



LOCKDOWN

Daily we recite or hear the proclamation of the Greatness and Power of Allah Ta'ala more than a hundred times. In the azaan, salaah and at other times, we keep repeating *ALLAHU AKBAR... ALLAHU AKBAR ... ALLAHU AKBAR*. This is a constant reminder throughout the day that ALLAH TA'ALA IS THE GREATEST. He Alone controls everything and has total qudrat and power over every minute particle.

Presently, Allah Ta'ala's qudrat (absolute power and control) is being manifested through a microscopic virus which has brought most of the world to almost a standstill. Subhaanallah! Pure is that Being to Whom belongs the entire universe. He Alone is the creator of every living being and every inanimate object. He causes the sun to rise and the moon to shine. Glory be to Allah Ta'ala who gives life and death and Who will resurrect everyone on the Day of Judgement.

VIRUSES AND PLAGUES

Allah Ta'ala is the Creator of viruses and plagues. Plagues are a punishment from Allah Ta'ala for those who reject Him and a mercy for the true Believers (who gain the rank of a martyr if it causes them to pass away). (*Musnad Ahmad #8305*)

As many parts of the world go into "Lockdown", it is a time to reflect: What has locked us down? Has the virus locked us down? NO. In reality, our sins have locked us down and drawn down this calamity upon us.

Sins? What sins? As we often say: *"I am not perfect, but I am not a bad person!"* So then what sins have locked us down? Let us peer deeply at our reflection in the mirror of the Quraan Majeed and sunnah and see how good or bad we really are. Most of us will see our blatant disregard of the commands of Allah Ta'ala staring back at us.

The five daily salaah, which are compulsory on every adult male and female, are perhaps performed diligently by less than five percent of the Ummah (many perform four or less and many perform none

at all), whereas deliberately missing a single salaah has been likened to an act of kufr (though not in itself kufr). Salaah with jamaa'ah (congregation), which is waajib for males, is generally taken very lightly or completely neglected. Count the number of musallis in the masjid for Fajr Salaah to get an idea of this gross neglect!!!

What about the involvement in gheebat (backbiting), lying, zina, gambling, taking or giving interest, indulging in drinking and drugs, breaking of family ties, harbouring malice and jealousy, being proud and arrogant, gross wastage — especially in weddings and other functions (such as thousands wasted on deco, etc.) and various other vices and sins? As for the trampling of the rights of people, this is often regarded as a joke or even an achievement!!! The list of our vices is almost endless. Yes indeed, sins destroy barakah and bring hardship and calamities. Thus our SINS have locked us down.

Allah Ta'ala has clearly declared in the Quraan Majeed: ***"And whatever calamity befalls you, it is due to what your hands have earned (what you have done)!"*** (*Surah Shura, v.30*). The same message is also conveyed in several other verses of the Quraan Majeed. While the physical *sight* and the intellectual mind can only see the virus as the means of us being locked down, the spiritual heart and divinely inspired *insight* can see that in reality, it is our sins that have locked us down.

TWO SERIOUS VICES

Among all the sins being perpetrated, two vices stand out in particular — ***zulm*** (oppression) and ***fah-shaa*** (immorality and shamelessness). The world has become filled with *zulm*. The extremely tragic *zulm* of many rulers and governments is well known. However, *zulm* is not confined to state tyranny. There are also numerous oppressed parents — the culprits being their own children. In many cases, the

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opposite is also true, where parents are guilty of oppressing their own children. Incidents of spouses oppressing one another are a heartrending story. If the tears of the numerous oppressed wives (and also many oppressed husbands) could be turned to ink, huge volumes could be written with this ink about the gross ill-treatment and oppression from those who were expected to give love and affection!

OPPRESSED

Among the many oppressed are: Workers who are not paid in full or whose labour is exacted for a pittance, heirs who are deprived of their rightful inheritance, the victims of fraud and corruption, those who are sworn at, mocked or ridiculed, and people who are looked down upon due to colour, nationality or language, etc., and the *zulm* between relatives and the severing of family relationships, etc.

With regard to *zulm*, Allah Ta'ala declares: ***“And indeed we destroyed generations before you when they committed oppression”***. (Surah Yunus, v.13) Also, in Surah Kahf, Allah Ta'ala says: ***“And those towns, We destroyed them when they committed oppression”***. (Surah Kahf, v.59) Closely examine our hearts and actions – we will find ourselves guilty of many aspects of *zulm*. To save ourselves from the wrath of Allah Ta'ala, we must stop committing *zulm*, sincerely repent and make amends for whatever happened in the past.

