

“Praise to Allah, who has not taken a son and has had no partner in [His] dominion and has no [need of a] protector out of weakness”

“[All] praise is [due] to Allah, to whom belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth, and to Him belongs [all] praise in the Hereafter. And He is the Wise, the Acquainted. He knows what penetrates into the earth and what emerges from it and what descends from the heavens and what ascends therein. And He is the Merciful, the Forgiving.”

“[All] praise is [due] to Allah . He will show you His signs, and you will recognize them. And your Lord is not unaware of what you do.”

I send *salah* and *salam* upon the one sent as mercy to the world, our Master Muhammad, and upon his family and companions altogether.

Fellow Muslims:

This momentous event that we are living through right now is a mighty sign from among the signs of Allah; a sign that removed all the masks, humbled the arrogant and conceited, cut off all ties to any other than Him, placing a barrier, before the Day of Resurrection, between people and their desires. Where is their pompous display of power? Where is their pride in what knowledge they have gained? Where are those who will rescue them from this calamity, besides Allah? **“Call upon those you claim to be deities**

besides God and you will know that they have no power to remove affliction from you or to bring about any change [that you may desire].”

This is a great lesson for everyone. Will people return back to the Creator of this Universe and to its Controller? Will people turn towards the One whom people have come to realise that they have no ability or will without His permission?

“And if Allah touch you with affliction, there is none to take it off but He; and if He visit you with good, then He has power over all things. He reigns Supreme over His servants; and He is the All Wise, the All Aware.”

“And if Allah should afflict you with harm, then there is none to remove it but He; and if He intends good to you there is none to repel His grace; He brings it to whom He pleases of His servants; and He is the Forgiving, the Merciful.”

This is the *sunna* of trials and tribulations:

“Exalted is He who holds all control in His hands; who has power over all things; who created death and life to test you [people] and reveal which of you does best. He is the Mighty, the Forgiving”

“Every soul is certain to taste death: We test you all through the bad and the good, and to Us you will all return.”

“We shall certainly test you with fear and hunger, and loss of property, lives, and crops. But, give good news to those who are steadfast, those who say, when afflicted with a calamity, ‘We belong to God and to Him we shall return.’ These will be given blessings and mercy from their Lord, and it is they who are rightly guided.”

During this momentous event, I wish to remind myself and my fellow brothers and sisters with a few things:

1. To be wary of false news and rumours, since they result in a weakening of will and in fear and anxiety. Let us be emissaries, opening the doors to what is good and shutting it in the face of what is bad. Indeed, Allah has compared those who spread rumours with the hypocrites. Beware of being someone who causes a weakening in the spirit.
2. The need to abide by whatever advice and guidance is given to us by the relevant authorities in this regard.
3. To continually repent, display penitence and seek forgiveness from the One Almighty.

“Will they not turn to God and ask His forgiveness, while God is most forgiving, most merciful?”

The gates of repentance are wide open! “Do they not know that it is God Himself who accepts repentance from His servants and receives what is given freely for His sake? He is always ready to accept repentance, most merciful.”

“He it is Who accepts repentance from His servants and pardons evil deeds. And He knows whatsoever you do.”

“Say, ‘[God says], My servants who have harmed yourselves by your own excess, do not despair of God’s mercy. God forgives all sins: He is truly the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful. Turn to your Lord. Submit to Him before the punishment overtakes you and you can no longer be helped. Follow the best teaching sent down to you from your Lord, before the punishment suddenly takes you, unawares, and your soul says, “Woe is me for having neglected what is due to God, and having been one of those who scoffed!”

Let us then renew our pact and relationship with Allah, Most Exalted and High. Let us exert the utmost efforts, while believing and doing good, righteous deeds, and whilst refraining and abandoning all the causes of His wrath and anger and punishment. Let us repent as He commanded us to: **“O believers! Turn to Allah in sincere repentance, so your Lord may absolve you of your sins and admit you into Gardens, under which rivers flow”**.

4. To seek assistance through prayer

As Allah has instructed us: **“O you who believe! Seek help in patience and prayer. Truly God is with the patient.”**

It was the practice of the Prophet, *sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam*, if he were troubled by any matter to rush to prayer.

