'b رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ reports, "I asked, "O Rasulullaah; I recite salaah on you in abundance. To what extent should I adopt this practice?" Rasulullaah ﷺ replied, "As much as you desire." I said, "One quarter" (i.e. ¼ of the time he had set aside for nafl ibadat?) Rasulullaah ﷺ said, "As much as you desire, and if you increase it, it will be better for you." I said, "One half?" Rasulullaah ﷺ said, "As much as you wish. If you increase it, it will be better for you." I said, "Then I shall only recite salawaat (i.e. all extra

time will only be devoted to salawaat). Rasulullaah ﷺ said, “Then it will suffice for all your worries and your sins too will be forgiven.” (Tirmidhi no. 2457)

In a narration by Imam Ahmed, a man asked, “O Rasulullaah ﷺ how will it be if I should devote all my time for the recitation of salawaat on you?” Rasulullaah ﷺ replied, “In that case, Allaah shall alleviate all your worries, in this world and the hereafter.” (Musnad Ahmad no. 21242)

Allamah Suyuti رحمه الله has written, “Ibn Abi Hajalah has written in his book on taa’oon (epidemics), “Some pious have stated to him that the most beneficial action found in times of epidemics and other great calamities is recital of abundance of salawaat....The proof for this action was the above narration, “Then it will suffice for all your worries and your sins too will be forgiven.”

Moulana Hakeem Akhtar رحمه الله mentioned the following, “Moulana Ashraf Ali Thaanwi رحمه الله had prepared a kitaab named “Nashr-ut-Teeb” in regard to the love of Rasulullaah ﷺ. The entire kitaab revolves around love for Rasulullaah ﷺ, and through reading this kitaab, one can gauge the deep love within the heart of the author for Rasulullaah.

During the time when Moulana Ashraf Ali Thaanwi رحمه الله was engaged in the compilation of Nashr-ut-Teeb, Thanabowan (the town in which Moulana Thaanwi رحمه الله resided) was afflicted by a plague. It was noticed that on the day when Moulana Thaanwi رحمه الله wrote any portion of this kitaab, there would be no reports of people passing away due to the plague. However, on the day when Moulana Thaanwi رحمه الله did not write any portion of the kitaab,

reports of many people passing away would be heard. When this observation reached Moulana Thaanwi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْه via many people, he would not leave out writing this kitaab on any day. It was through the barakah (blessings) of writing about the great virtues and esteemed position of Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ during that time that Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى caused the plague to come to an end.” After mentioning the above incident, Moulana Hakeem Akhtar Saheb رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْه concluded, “The recitation of abundant durood upon Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ is extremely beneficial in repelling calamities and disasters. Through reciting a single durood, one’s rank is elevated by ten stages, ten good deeds are recorded in one’s account, and ten sins are forgiven. Additionally, through reciting abundant durood, one is trying to fulfill the right of love which he owes to Rasulullaah.” (Aadaab-e-Ishq-e-Rasul صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ page 11)

Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْه has written in the introduction of Nashrut-Teeb: A greater readiness was felt (within me to compile this book on Seerah) due to the general Muslim public being distressed over external difficulties nowadays in the form of epidemics, earthquakes, inflation and other disturbing occurrences. Furthermore, the Ulama are distressed due to spiritual evils, such as the spread of bid’aat (innovations), ilhaad (hidden forms of disbelief) and open sinning and vice becoming common. At times of such calamities, the Ulama of the Ummah have always sought recourse through the recitation or compilation of Ahaadith, compilation of poetry in the praises of Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and in mention of his miracles, and increased salaah and salaam upon Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. This is the popular and widely accepted reason for the practice of Khatmul-Bukhaari, and was the reason behind the compilation of al-Hisnul Haseen and Qaseedah Burdah.

It dawned upon me that this book will contain the life-story and the Ahaadith of Nabi ﷺ at many places and salaah and salaam will be written in it. Readers and listeners to this kitab will consequently engage in it (in salaah - durud and salaam) in abundance. It would therefore not come as a surprise that Allaah تبارك وتعالى grants us salvation from these worries as a result. This is the reason why this useless slave gives preference to the abundant recital of Durud (salaah on Nabi ﷺ) over all other wazaah (daily recitals). I consider it to be comfortably more beneficial for our worldly objectives, as well as our objectives of the Hereafter.

He then wrote in the footnotes: As a matter of fact, from the time I had commenced writing this book until now, which is in Rabeeuth-Thaani 1329, through the grace of Allaah تبارك وتعالى, this town has been protected from every calamity, despite the fact that this book remained unpublished. Moreover, there was a severe and lengthy outbreak of an epidemic in all cities, towns and villages this year, starting in most places after Ramadhaan. Now, into its seventh month, it has not cleared up yet. But by the grace of Allaah تبارك وتعالى, here (in Thanabawan), there was no effect whatsoever. From the onset, I was certain that there would be no outbreak of the epidemic here. Now, after observation, I disclose that my notion of this book (on the life of Rasulullaah ﷺ) having such barakah proved to be correct... In a Hadith Qudsi, it is stated: I treat my servant according to what he expects from Me.

An amazing incident of cure after reciting Salawaat

Shaykh Saleh Al-Meghamsi, Imam of Masjid Quba, went through such a humbling, lesson-laden moment that leaves us with much to reflect on. He relates his story saying: I was in the intensive care unit, just beginning to regain consciousness after undergoing a 24

hour open-heart surgery, when the nurse in charge of me noticed a change in the blood. He informed a doctor, who informed another. A third doctor was then called, until 14 people, among them doctors and professionals, had gathered to discuss what they should do regarding my case. They were reading the signals from the devices over my head, and although I had no idea what the situation was, I could read fear in their faces. It seemed that the signals were not pleasant.

They called Dr. Adam, a successful Sudanese doctor, to come and see. He studied the monitor and concluded that there was congealed blood on the heart and that it had to be removed. The news came down on me like a thunderbolt. The doctor sought my permission, and although fear began to overwhelm me, Allah guided me to utter the shahadah, followed by my head nodding in agreement. I was disconnected from the devices around me, and the doctor left to prepare for the operation. At that same moment, there stood to my left a Lebanese nurse who seemed to feel sorry for me due to the situation I was in. Allah guided her to gently remind me:

‘Listen! Salli ‘ala al-Naby (send blessings on Nabi ﷺ), and your Lord will relieve it”

Instantly, like anyone would respond, I said: ‘Allahumma sallee ‘ala Muhammad wa ‘ala Aali Muhammad.”

Just like that, I said it. I said it and all the blood came down. The signals indicated by the machines differed, and they were unsure as to what had occurred. They called the doctor back. He arrived, looked at the screen and said; ‘Shaykh Saleh, what we wanted to do and rid you of, Allaah rid you of it from above the 7 heavens.’
(Stories of the Salaf)

3.) TASBEEH

Imam Shafiee has stated that the best action in an epidemic is tasbeeh, since zikr removes punishment.

Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى states regarding Yunus عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, "Had he not been amongst those who engaged in tasbeeh, he would have stayed in its stomach till the Day of Resurrection."

Ka'b sad, "Subhaanallah prevents punishment."

Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ commanded that man be lashed. He said, "Subhaanallaah!" Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ immediately forgave him. (Maa Rawaahul Waa'oon fi Akhbaarit Taa'oon of Allaamah Suyooti)

4.) SADAQAH

Zakaat must be discharged, even of past years if they were not given. Besides this, nafl sadaqah should be given in abundance.

a.) Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "Protect your wealth by giving zakaat, cure your sick through charity, and face calamities with duaa and humbleness." (Tabaraani in Awsat no. 1963, Kabeer no. 10196 vol. 10 page 128, Maraaseel of Abu Dawood no. 105)

b.) Ibn Abbaas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ states, "A beggar came begging to a woman. At that moment the woman only had a morsel of food which was already in her mouth. She took that morsel out of her mouth and gave it to the beggar. After some time, a child was born to this woman. When the child grew a little older, a wolf came and snatched the child away. The woman came out of her house running behind the wolf and at the same time shouting for help. Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى sent an angel and ordered him to free the child from the wolf's mouth. Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى added, "Also convey My salaams to that woman and inform her that I did this in return for the morsel of food

which she had given to that beggar." (Ibn Sasraa in his Amaali as quoted in Kanzul-Ummaal no. 16031, Al-Mujaalasatu wa Jawaahirul-Ilm of Deenawari vol. 8 page 263 no. 3529) Moulana Ashraf Ali Thaanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ writes, "This is the blessings of charity that the child's life was saved and the woman was also rewarded. We should give charity abundantly so that we may live in this world and in the hereafter in peace and comfort.

c.) Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "Verily charity extinguishes the anger of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and removes an evil death." (Tirmidhi no. 664)

d.) Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "Hasten with charity, because calamities do not surpass it." (Shuabul-Imaan no. 3082, Al-Mu'jamul-Awsat no. 5643) Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "Charitable deeds save one from calamities, discreet and undisclosed charity cools the anger of Allaah, and having good relations with one's relatives and family members increases one's lifespan." (Al-Mu'jamul-Kabeer vol. 8, page 261 no. 8014) Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "Charity removes seventy doors of evil." (Al-Mu'jamul-Kabeer vol. 4, page 274 no. 4402)

e.) Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "Whoever makes it easy for a person in difficulty (by assisting financially, overlooking a debt, etc.), Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى will grant ease to him in the world and the hereafter." (Bukhari no.2442, Muslim no. 2580)

A few recent incidents showing the benefit of Sadaqah

a.) There was a man in Egypt. A doctor told him, "Brother, all your veins, blood veins reaching to your heart is closing up." He said, "Can you do a surgery?" The doctor replied, "The surgery is so much difficult and so much dangerous. The best way is you go to Europe

to make a surgery for your heart." When he went to Germany, the German doctor told him that all his veins are almost closed. "This is the very dangerous operation that we have to do to you. And your chance to live is 50/50." The man felt like this might be the last few days of his life. He talked to the doctor, "Can I have two days to go back to my family and give them farewell because I may die in Germany, and let me go to my friends and ask them to forgive me too. So the doctor told him, "Go but dont be late because your heart veins are closing." So the man went to Egypt and he went to see his family and friends. As he was walking, he saw a woman near a butcher shop, collecting the little bones that fall down from the butcher. That were the rubbish of the bones. He said, "Woman, what are you doing?" She replied, "Im collecting this, for my daughters". He asked "Why?" She answered, "We dont have money and my daughters did not eat meat since two years. This is the only meat that they can eat." So the man talked to the butcher, "This woman will come to you every week and you shall give her what is enough for her and her daughters. And I will pay you the money for one year so that you can be guaranteed to give her for 1 year." Then, the woman started making dua' for him, "O Allaah give him health, O Allaah give him what he please for, give him all his wishes come true." All these duaas came from the deep recesses of her heart. The man after that went to his house and his daughter told him, "My father, your face has changed, your face is open, your face is much changed." He said, "Alhamdulillah, may Allaah make the operation easy in Germany." He travelled back to Germany for the doctor to do a final check up before the operation. The doctor asked him, "Which hospital did you go to?" He said, "I did not go to any hospital." The doctor said, "No, you have taken a strong medicine that opened up all your heart veins! Your heart veins has so much opened, you dont need an operation." The man told the doctor, "I

know who's the curer is. He is Allaah ﷻ. He cured me because I look for another poor person and I helped them.”

b.) This story was told by a Muslim living in a town near Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

A religious lady in his town was a confirmed blood cancer patient and following her treatment in a hospital there. For her attendance and daily services she hired an Indonesian maid. Within a week of after her arrival the lady noticed that she frequently visits wash room and takes unusually long time there. The lady enquired from the maid about her abnormal behavior to stay in the toilet for long periods. The maid started crying and told that she had given birth to a baby boy only twenty days before and she needed to extract the extra natural feed to avoid pain etc. etc. and that her family needed the money badly, so she left the child and came to Saudi Arabia as soon as she was offered this job. The Saudi lady was shocked to hear the sad story. She immediately made a splendid decision; she arranged for her (maid) a re-entry visa and paid full compensation for that period with a return ticket to Indonesia. Not only that, but also she paid (the maid) full benefits for the two whole contracted years. Also she gave her own contacts to the maid, in case she would like to come back again. The maid left making dua for the noble lady. Few days after the maid had departed the lady went to the hospital for a routine check of her treatment. There was miraculous surprise for the lady when the doctor saw her test results this time. The doctor was amazingly shocked to find her recovered from the deadly disease. He recommended the tests to be repeated in several ways but the result showed no traces of the cancerous germs at all. Finally, he recommended an MRI report BUT only to find "0 % cancer germs". Then only was he convinced of her complete recovery. The doctor then asked the lady of what treatment she had

undergone otherwise. The noble lady quoted the hadith of Rasulullaah ﷺ, “Cure your illnesses through sadaqah.”

c.) His name was Doctor Isa Marzooqi. He was a Syrian working in a hospital of Damascus. Suddenly he was admitted to the hospital due to some physical problems. During treatment the doctors came to know that Doctor Isa was suffering from a fatal disease, cancer. His friends started the treatment and a team of senior doctors gave special attention to his case. His medical reports were before him and the disease was progressing. According to the opinion of the board, he was a guest of a few weeks. Doctor Isa was a young man, was not married yet but he was engaged. People told his fiancée to break the engagement with Doctor Isa but the girl strictly refused to do so. Doctor Isa had read the hadith of Rasoolullah ﷺ, “Cure your patients through sadaqah.” One day as he was sitting, hopeless and depressed, this hadith came to his mind. He thought and thought about the words of the Hadith then suddenly shook his head and spoke out, “The hadith is correct, no doubt. I must now cure my disease through sadaqah (charity) because I have tried every other means.” He knew about a family, their head was no more in this world and they were living from hand to mouth. During the treatment of disease, most of his wealth had been spent but a small amount was still remaining with him so he sent that amount to that family through a friend. He also informed the family members about his disease and requested them to pray for him.

The day came when he was presented before the Board of Doctors. They were amazed by his reports which were showing his perfect physical condition. He told the doctors that he had cured his disease through the guidance of Rasoolullah ﷺ and now he had recovered completely. “No doubt I have perfect belief in Taqdeer (predestined) but it doesn’t mean that we should avoid adopting

other means. We should consult doctors, yes, but we should also try to seek the treatment advised by Rasoolullaah ﷺ. No doubt there is a creator (Allaah) who can surely cure patients without medicines. He is the only one in whose hands lies all health and well-being. (Translated from the book “Sunehre Awraaq” by Abdul Malik Mujahid)

5.) Duaa – Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى states, “Your Sustainer says, ‘Call to Me so that I may respond to your call.” (Surah Ghaafir verse 60) “When My servants ask you concerning Me, I am near. I accept the supplication of the supplicant when he supplicates to Me.” (Surah Baqarah verse 186) “Who is it that responds to the distressed when he calls Him, and removes hardship?” (Surah Naml verse 62)

Rasulullaah ﷺ narrates from Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى that He said, “O My servants! I have made oppression prohibited upon Myself and made it prohibited among yourselves as well. You should therefore not wrong each other. O My servants! All of you are astray except the one whom I guide. Therefore ask Me for guidance and I will guide you. O My servants! All of you are hungry except the one whom I feed. Therefore ask Me to feed you and I will feed you. O My servants! All of you are naked except the one whom I clothe. Therefore ask Me to clothe you and I will clothe you. O My servants! You commit sins by day and night, and I forgive all sins. Therefore seek forgiveness from Me and I will forgive you. O My servants! If you wish to harm Me, you will never be able to harm Me. And if you wish to benefit Me, you will never be able to benefit Me. O My servants! If all your past and future generations, and all the humans and jinn were to reach the level of the most righteous among you, that will not increase My sovereignty in any way. O My servants! If all your past and future generations, and all the humans and jinn were to reach the level of the most wicked among you, that will not

decrease My sovereignty in any way. O My servants! If all your past and future generations, and all the humans and jinn were to all stand on a single field, and they were to ask Me [whatever they desired] and I gave to every person whatever he asked for, that will not decrease My treasures in any way except as when a needle is dipped in the ocean. O My servants! It is your deeds which I store for you, and I will then give you your compensation in full. Therefore, whoever does good, should thank Allaah. And whoever does evil, he should blame none but himself [because evils are committed by the demands of his self].” (Muslim no. 2577)

A person wrote, “I have a righteous, devout friend whose wife was stricken with cancer. They had three children. He fell into despair and his world turned dark. One of the ulama advised him to perform tahajjud and make du’aa in the last part of the night, as well as making istighfaar (seeking forgiveness) and reciting Qur’aan over Zamzam water for his wife. He continued to do these things, and his wife started to wash with that Zamzam water over which the Qur’an had been recited. He used to sit with her from Fajr until sunrise, then from Maghrib (sunset) until Isha (evening), asking Allah for forgiveness and supplicating to Him. Then Allaah took away her sickness and healed her, and made her hair and skin more beautiful than they had been before, and then she became regular with istighfaar and tahajjud.