IMMORALITY

The second extremely serious vice is the tsunami of immorality and shamelessness. Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) is reported to have said: ***“When immorality becomes rife in a community and they blatantly indulge in shamelessness, plagues and such diseases will become widespread which their forefathers had never heard of”***. (Sunan Ibn Maajah #4019) Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) was once asked: “Will we be destroyed while there are pious people among us?” He (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) replied: ***“Yes, when sins will become abundant”***. (Sunan Tirmizi #2185) It is reported in another narration that Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) was asked when such destruction (which he warned about) would come. He replied: “When dancing girls and musical instruments will become rife”. (Sunan Tirmizi #2212)

When an evil becomes widespread and is commonly

indulged in, the severity of that vice diminishes from the hearts and it gradually becomes regarded as “OK”. It then degenerates further and people often comment about many vices by asking, *“What’s wrong with it?”* This has tragically become the order of the day with many immoral actions.

Perhaps most prominent among them is the style of dressing – especially dressing of females. Short, tight-fitting, transparent garments have become “OK”, in-style and “the way to go!” The evil and shamelessness in that manner of dressing – outdoors or even indoors in the presence of one’s children, parents and others - has largely disappeared from the hearts.

INTERMINGLING OF NON-MAHRAMS

Likewise, the immorality and vice of free intermingling of non-mahrams, in the workplace as well as socially among families and family friends (which has resulted in the inferno of zina in our communities), is tragically not regarded as a sin by numerous people. Hence, many who do wish to fully uphold the laws of *purdah* (*hijaab and niqaab*) and refrain from associating with cousins or non-mahram in-laws are mocked and pressured to conform to the norm – the immoral norm of non-*purdah*.

The haraam chatting and flirting on social media is also all part of the tsunami of utter immorality. Many aspects which the sharee'ah deems to be totally shameless are indulged in and then also advertised by being splashed all over social media. Watching porn, going to zina dens, sharing immoral and lewd messages on social media and other such vices are also tragically very common and high on the list of immorality among our people. *May Allah Ta'ala protect us all.*

The lockdown is a time to reflect and to sincerely repent. While one must repent from all sins, particular attention must be paid to making taubah from *zulm* and immorality. Let us unlock the shackles of sin and vice that *nafs* and *shaitaan* have locked us in by means of sincere taubah and righteous actions. Insha-Allah, our path to every good of this world and the Hereafter will be wide open.

May Allah Ta'ala assist us to shun all sin and make us among His loyal servants. May He unlock us from the effects of our sins and bless us and the entire Ummah with peace and happiness in this world and the Hereafter, aameen.

PANDEMIC: WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Q The Covid-19 pandemic has gripped the world. Please advise as to what we should do in these trying times.

A Indeed these are very trying times. In trying times, one must not remain casual and carefree. A carefree and heedless attitude in such situations is in fact dangerous, as it indicates indifference to Allah Ta'ala. While it is necessary to take the necessary precautions within the limits of sharee'ah, that alone is not going to take away the virus. There is much more to do. Hereunder are some aspects to undertake in order to treat the root of the issue:

SHED TEARS BEFORE ALLAH TA'ALA

Repent... repent... and sincerely repent. Shun all sin. Repeatedly make deep, heartfelt *taubah* and *istighfaar*, and shed tears of remorse and regret. Allah Ta'ala has declared in the Quraan Majeed: **"Indeed Allah loves those who constantly repent..."**. (Surah Baqarah, v.222) Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) has said: "The one who cries out of the fear of Allah Ta'ala will not enter the Fire". (Sunan Tirmizi #1633) If all of us repent sincerely, the *rahmah* and blessings of Allah Ta'ala will descend upon everyone and the hardships will insha-Allah be uplifted.

TALK ABOUT ALLAH TA'ALA

More severe than the challenge to life and health is the challenge to imaan. In times of hardship, a person of weak imaan is in great danger of slipping further away from Allah Ta'ala due to wrong actions and reactions. Therefore, during challenges and hardships, we are much more in need of boosting our imaan than at other times.

This requires that we talk much about Allah Ta'ala. Talk about His Greatness, Power and Might. Talk to our families, neighbours, friends and everyone else. Repeatedly discuss His qudrat (power), that Allah Ta'ala made the fire a garden for Nabi Ebrahim ('alaihi salaam) and He brought Nabi Yunus ('alaihi salaam) out of the belly of the fish. He controls the heavens and the earth. He has full control over every virus and every atom in the universe. We must therefore turn to Him. Keep talking about Allah Ta'ala until His greatness settles deeply in the heart.

Also, talk to them about the loving advice of

Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) to Sayyiduna 'Abdullah bin 'Abbaas (radhiyallahu 'anhuma): "O lad! Safeguard the commands of Allah Ta'ala (by fulfilling His injunctions and refraining from sin) and He will protect you. Safeguard the commands of Allah Ta'ala and you will find Him with you (by assisting you in your time of need and giving you solutions to every problem)... And know that whatever missed you was never meant to reach you, and whatever reaches you could never have missed you". (Sunan Tirmizi #2516)

BOW TO ALLAH TA'ALA

Whenever there was the slightest concern about anything, Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) immediately hastened towards salaah. In trying times, one should perform much salaah. There can be no question of missing the five daily salaah at any time whatsoever. In challenging times, one should try to perform as many of the nafl salaah as well, such as tahajjud, ishraq, duha, awwaabeen, etc. Regularly perform salaatul haajah (salaah of need) and engage in earnest du'aa.

