

All praise is due to Allah, the merciful, the wind. we praise him, ask forgiveness to him and seek refuge with him from our own evil. I testify that there is no deity except Allah and I testify that Muhammad is His Messenger and Servant, peace and blessings on him. To proceed: Dear brothers and sisters in Islam, the whole world is experiencing many problems and disasters today. A problem that has effected almost the whole world is the spread of the corona virus.

It is the worst epidemic or plague since the (spanish influenza). The corona virus probably first broke out in China and then spread throughout the world. The health authorities and scientists have so far been unable to develop a cure for it. Unfortunately, many people have already died. The economy is also suffering from this. The fear of the bad consequences of this epidemic is spreading. We will deal with this topic from an Islamic perspective today.

Dear brothers and sisters in Islam, Allah the Most Exalted, tests His servants to show them that no matter how developed and how rich they are, they will always need him. People cannot survive without him. He alone is the one who helps people in need. He alone can avert the disaster and he alone can heal the sick.

In Surah Al-An'am (surah number 6), verse number 17, it says

*"And if Allah should touch you with adversity, there is no remover of it except Him. And if He touches you with good - then He is over all things competent.[6:17]"*

In Surah Al-Shu'ara (surah number 26), verse number 80, we read

*"And when I am ill, it is He who cures me [26:80]"*

In Surah An-Naml (surah number 27), verse number 62, we read

*"Is He [not best] who responds to the desperate one when he calls upon Him and removes evil and makes you inheritors of the earth? Is there a deity with Allah? Little do you remember." [27:62]"*

Islam prescribes certain rules for dealing with epidemics, before they break out and during their spread. Before any epidemic or disease breaks out, the Muslim has to know that everything that happens in this world happens according to the Qadr of Allah (divine decree). Sometimes this decree is pleasing to us and sometimes it is not.

Belief in fate is one of the six beliefs that we as muslims are required believe in. Allah, the Exalted, created the means for the emergence of diseases, but He also created the means for healing. Life and death are determined by Allah. We Muslims also believe that when Allah causes a disease to break out, He also creates a cure for it. The question is how long it will take humans to find this cure.

We read in Sahih Muslim, a narration from Jabir ibn Abdullah that Rasulullah (sa) said *"Every disease has a cure, when the right medicine is taken for a disease then the cure is from Allah's permission."*

We read in Sahuh Bukhar and Muslim, it is narrated from Abu Huraira(ra), that Rasulullah (sa) said that *"Allah does not send a disease except that he also sends a cure for it"*

In Musnad Ahmad, it is narrated from Usamah ibn sharik he (sa)

*"I was with the Prophet (sa) and a bedioun came and said " Oh messenger of Allah, should we take medicine". He (sa) said yes take medicine, Oh Slaves of Allah, Allah has not sent down any disease except that he has also sent down its cure, except one disease which is old age".*

In Mustadrak of AlHakim, it is narrated from Abu Saeed (ra) that Rasulullah (sa) said

*“Allah has not sent down any disease except that he has sent down a cure for it, those who know (they understand), those who dont dont (understand), except one disease which is death.”*

The cure for every disease and transmittable diseases are with Allah, he lets it known to anyone of his slave and keeps it away from anyone he wishes as a means of trial and testing for him, such that the slave returns to the creator and knows that only Allah can help his slave in need.

It is from the guide-lines of Islam about an epidemic that a person does not go to a land in which an epidemic has spread and does not exit that land. This is explained in what has been narrated from Abdul Rahman Ibn Awf (ra) that Rasulullah (sa) said *“If you hear that a plague has spread in a land then do not go to that land and if you happen to be in the land, then do not exit that land running away from the plague”* [Narrated by Bukhari and Muslim]. So in this tradition, the Prophet (sa) forbids entering and exiting a land where an epidemic has spread.

Scholars have derived a number of rulings that the people must abide by in event of an epidemic, one of it is that the one who is outside the land should not travel to the infected area based upon the verse of the Quran.

*And spend in the way of Allah and do not throw [yourselves] with your [own] hands into destruction [by refraining]. And do good; indeed, Allah loves the doers of good.[2:195]*

*O you who have believed, do not consume one another's wealth unjustly but only [in lawful] business by mutual consent. And do not kill yourselves [or one another]. Indeed, Allah is to you ever Merciful.[4:29]*

The rules for the one who is in an infected land is to stay in the land and do not exit that land because exiting that land has a number of harms such as it leads to the transmission of disease leading to harm for muslims and non-muslims. As the experts have said that the epidemic is not contingent upon land, however it depends upon the people, therefore leaving an infected land is not always helpful (since the land where a person goes to might also get infected). Another wisdom behind staying in the infected place and not leaving it, is preparing ourselves for trusting Allah (swt) and being patient with his decree.

Our prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, warned us against contacting people with contagious diseases. In Musnad of Imam Ahmad, its narrated that Prophet (sa) said that *“flee from the patient of leprosy as you flee after seeing a lion”* and in the Musnad of Imam Ahmad and Abu Dawud, its narrated from Rasulullah (sa) *that the sick and the healthy should not inter-mingle.*

We read in our history that when Umar Ibn Khattab (ra) came to know about the news of the spread of plague in the Al-Shaam (greater Syria), he consulted his companions about the matter, some of them advise Umar (ra) to move forward towards Shaam, some of the advised to not enter the AlShaam in order to protect the lands of Muslims. Then Umar (ra) decided to not enter AlShaam. After which Abu Ubaida (ra) objected *“Oh, leader of the believers, are you running away from the Qadr (divine decree) of Allah (swt) ? . So Umar(ra) said to him “I wished it was not you who said it. Oh Abu Ubaida, yes, we are running from the decree of Allah to the decree of Allah”*. Therefore the he (ra) made it clear that taking precautions from the epidemics and diseases is not going against the decree of Allah and it is not against the trust (tawakkul) upon Allah (swt).

That is why we must understand that if the authorities prescribe quarantine or restrictions on assembly then it conforms to the rules of Islam because Islam protects the souls and lives. We should show understanding for it and be co-operative.

How does the Muslim behave if he is already infected. There are many things you can do. First you should inform the authorities, such as the health department and the like. Avoid contact with other people until you are certain whether an infection exists or not.

Secondly, muslims must understand also that what has to afflict you will not miss you. The muslim must believe that in divine decree and believe that he is infected then it is part of the decree of Allah (swt)). This only applies if one is effected. That is why the muslims should think of the tradition of Rasulullah (sa) when he said *“How good is the affair of a believer, All of his affairs have good in them (he is never in loss), and this is not for anyone except a true believer, if he is blessed with a blessing then he is thankful so it is a good for him (as opposed to if he was unthankful then the blessing would become a punishment). And if he is afflicted with a punishment then he is patient with it and that is good for him”*

Suffering from an illness while remembering that Allah will reward you for patience, it can erase the sins of a Muslim or increase the ranks of these people in paradise.

We must rely on Allah (swt) as muslims and trust in him and believe in his words in the Quran. In Surah Tawbah, verse 51, Allah (swt) says.

*Say, "Never will we be struck except by what Allah has decreed for us; He is our protector." And upon Allah let the believers rely.” [9:51]*