5) SUNNAH DUAS AND SURAHs TO BE RECITED FOR PROTECTION

a.) Surah Falaq and Naas

1.) Thrice morning and evening: Rasulullaah ﷺ said to Abdullaah ibn Khubayb رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, “Recite Surah Ikhlaas, Surah Falaq and Surah Naas in the morning and evening three times each and

they will protect/ suffice you from everything.” (Abu Dawood no. 5056) Included in this is protection from sicknesses.

2.) When awakening and sleeping: Rasulullaah ﷺ said to Uqbah ibn Aamir رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, “O Uqbah, read these two surahs whenever you wake up and whenever you sleep.” (Nasai no. 5437)

3.) After salaah: Uqbah ibn Amir رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ says, “Rasulullaah ﷺ commanded me to recite these two surahs after every salaah.” (Abu Dawood no. 1523, Nasai no. 1336)

4.) In sickness: When Rasulullaah ﷺ was suffering from pain, he would recite these two surahs and blow over himself. When the sickness increased, Aaishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا used to recite these two surahs, and pass his ﷺ hands over him, hoping for his blessings. (Muatta Maalik)

5.) At night: Aaishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا narrates that when Rasulullaah ﷺ used to retire to bed every night, he would gather his hands and blow in it after reading Surah Ikhlāas, Surah Falaq and Surah Naas. Then he would wipe them over his body as far as he could reach, beginning with his face and head and the front of his body. He ﷺ would do it thrice.” (Nasai, Abu Dawood, Tirmidhi)

b.) Rasulullaah ﷺ said, “When any servant says the following words three times every morning and evening, nothing will harm him.” [The words are]:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الَّذِي لَا يَضُرُّ مَعَ اسْمِهِ شَيْءٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

In the name of Allaah, in the protection of whose name nothing in the heavens and in the earth can cause any harm. And Allaah alone

is The All-Hearing, All-Knowing. (Tirmidhi no. 3388, Ibn Majah no, 3869)

Some portion of one of the limbs of the narrator of this hadith, Abaan ibn Affaan had become paralyzed. A man looked at him in astonishment when he narrated this hadith. This objection came in his heart that how is it that the narrator of this hadith himself is afflicted with paralysis. Abaan said to him, "The hadith is as I have mentioned to you. However I was once extremely upset regarding a certain matter. Due to my anger, I had forgotten to recite it on that day. I was then afflicted with this sickness."

Allaamah Qurtubi رَحِمَهُ اللهُ states, "I used to always recite this duaa. Once I forgot. On that day, a scorpion bit me."

Allaamah Damiri رَحِمَهُ اللهُ, the author of Hayaatul-Hayawaan states, "Once I was sitting with my tutor, Alamah Fakhrud Deen Uthmaan ibn Muhammad Toosi رَحِمَهُ اللهُ. A scorpion came forward. My respected tutor lifted it up with his hands. It did not cause him any harm. On seeing this amazing scene, I asked him the reason, to which he replied, "Whoever recites this duaa, then nothing can cause harm to him." (al-Futuhaat Rabbaaniyah)

c.) Abbaas رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ narrates, "I said, 'O Messenger of Allaah! Teach me something which I could ask from Allaah.' He replied, 'Ask Allaah for aafiyat (well-being).' After a few days I went back to him and said, 'O Messenger of Allaah! Teach me something which I could ask from Allaah.' He replied, 'O 'Abbaas! O uncle of the Messenger of Allaah! Ask Allaah for aafiyat (well-being) in this world and in the Hereafter.'" (Tirmidhi no. 3514)

This dua can be recited at any time, and especially between adhaan and iqamah.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الْعَافِيَةَ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ

O Allah, I ask You for safety and well-being in this world and the hereafter. (Tirmidhi)

d.) Sayyiduna Abu Bakrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ would recite this du'a thrice every morning and evening as he heard Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ reciting it:

اللَّهُمَّ عَافِنِي فِي بَدَنِي، اللَّهُمَّ عَافِنِي فِي سَمْعِي، اللَّهُمَّ عَافِنِي فِي بَصَرِي، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ

O Allaah! Make my body healthy, make my hearing healthy, make my eyesight healthy. There is no Deity but You. (Abu Dawood no. 5049)

e.) Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ would make the following du'aa:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْبَرَصِ وَالْجُنُونِ وَالْجُدَامِ وَمِنْ سَيِّئِ الْأَسْقَامِ

O Allaah! I seek refuge in You from leprosy, madness and evil diseases. (Abu Dawood no. 1549)

f.) Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "Laahawla wa laa quwwata illa billaah" is a cure for 99 (worldly and relating to the hereafter) sicknesses, the smallest of which is severe worry (of this world and the hereafter)." (Mustadrak no. 1990, Tabaraani in Awsat no. 5028)

6.) SALAAH

Whenever any matter worried Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, he hastened to salaah. (Abu Dawood no. 1319)

Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "The person who offers the Fajr salaah is under the protection of Allaah." (Muslim no. 657)

Rasulullaah ﷺ said, “Hold firm onto the salaah of the night, for verily it is the way of the pious before you, a means of gaining closeness to Your Rabb, an expiation of sins, a barrier from sins, and it removes sickness from the body.” (Tabrani in Kabeer no. 6154)

7.) ABSTINENCE FROM SIN

This is most important. Nu'man ibn Basheer رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said,

إن الهلكة كل الهلكة أن تعمل عمل السوء في زمان البلاء

Complete destruction is that you do evil in times of calamity.

CHAPTER FIVE: LOVE FOR SICKNESS

A Muslim always makes duaa for well-being. However, if he is afflicted by illness, he does not become despondent but understands that there are great benefits for him in these illnesses and that this sickness is in actual fact a bounty of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى.

Jaabir رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrated that Rasulullaah ﷺ visited Umm As-Saaib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا and asked, "What happened to you? Why are you shivering?" She complained, "I have fever. May Allaah not bless it!" He ﷺ said, "Do not curse fever, for it removes the sins of the sons (offspring) of Aadam in the same way as bellows removes the dross of iron." (Muslim no. 2575) In the narration of Al-Adabul Mufrad no. 516, it is mentioned that she said, "الحمى أخزأها الله." (I have fever. May Allaah disgrace it!)

Sickness is a blessing for a believer because it obliterates his sins. By cursing or speaking ill of it, one does not appreciate this bounty and further expresses displeasure over Allaah's decision. One should rather accept it as Allaah's decree and understand it to be part of

fate. It does not mean that one should not seek a cure for it, because seeking a cure is Sunnah and encouraged in Islam.