CALL TOWARDS ALLAH TA'ALA

Among the major reasons for calamities is abandoning the duty of *amr bil ma'roof* and *nahi 'anil munkar* (enjoining the right and forbidding the evil). Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) is reported to have said: **"You must certainly enjoin what is right and forbid the evil, or else Allah Ta'ala will inflict you with a calamity. You will then beg of Him but He will not answer your prayer"**. (Sunan Tirmizi #2169) Therefore, sit and reflect – what is lacking in your own household? What wrongs are being perpetrated? Advise them with wisdom and guide them with love. Keep enjoining the right and forbidding the evil. It will pave our pathway to salvation.

BE LOYAL TO ALLAH TA'ALA

This is a time to shun all sins and adopt taqwa (Allah consciousness). The Quraan Majeed declares: **"He who fears Allah (adopts taqwa), Allah will give him a solution (from every problem) and grant him sustenance from sources he cannot imagine"**. (Surah Talaq, v.3). The essence of taqwa is to give up all sin.

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PANDEMIC

(FROM PAGE 3)

This is our greatest need – to give up sin and become loyal to our Creator and Most Compassionate and Most Merciful Allah Ta'ala.

GIVE SADAQAH FOR ALLAH TA'ALA

With utmost sincerity, give for Allah Ta'ala. Give as much as you can – and give without any fear of a decrease in wealth. Sadaqah (charity) repels calamities and in fact increases wealth. Give to anyone in need, Muslim or disbeliever.

Nevertheless the first priority is to give to relatives in need. Also, in lockdown time, when many will not be earning their salary for the weeks ahead, it will be more rewarding to give one's own needy workers before giving others. They are the apparent means of helping one to earn one's wealth and hence deserve special consideration in these trying times.

REMEMBER ALLAH TA'ALA

Engage in much zikr and tasbeehaat. Keep a tasbeeh or tasbeeh counter in your hand all the time. Keep reciting istighfaar, durood shareef, the third alimah, etc. He who remembers Allah Ta'ala, Allah Ta'ala remembers him—i.e. He showers His favours upon him.

TALK TO ALLAH TA'ALA

Daily ... repeatedly ... TALK to Allah Ta'ala. Talk to Him through du'aa. Beg of Him. Beseech Him. Cry unto Him. Knock at His door. Humble yourself before Him. Allah Ta'ala declares: **“Or who is it (besides Allah) who responds to the call of the distressed one and removes his calamity...? Is there any deity besides Allah? (Surah Naml, v.62)**

From the advices of ...

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FAQEEHUL UMMAH

The sterling advice of Faqeehul Ummah Hazrat Mufti Mahmood Hasan Gangohi Saheb (rahmatullahi 'alaihi) has helped thousands of people to overcome many problems and difficulties — especially in the line of *islahun nafs* (inner-self reformation). Hereunder is an answer to a question posed to him.

INCLINATION TO SIN

Bismih Ta'ala

Respected Mufti Saheb

Assalaamu 'alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakaatuh

For some time now, a strange condition has overcome me. My nafs (the carnal-self) dominates me. I have a strong inclination to sin and this leaves me extremely restless. The thought continuously passes my mind as to what my condition will be at the time of death and after death. The world seems to be full of sorrow for me. After trying so much to save myself from sin, I still fall into sin. I request your du'aas and advice to remedy my situation.

Reply: Always keep in mind the despised and shameful nature of sins, and the punishment that will be meted out due to these sins. By keeping the punishment for sins in front, one will insha-Allah be given the ability to stay away from sin. May Allah Ta'ala be pleased with all of us. (*Maktoobaat vol. 1, pg. 94*)

JOIN FOR THE SAKE OF ALLAH TA'ALA

If family relationships have been broken, join them for the sake of Allah Ta'ala. Breaking family relationships results in deprivation of barakah in life and wealth and prevents one's du'aas from being accepted. The community that does not advise such people to refrain from such actions is also deprived of the mercy of Allah Ta'ala.

Once, Sayyiduna 'Abdullah bin Mas'ood (radhiyallahu 'anhu) addressed those who were seated in his gathering: **“I plead in the name of Allah Ta'ala to those who have severed family relationships to please leave the gathering. We wish to make du'aa to our Rabb, whereas the doors of the heavens are closed**

to the one who cut ties”. (*Al-Mu'jamul Kabeer #8793*)

Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) has also warned: **“The one who breaks family ties will not enter Jannah (until he is cleansed from the filth of this sin in Jahannum).** (*Bukhaari #5984*)”

TURN TO ALLAH TA'ALA

In short, turn to Allah Ta'ala. Turn to Him in all sincerity and earnestness by means of all the actions advised above... and much more. Become His, and He will become ours. He alone has power over everything and He alone will remove all calamities and difficulties.

May Allah Ta'ala protect the entire Ummah from every hardship and bless all with the best of both worlds, aameen.