5. To remember Allah abundantly

On the authority of Abu Hurayrah, who said: the Messenger of Allah, *sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam* said, "Shall I not guide you to a treasure from the treasures of Jannah?" I said: "Yes" Thereupon he said, "(Recite) '*La hawla wa la quwwata illa billah*' (There is no change of a condition nor power except by Allah)." I think he then said: "[Upon saying it] Allah, the Exalted, says: 'My servant has submitted and believed'."

Ibn Abbas reported: Abraham, *'alayhis-salam*, said when he was thrown into the fire, "Allah is enough for us, and excellent is he as the guardian (*hasbuna Allah wa ni`ma al-wakil*)," and it was likewise said by Muhammad, *sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam*, when they said, **"Verily, the people have gathered against you, so fear them. It only increased their faith and they said: Allah is enough for us, and excellent is he as the guardian."**

So let us repeat these prayers often: *la hawla wa la quwwatta illa billah* and *hasbuna allah wa ni`m al-wakil*, besides *tasbih* (saying: *subhanallah*), *tablil* (saying: *la ilaha illa Allah*) and *takbir* (saying: *allahu akbar*) and *hamd* (saying: *alhamdulillah*). We ask Allah to remove this affliction from us all.

6. To supplicate abundantly

Let us supplicate and call upon our Lord. His gates are open to those who ask of Him.

"If My worshipers ask you about Me, I am near, answering the prayer of the one who prays to Me"

“Your Lord says, ‘Call on Me and I will answer you”

Nothing repels Divine Decree except *du’a*. *Du’a* helps in those things that have occurred and in those things that have not occurred.

So let us supplicate and invoke Allah increasingly. Asking Allah to remove and lift this trial from us all; and ask Him for protection and safety.

I advise you all not to abandon the morning and evening supplications in particular. They are from among the strongest protections and ‘fortresses’.

7. Charity

The Prophet, *sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam* said, “Charity extinguishes sin, the way water extinguishes fire.”

Let us be charitable, hoping in Allah’s reward, especially in the current climate where many of the vulnerable are in need and unable to get to what their needs. Give them from Allah has blessed you with.

Fellow Muslims!

This test is an opportunity to review and evaluate our relationship with Allah, and with other humans, and with those whom Allah has made us stewards and guardians and responsible for in our

households. Let us improve our relationships with our spouses, families and children. This test - fellow Muslims - is an opportunity to increase and strengthen our faith; it is an opportunity to show our sole reliance on Allah, since none can rescue us except Him, alone! Let us then put it to good use, in whatever will deliver good for us in this world and the afterlife.

Finally, I remind my brothers and sisters that since both the Friday and congregational prayers have been suspended in mosques, then we should pray Dhuhur at home instead. We complain to Allah about the state we find ourselves in. Any opinion that states that we should pray the Friday prayer in the homes is a baseless one according to the evidences of the Shari'ah. The reason why we are abandoning the Friday prayers is in fact more worthy than the reasons an ill or travelling person would abandon it. We seek refuge in Allah from calamities and hardships, the lowest depths of misery, the bad of what is decreed and the gloating and malice of the enemies.

I end with the prayer that some of the righteous predecessors would make: O Allah! We ask you through Your mercy that has enveloped all things, and with Your glory that has made all things submit, relent and surrender. We ask you through Your greatness through which you have triumphed and overpowered all things, and with Your supremacy that reigns sovereign over all. We ask you through Your power whom none can overcome, and with Your light which shines through all things. We ask you through Your knowledge which encompasses all things, and with Your name with whom all things begin! We ask You through Your face that remains after all perishes. *Ya nur! Ya quddus!* [repeated thrice]. O First of the First and Last of the Last. O Allah, *O rahman, O rahim*, forgive the sins which cause

these calamities; and forgive the sins that tear apart our protections, and forgive the sins that make us regret, and forgive the sins that bar our provisions, and forgive the sins that bring trials and strength to enemies, and forgive the sins that prevent the rain from descending and result in a swift destruction and pollute and darken the air and repel the answering of supplications, and forgive us - O Lord - all the sins that make us enter hell.