What is the wisdom behind why fever removes sins in this manner? Ibnul-Jawzi رَحِمَهُ اللهُ explains: A person's heart and limbs experience enjoyment in sin. Fever is heat which originates from the heart and then penetrates into the limbs. Every part of the body which had taken enjoyment from sin undergoes aches and pain. Therefore, the fever cleanses him from his sins (of every limb). (Kashful-Mushkil vol. 3 page 105)

According to one mural narration, Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ is reported to have said, "تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى" wipes away all the sins of a believer because of the fever of one night." (Shuabul-Imaan no. 9400) Ibnul Mubaarak رَحِمَهُ اللهُ commented after hearing this Hadith: This is a jayyid (amazing) Hadith." (ibid) Abu Darda رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ states: The fever of one night removes sins of one year. (Shuabul-Imaan no. 9403)

Abu Hurairah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ said, "There is no sickness as beloved to me as fever. It enters into every joint. Allaah then grants a specific amount of reward for every joint (undergoing pain)." (Bukhari in Al-Adabul Mufrad no. 503, Shuabul-Imaan no. 9407)

Ubayy ibn Ka'b asked, "O Rasulullaah? What is the reward when one is afflicted with fever?" Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ replied, "Rewards flow on the person who is afflicted with fever as long as his leg twitches or any vein of his throbs." Ubayy رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ made dua, "O Allaah! I ask you for fever which will not prevent me from emerging in Your path, going to Your House and the Masjid of Your Nabi." The narrator states, "Ubayy thereafter always had fever." (Al-

Ahaadeethul-Mukhtarah no. 1269, Tabaraani in Kabeer no. 540 and Awsat no. 445)

Why should dua be made for sound health, if it is a bounty?

One making dua for a sick person or the sick person making dua for himself for sound health does not mean that sickness is not a bounty. A person is actually seeking one bounty in place of another. (Ar-Rafeequl-Faseeh vol. 10 page 48, who also quoted Fathul-Baari v.10 pg.131 no.5352)

Haji Imdadullah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ, a great Aarif, once delivered a discourse in which he explained in detail that all difficulties are in actual fact favours and bounties from Allaah. No sooner did he make mention of this, than a person arrived whose hand was severely hurt and wounded. He said, "I am suffering greatly in this illness of mine. Make dua to Allaah to cure me from his illness." His student, Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ commented: We wondered how he would react. He had just explained that these difficulties are a great ni'mah. Now let us see how he makes dua for this person for the removal of his difficulty. By making dua to remove the difficulty, he will in actual fact be making dua for the removal of a bounty. By those who are bestowed with the recognition of Allaah are not intimidated by any situation. Allaah opens up realities in front of them. He immediately responded, "All our friends should make dua." He then made dua in a raised voice, "O Allaah! Although we know that this difficulty is certainly also a bounty, yet we cannot endure this bounty due to our weakness. So we beg you to replace this bounty with the bounty of aafiyah (good health and ease)." Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ then explained: When we heard him making dua in this manner, your eyes opened. SunhaanAllaah. How wonderfully he reconciled between these two seemingly conflicting ideas; he kept up its status as a bounty, yet he

also made dua for its removal... A physical example of this which we observe is that roasted meat is a bounty, but a weak stomach is unable to endure it. Such a weak stomach is fed with sago (and porridge). (Ma'ariful-Akaabir no.117) A person should always desire good health and well-being. However, when he is tested, he should realise it is from Allaah and there is definitely benefit for him therein.

VIRTUE OF PASSING AWAY AFTER SUFFERING FROM AN ILLNESS

Yahya ibn Sa'eed رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrated that a man passed away (suddenly) during the era of Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Another man remarked, "Congratulations to him! He passed away without being tested by any illness." Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "Woe to you! You know not! Had Allaah tried him with an illness, it would have atoned for his sins." (Muatta of Maalik no. 1979)

A person who passes away after suffering from an illness is better than one who passes away suddenly in this aspect that an ill person has the opportunity to turn to Allaah and to repent, and Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى especially forgives sins during those times. The person who passes away suddenly is not blessed with those bounties. Therefore, he is not worthy of any special praise. (Ar-Rafeequl-Faseeh vol. 10 page 124)

VIRTUE OF PRAISING ALLAAH DURING SICKNESS

Shaddaad ibn Aws رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and as-Sunaabihy رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ are reported to have visited a sick man. They asked him, "How are you this morning?" He said, "I am passing the morning with a great bounty (of patience and submission to Divine decree)." So Shaddaad said to him, "I give you glad tidings that your sins are removed and your shortcomings erased, for I had heard Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ say,

‘Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى says, ‘When I try one of my slaves who is a believer (with illness or anxiety) and he praises Me for the trial with which I try him, then he will get up from his bed without sins as he was on the day his mother had given birth to him.” Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى says (to the angels), “I restricted My slave (by this sickness) and I have tried My slave (to see whether he is grateful or not). So continue to record for him (in his record of deeds) what you had been recording for him (i.e. his righteous deeds) when he was healthy. (Musnad Ahmad no. 17118)

SPECIAL VIRTUES FOR PASSING AWAY IN A PLAGUE/EPIDEMIC

Aaishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا narrated, “I asked Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ about plague.” He informed me that it is a punishment that Allaah sends upon whomsoever he wills. But, surely, Allah has made it a mercy for the believers. Whoever remains in his town when plague strikes it, patiently, seeking reward from Allaah and knowing that only what Allaah has decreed for him shall happen to him will earn a reward similar to that of a martyr.” (Bukhari no. 3474)

Mulla Ali Qari رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ writes, “If a plague breaks out, then the ruling of the Shariah is that people should not flee from there, due to fear of death. If a person remains there to attain reward (and not to protect his wealth and assets) and despite possessing the ability to leave does not do so, placing his trust in Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and being happy with divine decree, then the plague is a source of mercy for such a person, and he will earn by Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى the reward equal to that of a martyr.” (Mirqaat vol. 4 page 27)

Therefore, even if one does not pass away due to the plague, he will still gain the reward of a martyr.

Jaabir رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrated that Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, “He who flees from plague (when it strikes the land where he resides) is like one who flees from battle and one who shows patience during plague will earn the reward of a martyr.” (Ahmad no. 14478)

Teebi said that the comparison is for the major sin that the one who flees from battle and the one who flees from plague earn. (Teebi vol. 3 page 322) If anyone runs away from plague with the conviction that he would remain safe if he flees otherwise he would die, then it is disbelief. One who faces plague patiently will earn a martyr's reward even if he does not die of it. (Mazaahir Haq vol. 2 page 65)

If any person passes away in the plague, the reward is even greater. Anas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrated that Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, “(Passing away in a) Plague is martyrdom for every Muslim.” (Bukhari no. 5732)

Al-Irbaad ibn Saariyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrated that Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, “The martyrs and those who had passed away on their beds will argue before our Sustainer regarding those who had passed away in a plague. The martyrs will plead, “(They are) our brothers. They were killed as we were killed.” But those who passed away (on their beds) will plead, “(They are) our brothers. They passed away on their beds just as we had passed away.” So our Sustainer will say (to the angels), “Look at their wounds. If their wounds resembled the wounds of those who were slain, they are amongst them and will be with them. Behold, their wounds will resemble their (martyrs) wounds.” (Nasai no. 3164, Musnad Ahmad no. 17159)

Just as the martyrs were wounded by the disbelievers and passed away, these people were injured by the jinns and passed away. The ulama state that the word for plague is ‘Taa’oon’ derived from ‘ta’n’ which mean ‘to strike spears.’ Those who die of plague feel as if they are being struck by spears. The hadith classifies death of plague as

martyrdom. On the day of resurrection, these people will be with the martyrs. (Mazaahir-Haq vol. 2 page 64)

N.B. As we had explained in the beginning of the book, through the quotation of Shah Abdul-Haq Dehlawi (rahimahullah), taa'oon is a specific type of illness. But the rulings which have been given regarding it generally apply to all other types of plagues and epidemics as well. Similarly, some of the virtues and rewards which have been promised to the one afflicted by taa'oon may also apply to one who is afflicted by any epidemic, on a secondary level.

ONE SHOULD NOT FLEE FROM THERE

Usaamah ibn Zayd رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrated that Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "Plague is a punishment that has been sent down upon some of the Bani Israaeel or upon those who had existed before you (the sub-narrator was unsure which words were spoken). So, when you learn about it (having spread) in a land, do not go to it. And when it afflicts the land where you are, do not emerge fleeing from it." (Muslim no. 2218)

The Bani Israaeel referred to here were those whom Allaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ had commanded to enter a certain city in prostration. However, they were disobedient and obstinate, so Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى sent down on them a punishment in the form of a plague from the heavens. (Surah Baqarah verses 58, 59) As a result, twenty-four thousand of their old people died instantly. (Teebi vol. 3 page 302)

A fundamental belief in Islam is that going to a certain place is not a cause of death, and by absconding from a certain place, one cannot save himself from death.

