

The Effects of Difficult Times On the World of Faith

Prof. Dr. Mehmet Görmez
İslâm Düşünce Enstitüsü Başkanı

Prof. Dr. Mehmet Görmez
President of Institute of Islamic Thought

The Effects of Difficult Times
On the World of Faith
Ankara in 7 / April / 2020

1

The Effects of Difficult Times On the World of Faith

In the name of Allah, the most gracious the most merciful, Praise be to him, Lord of the worlds, peace and blessings be upon our great Teacher Muhammad and his family and companions till the day of judgment.

Starting this talk I greet you with of honor and blessing, may this night of 15th of Shabaan (the night of Bara'a) be a blessed night, I make Dua'a to Allah to make this night a beacon for guidance that enlightens the path of humanity that entered the midst of the search for a new meaning of life with this crisis that has afflicted us, and a healing of our souls burdened with worries, the tranquility of our eager hearts, and the repentance from the sins of centuries. I pray to Allah to distance from us the disasters, epidemics and fear that came to us, sooner rather than later, and I hope for a speedy recovery for our sick brothers and sisters, and that our dead be blessed with mercy and forgiveness of Allah, and that patience and solace is calming their families and relatives by the grace of Allah, And I also pray to God to preserve the medical cadres who are working hard to defeat this pandemic that afflicted us.

Dear brothers and sisters...

In this third lesson, based on your requests, I would like to discuss the effects of difficult times on our world of faith, and I know that there are a lot of questions swirling in the minds of young people in this regard, so I will address the topic in the light of the Usul without going into details.

Dear brothers and sisters...

Such calamities, epidemics, earthquakes, famines and wars that have inflicted on humanity throughout history have had devastating effects on the beliefs of individuals and societies, which have been definitely reflected on their religious lives. but there has been a historically established fact that societies that are replete with strong religious bonds, established beliefs, and strong morals are the least affected with these effects.

When we look at the history of major epidemics, we find that these infectious diseases have accelerated the sequence of historical events, and have opened the doors of broad questions on various levels; intellectual and cultural, they even have ended old ones and generated new ideas and cultures.

Thirty years before the birth of our Prophet (PUBH), the plague of Justinian occurred in the year 541 AD and invaded the world almost destroying the two greatest empires at the time Roman and Sasanian, and paved the way for the Islamic conquests. The "Black Death " claimed 40% of the European population, announcing the end of the dark periods of the Middle Ages. Then, soon after the vaccine was discovered, the Church's narrative about the plague went in vain. and here I would like to remind ourselves that no one should be hasty in giving an opinion regarding such issues that embarrass our minds in the future, especially if it comes to the religion of Allah immense care must be taken.

When the Prophet (PBUH) grieved the death of Ibrahim, who was seventeen or eighteen months old, sadness prevailed over Medina, and on the same day the sun eclipsed and the Companions -may Allah be pleased with them- thought that the eclipse of the sun occurred because of the death of Abraham. So the prophet stood and stated: "The Sun and the Moon are two of the Signs of Allah, they do not eclipse because of the death or life of anyone. Therefore, whenever you see an eclipse, remember Allah and say Allah is Most Great, pray and give charity. "

Dear brothers and sisters...

In such difficult days, many questions are circulating in the minds everyone, especially young people, I can tell in light of the dozens of messages that I received previously. "If Allah exists, with his absolute justice, absolute mercy, and absolute ability, then how is evil permitted to exist?", "If Allah is the creator of everything then why did he create this virus that harms everyone?", "If this virus was a biological weapon produced by some people, why does Allah permits it?", "Why did Allah create evil, pain, sorrows and worries?", "Why do innocent children die ...?"

Religions throughout history have faced critical questions in such difficult days, many people - with satisfactory answers - have been guided to the true path, and many of them have gone astray from the path and have lost their faith in Allah, and never found the true meaning of evil.

It is our duty to accept these critical questions that revolve in the minds of young people, give them clear and correct answers, and deal with them with an Abrahamic position when he asked his Lord, "Show me, Lord, how You will raise the dead," and he is Who he is: a Prophet of Allah and a leader of the Ummah of monotheism. Allah's answer to him and to our Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, "Yes, but to reassure my heart." Today's youth also say we believe, but we ask to reassure our hearts. So we must provide them with healing answers that reassure the minds and hearts. You cannot say to today's youth leave your Brain aside and believe in Allah, we should talk to them in the language of faith which satisfy the minds and hearts.

Dear youth...

In the beginning, we should know that an explanation of the meaning of evil, pain, and sorrow in the world cannot be found unless the purpose of existence and the wisdom of creation becomes clear to us. Alongside a correct perception of the world, and a firm belief in the Hereafter, among the most important qualities of the Allah is “the Wise”, that is, the one of all wisdom and perfection of judgment, so there is no futility in existence, creation or religion. The Almighty says in verse 115 of Surat Al-Mu'minun: "Do you think that you created you in vain and that to us you shall not return", Qur'an has expressed “futility” with three different words: لغو (empty action), لهو (hilarity), and سهو (inattention), and from this standpoint there is neither empty action, hilarity, nor inattention in creation, existence and religion.

In this context I would like to point out that there is no absolute evil in the realm of existence. Evil is not an object in itself, and it cannot be attributed to Allah Almighty, except that for his great wisdom he allowed evil among creatures ... For how can we realize light without darkness, or how do we know Truth if not for falsehood, or how to understand good without evil, but no one can in any way attribute the cause of any injustice or the existence of “Evil” to Allah Almighty.