Why should one not enter such a place? This is based on certain wisdoms:

1.) Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has commanded us to take precautions from anything harmful. Wherever there is a fear of danger, then one should abstain from going to such places. Not entering such plague-stricken areas is one form of precaution.

2.) Since the plague is a form of punishment, one should not enter such a place. When Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ reached Hijr (the area where the nation of Thamud were destroyed), he prohibited his companions from entering the house of those who were punished. So it is only appropriate for him to prevent his followers from entering a plague-stricken area, which has been afflicted with a form of punishment. (Al-Muyassir vol. 2 page 375, At-Ta'leequs-Sabeeh vol. 2 page 199)

3) One should not act brave and daring, as if he can bear sickness. That is an indication of pride, and one may then be tested accordingly, and deprived of Allah's help in such a test.

The second instruction given in the hadeeth is not to emerge from such an area if one is present there. The reasons for this are:

1.) A Muslim shows that he is pleased with the decision of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and has handed over his matters to Him (tasleem) in those matters in which one has no choice.

2.) If all the strong and healthy people leave, then only the weak and ill will remain. Due to fear and loneliness, their condition will deteriorate even further. There will be none to care for them and none to bury the deceased. (At-Ta'leequs-Sabeeh vol. 2 page 199)

We also learn from the above that we should be sensitive to the feelings of those who are afflicted. It is the duty of those who are close to them to care for them in their illness, and to see to their wellbeing. It does not befit a Muslim to discriminate against them, and say or do such things by which their feelings are hurt, or by which they are made to feel distressed and despondent.

3) If a person leaves and is not affected by the plague, he will say, “If I had stayed, I would have been afflicted.” If a person stays while others are fleeing and is later afflicted, he will say, “Had I left, I would have been saved.” Both of these people would then be guilty of ‘if’ which we have been prohibited from. Making such statements opposes the fundamental belief in Islam that Allah is the One who gives death on its affixed time, and He is not bound by worldly causes. Going to a certain place is not a cause of death, and by absconding from a certain place, one cannot save himself from death. Nabi ﷺ stated that ‘if’ opens the door to the workings of Shaytan. (Muslim) (Expanded from Lama’aatut-Tanqeeh 5/28)

Incident of Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ - Abdullah ibn Abbaas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ says that Umar ibn Khattaab set out for Syria. When he got as far as ‘Sargh’, the commanders of the army, Abu Ubaydah ibn Jarrah and his companions met Umar and told him that a plague had broken out in Syria.

Abdullah ibn Abbaas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, ‘Umar said to me, ‘Call the early Muhajirun for me,’ I called them, sought their consultation and informed them that a plague had broken out in Syria.

They disagreed. Some of them said, ‘You have set out on a matter and we do not think that you should retreat from it.’ Others said, ‘You have the rest of the people as well as the Companions of Rasulullaah ﷺ, and we do not think that you should expose them to this plague.’

‘Umar then said, ‘Go away.’

Then he said, ‘Call the Ansaar for me,’ and I called them and he consulted them. They behaved as the Muhajireen had done and disagreed as they had disagreed.

He said, ‘Go away.’

Then he said, 'Call those who are here of the elders of Quraysh who emigrated the year of the Conquest of Makkah.' So I called them, and none among them disagreed about it. They said, 'We think that you should return with the people and not expose them to this plague.'

So Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ made an announcement among the people, 'I am returning in the morning, so return as well.'

Abu 'Ubaydah ibn Jarrah said, 'Are you fleeing from the decree of Allah?' 'Umar said, 'If only someone other than you had said that, Abu 'Ubaydah!'

Yes, 'we are fleeing from the decree of Allah to the decree of Allah'. Do you think that if you had camels and they went down into a valley which had two sides, one of which was fertile and the other barren, is it not that if you grazed them on the fertile side, then that grazing would be by the decree of Allah, and if you grazed them on the barren side, then that grazing would also be by the decree of Allah?'

Abdur Rahman ibn Awf رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ -who had been absent on some errand- then came and said, 'I have some knowledge regarding this issue. I heard Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ say, "When you hear that [a plague] is in a land, do not go to it and if it occurs in a land that you are already in, then do not leave it, fleeing from it."

Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ praised Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى [due to him making the correct decision] and then left." (Bukhari no. 5729, Muslim no. 2219, Muatta Malik no. 1587, Abu Dawood no. 3103)

Explanation of 'we are fleeing from the decree of Allaah to the decree of Allaah'

Hafiz ibn Hajar رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ makes mention of another version of this narration which has the following words. This version clarifies the meaning as well. "If we proceed, it will only be through the decree

of Allaah, and if we return, this will also be through the decree of Allaah.” Allah Ta’ala has commanded us to be cautious and to abstain from things that will lead to our destruction. Since we are prohibited from putting ourselves in danger, we are fulfilling the decree of Allah by not proceeding. This was already predestined for us.

(Al Minhaj of Imam Nawawi hadeeth no. 5745 and Fathul Bari hadeeth no. 5729)

Abul Hasan Madaa’ini رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ quotes his father as saying, ‘Few people who flee from a plague are saved from it.’ Allaama Taajud Deen Subki رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ remarks, ‘What he says is based on experience. It is not at all impossible to believe that Allaah could make a person’s flight from a place of plague the cause for reducing his lifespan because the Qur’aan cites flight from a battlefield as a cause for this, when Allaah says, ‘Say, ‘Your fleeing will be of no avail to you when you flee from death or from being killed for then you will benefit from life only but a little longer.’ It is mentioned that his father may have deduced this from this verse.”

Mujaddid Alf Thaani رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ has mentioned the same thing in his Maktoobaat. Refer to Vol.1 Pg.430 for the details. One must therefore trust in Allaah and remain where one is because fleeing will not help. One must repent from one’s sins and make du’aa to Allaah because only He can help one.

CHAPTER SIX: LOVE FOR DEATH

A true Mu’min in whose heart is embedded Imaan should not fear for death. Panic is never in the lifestyle of the Mu’min. Since true Believers are aware of the Divine Scheme, there is no need for them

to panic. Increase Istighfaar and Thikrullaah and welcome death with an open heart.

The students of Aabis Ghifaari رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ were with him on his rooftop. A group of people passed by, carrying their goods away (as they were leaving the settlement). He asked, "What are they doing?" They said, "They are fleeing from the plague." He said, "O plague, take me! O plague, take me! O plague, take me!" His nephew who was a Sahaabi said, "Are you wishing for death? I heard Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ say, 'None of you should wish for death, because that is the end of the actions of a believer, and he can never return to repent.'" Aabis رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ replied, "My nephew! I wish to leave the world before such occurrences which I heard Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ informing us will occur in the end of times, such occurrences which he feared for his Ummah; the rule of foolish people, an abundance of police, murder being taken lightly, family-ties being broken, and a new group trend of some people who will take the Qur'aan to be just a tune (a sweet voice) – they will send ahead (as Imaam or seat before their gathering in a position of honour) such a man who is not a Faqeeh (one who has sound understanding) in Deen, nor is he the most knowledgeable amongst them, whereas such a Faqeeh or knowledgeable man will be amongst them. They will send him forward to sing (the Qur'aan) for them. (Ahmad, Tabaraani in al-Kabeer no.13999, Maj'mauz-Zawaaid no.3876)

When an epidemic broke out, and many people began to panic and fell into distress, despair and despondency, Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ began mentioning in his lectures the joys, favours and comforts of the Hereafter and the importance of creating a strong desire for the Hereafter. Since these favours can only be received after crossing the bridge of death, death is a great blessing and

favour. The virtues of difficulties, promise of rewards, nearness to Allah, the joys of the grave, the day of Qiyaamah and Jannah were all recounted to them people. He writes, “Immediate results were witnessed. The public found a new sort of courage and confidence. Signs of happiness and contentment began to manifest. Distress and difficulties were converted into happiness. In some way, some people began to look forward to death.” When he noticed that discussing these subjects proved so beneficial to the people, he decided to compile it in the form of a book. It would provide solace and courage in times of epidemics, distress, difficulties, fears and at the loss of beloved ones. People lose patience at such times and their life becomes bitter. This book would serve to strengthen them. He named the book ‘Shawq-e-Watan (the desire for our original homeland i.e. Aakhirah and Jannah). This book is available in English by the title ‘Desire for the Aakhirah’, and was translated by Moulana Muhammad ibn Abdur-Rahmaan Ebrahim. Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ wrote, “Everywhere, people are in need of this prescription for strengthening their souls and hearts.”

A SUMMARY OF THE JOYS EXPERIENCED BY A BELIEVER AFTER DEATH

When death approached the friends of Allah, they were ready to happily leave this world because they had the following thoughts in their mind:

If I prepared for death and I have performed righteous actions, then at the time of death, angels whose faces are bright and shining like the sun will come to me with the shrouds and fragrances of Jannah. They will remove my soul with ease, place it in the shroud and fragrances of Jannah and take it to the heavens. I will be honoured in every sky until my name is recorded amongst the Illiyyîn (special

register of the souls of the pious). I will then be returned to the grave and I will be asked three questions. If I had conviction that Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى was my Sustainer and Master, if I had implemented Islam in every aspect of my life and if I followed the sunnah of Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, then I will easily answer these questions. My salaah will stand at my head-side, zakaat on my right, my fasting on my left, my good deeds, abstinence from sin and kindness to people at my feet-side, all protecting me from any form of punishment in the grave. Thereafter, bedding from Jannah will be spread out, I will be clothed with clothing from Jannah, and a door of Jannah will be opened for me. The grave will be expanded as far as I am able to see. My good deeds will come to me in the form of a handsome person who will accompany me in the grave. I will meet all my family members who had passed away. I will be able to visit Jannah in the stomach of a green bird when I wish to see my abode there. I will eat, drink and go wherever I wish to go. There will be no sorrow and grief there. I will be even asked to return to this world, but I will refuse when I will experience the bounties there. On the Day of Judgement, I will be under the shade of the Divine Throne, while others will be drowning in their perspiration. I will be granted water to drink from the Pond of Kauthar due to which I will never become thirsty again and Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ will intercede on my behalf if I followed his lifestyle. In Jannah, I will be granted such pleasures which no eye has ever seen, no ear has ever heard of and no heart has ever thought of. I will live there forever, young, healthy and in great comfort. I will never become ill, experience hardship or die. Day and night, I will live in enjoyment. The bricks of the houses in Jannah will be made of silver and gold, the bonding will be of pure musk, the stones will be of sapphire and pearls, and the sand will be of saffron. There will be flying conveyances in Jannah. The lowest ranking person in Jannah will have eighty thousand servants and

seventy two wives. There will be rivers of honey, rivers of water, rivers of milk and rivers of wine. The beautiful wide-eyed damsels of Jannah will sing such songs the like of which was never heard before. The greatest bounty will be to see Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى, which will surpass all other pleasures. May Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى make us of these people!

CHAPTER SEVEN: PRECAUTIONS TO BE TAKEN

Our deen has taught us many etiquettes of cleanliness, by which a person will be saved from many of these sicknesses. Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, “Purity is half of imaan.” (Muslim no. 223)

We should also practise on these guidelines:

1.) Follow the rules of istinja, wudhu and ghusl. By this, a Muslim remains clean majority of the time, compared to non-Muslims who are generally in a state of impurity.

2.) Washing hands before and after eating:

Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, “The blessings of food is to wash before and after eating.” (Tirmidhi no. 1846)

3.) Covering one’s face when sneezing:

Abu Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrates, “When Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ used to sneeze, he would place his hand or his garment over his face, and he would lower his voice.” (Abu Dawood no. 5029, Tirmidhi no. 2745)

4.) Cover all utensils at night:

Jabir ibn Abdillah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ says, I heard Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ saying, “Cover the utensils and tie the water skins, for there is a night in a year

when a disease descends and it does not pass an uncovered utensil or an untied water skin but that it enters it.” (Muslim no. 2014)

5.) Washing hands when awakening and cleansing the nose properly: Rasulullaah ﷺ said, “If anyone of you performs wudhu he should put water in his nose and then blow it out and whoever cleans his private parts with stones should do so with odd numbers. And whoever wakes up from his sleep should wash his hands before putting them in the water for wudhu, because nobody knows where his hands were during sleep.” (Bukhari no. 162)

6.) Don’t travel to and intermingle with those who are affected. Rasulullaah ﷺ said, “If you hear of an outbreak of plague in a land, do not enter it; but if the plague breaks out in a place while you are in it, do not leave that place.” (Bukhari no. 5728, Muslim no. 2219)

CHAPTER EIGHT:

THE SAHAABAH’S REACTION DURING THE PLAGUE OF AMWAAS

ABU UBAYDAH IBNUL JARRAH رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ:

Abu Moosa رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrates that as soon as Ameerul Mu'mineen (Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) heard about the plague that was affecting the people in Shaam, he wrote the following letter to Abu Ubaydah ibnul Jarraah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ: “I have some work with you which has cropped up and I cannot accomplish it without you. If this letter of mine reaches you at night, I emphatically command you not to let the morning arrive without you riding off to me (in Madinah). If this letter of mine reaches you in the morning, I emphatically command you not to let the evening arrive without you riding off to me.”

(After reading the letter) Abu Ubaydah رضي الله عنه remarked, "I know well what work has cropped up by Ameerul Mu'mineen. He wishes to preserve someone who cannot remain living (he wants me to escape the plague by returning to Madinah)." Abu Ubaydah رضي الله عنه then wrote back to Umar رضي الله عنه, saying, "I am part of a Muslim army. I am not prepared to leave them to save my own life. I am well aware of the work has cropped up by you. You wish to preserve someone who cannot remain living. When this letter of mine reaches you, do absolve me of your command and permit me to remain here."

When Umar رضي الله عنه read this letter, his eyes welled with tears and he began to weep. The people with him asked, "O Ameerul Mu'mineen! Has Abu Ubaydah passed away?" "No," replied Umar رضي الله عنه, "but it is as if he already has." Umar رضي الله عنه then wrote back to Abu Ubaydah رضي الله عنه saying, "Indeed the entire land of Jordan has been affected by the epidemic, whereas the region of Jaabiya is free from it. You should therefore take the Muhaajireen there." When Abu Ubaydah رضي الله عنه had read the letter, he said, "We shall certainly listen to and obey this command of the Ameerul Mu'mineen." Abu Moosa رضي الله عنه reports further, "Abu Ubaydah رضي الله عنه then ordered me to mount my animal. In the meantime, my wife also got affected by the plague. When I reported this to Abu Ubaydah رضي الله عنه, he personally proceeded, after which he was also afflicted and passed away. The plague then came to an end." Abul Muwajjih says, "It is believed that Abu Ubaydah رضي الله عنه was part of an army of thirty six thousand people. Every one of them save six thousand died." (Tareekh ibn Asaakir vol. 25 page 484) Another narration states that (when he read the letter from Umar رضي الله عنه) Abu Ubaydah رضي الله عنه said, "May Allaah forgive the Ameerul Mu'mineen. He wishes to

preserve the lives of people who cannot remain living (forever)."
Abu Ubaydah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ then wrote back to Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ saying, "Verily, I am with an army from amongst the armies of the Muslims, whom I am not prepared to leave to save my own life from that which had afflicted them." (al-Mustadrak of Haakim no. 5146)

Shahr bin Howshab reports from a man from his tribe called Raabah that when the plague started to spread, Abu Ubaydah ibnul Jarraah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ addressed the people saying, "O people! This plague is the mercy of your Rabb, the du'aa of your Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and the manner in which the lives of the pious ones before you were taken. Abu Ubaydah prays that Allaah grant him his full share of it." Abu Ubaydah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was then struck with the plague and passed away. (Al-Bidaayah Wan-Nihaayah vol. 7 page 91)