Allah Almighty says in three different places of the Noble Qur'an; verse 49 of Surat Al-Kahf “And your Lord does injustice to no one”, and verse 77 of Surah al-Nisa “And injustice will not be done to you, [even] as much as a thread [inside a date seed]” and verse 46 from Surat Fussilat, “And your Lord is not ever unjust to [His] servants.” And in surat alShura verse 30, Allah Almighty says, “And whatever strikes you of disaster - it is for what your hands have earned; but He pardons much”. and our beloved prophet called his Lord saying: “Here I am in obedience to You, and in aiding Your cause, and the good, all of it is in Your Hands, and the evil is not attributed to You”. and if Allah did not create Evil, the purpose of creation on the face of the earth would turn to nothing, for Allah has made the base of goodness, justice, compassion, and elimination the evil and injustice the very goal of human existence. So, could we say after this to Allah Almighty: Why did you create evil? And why don't you stop it? If Allah had not created evil, man would not have enjoyed the will and freedom ... and when man was given good choice between good and evil and between faith and disbelief.

The wisdom of Allah's creation of man, existence, and life is nothing but a test. The world is a trial, not a place of recompense and reckoning, and there is a dangerous case which is not accepting this test, this is by far more dangerous than losing the exam. Allah Almighty says in verse 2 of Surat Al-Malik “[He] who created death and life to test you [as to] which of you is best in deed - and He is the Exalted in Might, the Forgiving” in verse 168 of Surat al A'raf, says the Almighty: "And We tested them with good [times] and bad that perhaps they would return [to obedience]" in verse 35 of Surat Al Anbya, the Almighty says, "And We test you with evil and with good as trial; and to Us you will be returned".

Many things may appear evil on its surface and in which there is great goodness, Almighty says in verse 216 of Surat Al-Baqara, “. But perhaps you hate a thing and it is good for you”.

Dear brothers and sisters

The diseases and epidemics that we face as individuals and as societies have meanings, goals, wisdom and philosophies that folds inside. for without diseases we would not know what health truly is, and if it were not for fear, worry and distress, we would not have known the value of security and safety.

Diseases were not only divine warnings, but were mercy to some of His servants, as atonement for others, and to raise the ranks of some. sometimes diseases come to protect humanity from greater calamities, and sometimes they are a reminder to those who have forgotten themselves and forgotten Allah and His Majesty. disease may come to show that there is no value For money, positions, and ranks that we value so much in our lives, and sometimes they come to make us realize the value of what we neglected, such as health and wellness. And so, a vile virus came to teach that human being - who captured nature with continues revolutions, plundered it with rudeness, threatened it with the chemical weapons that he invented, narrowed the land down for the innocent, all while looking forward to taking control the of the space as if what he wreaked of corruption on the ground is not enough - great lessons and morals.

My dear brothers

Certainly, humanity will seek - after this pandemic ends- new meaning like what happened in the past, and we believers today can turn these difficult days and this epidemic that has befallen us and quarantine into a new birth in our lives, as the Mustafa says ﷺ "If the day of judgment came while you have a palm-cutting in your hands and it is possible to plant it before the Hour comes, you should plant it." Today is the day of planting the seedlings that are in our hands, sowing the seeds of mercy in the hearts that we neglected.

Dear youth

There are three types of emptiness that destroy life, The emptiness of time, mind and heart. If you fill these voids, then you will have a legacy after you of a more beautiful and fair world.

Dear youth

Fill in your spare time, for you are on the path of truth, one like you does not immerse his life in a virtual world. One of the worst things that can happen to young people is to consume time and exhaust life without benefit or a goal, and the second void that poses a danger to the youth is the mental void. With this emptiness, knowledge and wisdom come as a cure. so find the path behind every useful knowledge. and the third emptiness that you should not leave is the emptiness of the heart, so do not fill your hearts with fleeting love, but fill them with the love of Allah, Love all the servants of Allah, and let us look at existence and beings with an eye of mercy and love. do not forget that by mentioning Allah alone hearts are reassured.

I conclude my words with warnings received in Surat Al-Balad. This surah dealt with the commandments of the Qur'an for the believers to pass the obstacles, and that the way to do so

is to get rid of the shackles that captivate us, cleanse the hearts of arrogance, hatred and grudge. that we share what we have in difficult days with the poor and needy, that we follow Patience and mercy, and to overcome the difficulties that stand in our way, get rid of three things...

The first is to get rid of the obsession of power, Almighty said in verse 5 of Surat Al-Balad, "Does he think that never will anyone overcome him?"

5

The second: to get rid of the obsession of pride in spending wealth. In verse 6 of Surat Al-Balad, the Almighty said: "have spent wealth in abundance."

The third: to get rid of the obsession of irresponsibility, in which a person believes that no one sees him. The Almighty said in verse 7 of Surat Al-Balad: "Does he think that no one has seen him?"

Dear brothers and sisters ...

In the conclusion of my speech, I would like to remind you of verse 16 of Surat Al-Hadid, when Allah Almighty says: "Has the time not come for those who have believed that their hearts should become humbly submissive at the remembrance of Allah and what has come down of the truth?"

I pray to our Creator to make from these difficult circumstances a means to meet the universal mercy, and to honor us with the sanctity of this blessed night of 15th of Shabaan (Bara'a) for only He is capable of what he wills, and only he is worthy of our prayers.

May Allah make this night a blessed one

Peace, mercy and blessings of Allah be with you