Urwa ibnuz Zubayr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ reports that Abu Ubaydah ibnul Jarraah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and his family were unaffected by the plague of Amwaas. He then prayed to Allaah saying, "O Allaah! Grant the family of Abu Ubaydah their share." When a sore erupted on his little finger, Abu Ubaydah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ started looking at (thinking that it a sign of the plague). The people insisted that it meant nothing (as it was just a small sore). He then said, "I wish that Allaah blesses it, because when he blesses something little, it becomes a lot." (Taareekh Dimishq vol. 25 page 485)

Haarith bin Abu Umayrah Haarithi narrates that Mu'aadh bin Jabal رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ sent him to ask Abu Ubaydah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ how he was when the plague struck him. Abu Ubaydah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ showed Haarith a sore that had erupted on his palm. It looked very serious to Haarith and gave him a fright. Abu Ubaydah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ then swore in the name of Allaah that he would not want to trade it even for red camels. (Ibid)

HIS ADVICE AFTER BEING AFFLICTED BY THE PLAGUE

Sa'eed ibn Abi Sa'eed Maqbari رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrates that Abu Ubaydah ibnul Jarraah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was struck by the plague in Jordan and this is where his grave is situated. When this happened, he called all the Muslims present there and said, "I wish to give you such advice that if you take heed to it, you will always remain in good stead. Establish salaah, pay zakaah, fast during Ramadhaan, give charity, perform Hajj, perform Umrah, encourage each other (to do good), wish well for your leaders and never betray them. Never allow the world to make you negligent, because even if a man is granted the life of a thousand years, he will have to encounter this juncture that you see me lying in. Allaah has ordained death for mankind and they therefore have to die. The most intelligent of them is he who is most obedient to his Rabb and carries out the most good deeds for the day he returns to Allaah. Was Salaam Alaykum wa Rahmatullaah. O Mu'aadh ibn Jabal! Lead the people in salaah." Thereafter, Abu Ubaydah bin Jarraah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ passed away.

Mu'aadh ibn Jabal رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ then addressed the people saying, "O people! Repent sincerely to Allaah for your sins, because when a servant meets Allaah after having repented for his sins, Allaah makes it compulsory for Himself to forgive all his sins. It is only his debts that are not forgiven because a person is held in custody for his debts. Whoever has severed ties with his brother should meet him and shake hands with him because it does not befit a Muslim to sever ties with his brother for more than three days. Whoever does sever ties for more than three days will be guilty of a major sin." (Taareekh Dimishq vol. 25 page 487)

2.) MU'AADH IBN JABAL رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ:

Abdur Rahmaan ibn Ghanam reports that when the plague struck Shaam, Amr ibn Al Aas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ announced, "This plague is a punishment, so flee from it to the valleys and ravines." When news of this statement reached Shurahbeel ibn Hasanah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, he became incensed and said, "Amr bin Al Aas is wrong! I was a companion of Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ at a time when Amr was more astray than the camel his family owns. This plague is the du'aa of your Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, the mercy of your Rabb (someone who dies in a plague is a martyr in the sight of Allaah) and the way in which many pious people lost their lives in the past." When this news reached Mu'aadh رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, he made duaa, "O Allaah! Grant the family of Mu'aadh their share in full." His two daughters then passed away in the plague and his son Abdur Rahmaan was also afflicted. Advising his son, Mu'aadh رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ recited the verse:

الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ فَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُمْتَرِينَ

The truth is from your Rabb so never be among those who doubt.

{Surah Baqarah, verse 147}

To this, his son replied with the following verse of the Qur'aan:

سَتَجِدُنِي إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مِنَ الصَّابِرِينَ

If Allaah wills, you will soon find me to be among the patient ones.

{Surah Saaffaat, verse 102}

The plague then struck Mu'aadh رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ himself (and it showed up first) on the back of his hand. "This," Mu'aadh رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, "is more beloved to me than red camels." When he saw a man weeping beside him, he asked, "What makes you weep?" The man replied, "I am crying over the knowledge I used to gain from you (which I shall no longer be gaining after your demise)." "Do not cry," Mu'aadh رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ consoled him, "because although Ibraheem عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام was in a

place where there was no knowledge to be learnt, Allaah gave him the knowledge. After I die, seek knowledge from four men (viz.) Abdullaah bin Mas'ood, Abdullaah bin Salaam, Salmaan and Abu Dardaa." (Ahmad no. 22136)

Another narration states that Mu'aadh رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, Abu Ubaydah ibnul Jarraah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, Shurahbeel ibn Hasanah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and Abu Maalik Ash'ari رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ were all struck by the plague on the same day. Mu'aadh رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, "This is the mercy of your Rabb, the du'aa of your Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and the manner in which the lives of the pious ones before you were taken. O Allaah! Grant the family of Mu'aadh their full share of this mercy."

The night was not yet over when his only son Abdur Rahmaan was struck by the plague. Abdur Rahmaan was the most beloved person to Mu'aadh رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and it was with his name that Mu'aadh رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ received his title (of Abu Abdur Rahmaan). Returning from the Masjid, Mu'aadh رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ found his son restless and asked, "O Abdur Rahmaan! How are you?" In reply, his son said, "Beloved father, "The truth is from your Rabb, so never be among those who doubt." Mu'aadh رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said to him, "If Allaah wills, you will soon find me to be among the patient ones." Abdur Rahmaan passed away that night and Mu'aadh رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ buried him the following morning.

According to a narration of Ahmad and Bazaar, 2 of his daughters also lost their lives in this plague.

Mu'aadh رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was also afflicted with the plague and when the pangs of death struck him, they struck more severely than they did any other person. Each time he regained consciousness from his coma, he opened his eyes and said, "O Rabb! You may strangle as

often as you please, because I swear by Your honour that You know how much my heart loves You.” (Hilyatul-Awliya vol. 1 page 240)

THE STATEMENT OF MU'AADH رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ CONCERNING THE PLAGUE OF AMWAAS

Abu Qilaabah narrates that when the plague struck Shaam, Amr bin Al Aas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, “This is a scourge that has come, so flee from it to the mountains and ravines.” When this statement reached Mu'aadh رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, far from confirming it, he said, “Not at all! It is martyrdom, a mercy and the du'aa of your Nabi.” Abu Qilaabah narrates further, “While I knew that it was a form of martyrdom and a mercy, I did not know how it was the du'aa of Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ until I was informed that while performing salaah one night, Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ thrice made du'aa saying, “Then let it be fever or a plague.” The following morning, one of his family members asked, 'O Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ! I overheard you making a du'aa last night.' 'You heard it?' Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ asked. 'I certainly did,' came the reply. Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ then explained, 'I asked my Rabb not to let my Ummah perish through drought and this du'aa was accepted. I then prayed to Allaah never to allow an enemy to overpower them and annihilate them (this was also granted). I also prayed to Him never to let my Ummah fragment into groups, waging wars against each other. This du'aa however was refused. It was then that I thrice said, 'Then let it be fever or a plague'.” (Musnad Ahmad no. 1697)

THE ACTION OF AMR BIN AL AAS رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ TO PREVENT FURTHER LOSS OF LIFE

After Mu'aadh رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ passed away, Amr ibn Al Aas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was appointed commander. When he stood up to address the people, he said, "O people! When this plague strikes, it spreads like wildfire, so seek shelter from it in the mountains." To this, Abu Waathilah Hudhali رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ remarked, "You are wrong! By Allaah! I was in the company of Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ when you were worse than this donkey of mine!" Amr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ's response was, "By Allaah! I shall not reply to what you are saying, but I swear by Allaah that we cannot manage to continue staying here." The narrator continues, "Amr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ then left, the people scattered and Allaah removed the plague from them. When the opinion of Amr ibn Al Aas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ reached (Ameerul Mu'mineen) Umar ibnul Khattaab رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, I swear by Allaah that he did not condemn it." (Musnad Ahmad no. 1697)

CHAPTER NINE: CONTAGIOUSNESS IN ISLAM

Question – 1. Can you advise me in regard to the Islamic belief of sicknesses, diseases, epidemics etc., whether they are contagious or not.

2. Please provide a detailed explanation of the following two Ahaadith narrated in regard to sicknesses, *-لا عدوى ولا طيرة (there are no contagious sicknesses nor any bad omens)* and *فر من المجذوم كما تفر من الاسد (flee from a leper as you will flee from a lion)*. Apparently, the meanings of both these Ahaadith seem to contradict each other. What is the correct understanding and reconciliation of both these Ahaadith?

3. At the time of an epidemic, what is the Islamic teaching in dealing with people who are afflicted?

A: In regard to sicknesses and diseases being contagious, there are two views reported from the Muhadditheen and Ulama of the past: The first view is the view of Allamah Ibn Khuzaimah رَحْمَةُ اللهِ, Allamah Ibn Hajar رَحْمَةُ اللهِ, Allamah Tabari رَحْمَةُ اللهِ and others. According to these ulama, there are no sicknesses that are contagious in Islam. All sicknesses come directly from Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. Just as the first person was afflicted with the sickness directly from the side of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى, similarly the second person was also afflicted with the same sickness directly from Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. These Ulama substantiate this from the generality of the Hadith طيرة ولا عدوى - *(there are no contagious sicknesses nor any bad omens)*.

As for the Hadith that states -فر من المجذوم كما تفر من الاسد- *(flee from a leper as you will flee from a lion)*, this was explained in order to safeguard the belief of people from becoming corrupt. As it is known that if a person associates with a sick person and is afflicted with the same sickness, he will attribute the sickness to his association with the sick person and not to Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. Hence, Nabi صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ commanded us not to associate with a sick person so that our belief is not corrupted.

The second view is the view of Allamah Bayhaqi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ, Allamah ibn Salah رَحْمَةُ اللهِ and others. They hold the view that though all sicknesses come directly from Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى, Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has created certain causes for these sicknesses to come about. Hence, associating with a sick person at times may become a cause for one being afflicted with the same sickness, and at times may not be the cause for one getting sick. The belief of a mu'min is that Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى is the controller of everything but Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has created means and causes for things to come about. These means and causes at times prove effective to bring about the outcome, and at times do not prove effective when Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى does not decree it.

Therefore, it is witnessed that at times people associate with a sick person (e.g. one who has chickenpox, measles, flu, etc.) and they are afflicted with the same sickness, while other people also associate with the same person, but are not afflicted. Hence, through the hadith, *افر من المجذوم كما تفر من الاسد* (flee from a leper as you will flee from a lion), Nabi ﷺ had taught the ummah to take precaution.

Similarly, in certain Ahaadith, Rasulullaah ﷺ mentioned, "Do not keep a sick animal with a healthy animal, as it is possible that the association with the sick animal can become the cause for it getting sick." Therefore, we understand from the Hadith that we are advised to adopt precaution, but together with this, we should understand that everything happens with the will and decree of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. Hence, a mu'min should adopt the means while placing his trust and reliance on Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى alone. He should believe that the means will only prove effective if Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى wills, and even if the healthy animal is kept with the sick animal, it will not get sick unless Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى wills.

This lesson we learn from another Hadith wherein Rasulullaah ﷺ taught us that associating with a sick person is not the definite cause for falling ill and that our hearts should be upon Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى, and not upon the cause. Therefore, in the Hadith it is mentioned that Rasulullaah ﷺ had once ate with a leper from the same plate. Rasulullaah ﷺ took the hand of the leper and placed it in the plate and said to him, "Commence eating." Rasulullaah ﷺ then took the name of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and said *ثِقَةً بِاللَّهِ وَتَوَكُّلاً عَلَيْهِ* I place my trust in Allaah and rely upon Him alone.

From this Hadith, we understand that Rasulullaah ﷺ had taught the ummah that nothing happens without the will of Allaah

تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and associating with a person who is sick or who has a contagious sickness is permissible. Similarly, he taught the ummah that through associating with the sick, one will not get sick if Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى does not decree it. Hence, if one's Imaan is strong and one is pleased with the decree of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى in regard to everything that Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has decreed for him, whether good health or sickness, then there is no harm in such a person associating with a person who has a contagious sickness.

Therefore, we find in the time when the plague of Amwaas struck Syria in the time of Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, the people did not abandon the sick but continued to take care of them and associated with them as the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ possessed strong Imaan. Hence, there is no mention of the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ abandoning those who were ill. Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ had given an instruction to Abu Ubaidah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ to take the people from the low, narrow and damp land wherein they were situated to a higher land as the clear, open air would prove effective as a remedy for their sicknesses. In this case also, we do not see that those who were well moved away and quarantined those who were ill, forsaking them and leaving them to fend for themselves.

Accordingly, it is reported in the Hadith that Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ had taught the ummah that at the time when an epidemic breaks out in a certain place, people from that place should not leave and nor should people from outside enter. The muhadditheen explain the reason for people being discouraged from leaving the place is that if all the people had to try and escape from the place, then there will be no one to take care of the ill and the sick among them. From this we understand that care should be shown to those who are ill and they should not be abandoned. If there are certain people taking care of them, then others will be absolved and are not obliged and forced to go near them. However, if there are

quarantined and isolated to the point that no person cares about them and they have to pass away in this situation, then on account of not taking care of the sick, all the people who had knowledge of their condition will be answerable.

As for the Hadith, لا عدوى ولا طيرة - *there are no contagious sicknesses nor any bad omens*, this Hadith was explained in order to refute a baseless belief prevalent amongst the Arabs. The Arabs in the pre-Islamic era believed that sicknesses and bad omens were some type of creation which possessed the ability in its very nature to move by itself from person to person. Hence, they dreaded associating with a sick person as the sickness within him would move onto them and grip them by itself. Thus, Nabi ﷺ refuted this baseless superstitious belief by saying لا طيرة ولا عدوى (there are no contagious sicknesses nor any bad omens (in Islam)). Moulana Gangohi رحمه الله mentioned that this belief of the Arabs was based on shirk as they believed that this sickness has the ability to move on its own in every situation and it was not under the control of Allaah تبارك وتعالى. Therefore, since this went against the belief of Islam, Rasulullaah ﷺ had unequivocally refuted it.

Moulana Ashraf Ali Thaanwi رحمه الله explained that both views are substantiated from the Hadith. Hence, whichever view one wishes to subscribe to one may do so.

Answered by: Mufti Zakaria Makada

Checked & Approved: Mufti Ebrahim Salejee (Isipingo Beach)

(Taken from Muftionline.com)

CHAPTER TEN - CONCLUSION

Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رحمه الله once mentioned that when a person is afflicted with any calamity or difficulty, then he should adhere to the following six points:

1. He should exercise patience as this is the sign of a true believer. Rasulullaah ﷺ said, "If a believer experiences favourable conditions, he should express gratitude, and this is good for him. And if he experiences unfavourable conditions, he should exercise patience, and this is good for him." (Muslim no. 2999)
2. He should not become despondent and lose hope in the mercy of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. Rather, he should continue to hope for the mercy of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى, as the power and grace of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى is above all worldly means. Only a kaafir who does not believe in taqdeer loses hope. People of true imaan and Deen are always pleased with the decree of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى.
3. He should not allow the difficulty to cause him to become negligent in regard to fulfilling his Deeni obligations.
4. He should continue to make du'aa to Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى to make the calamity easy for him, and he should also adopt the means to remove the problem. However, he should not place his reliance on the means, but he should place his reliance upon Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. Through turning to Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى in du'aa, Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى will place barakah in the means and cause the desired effect to materialise.
5. He should continuously engage in istighfaar and beg Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى to forgive his sins.
6. If a calamity has afflicted any of his Muslim brothers, then he should regard his brother's difficulty as his own difficulty. He should make du'aa for him and if he is able to assist him, then he should adopt the similar means in assisting him that he would have adopted to remove his own difficulty. (Malfoozaat Hakeemul Ummat 23/174)