

THE BLESSINGS BEHIND CALAMITIES

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ
كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ، أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ،
وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدَهُ وَرَسُولَهُ، اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ عَلَى
سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ وَمَنْ تَبِعَهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ إِلَى يَوْمِ الدِّينِ.
أَمَّا بَعْدُ،

فِيَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ.

Let us all increase our devotion towards Allah the Almighty by performing all that He has decreed and abstaining from all that He has prohibited. Hopefully, we will be forgiven in this world and in the Hereafter.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Recently, disasterous storms, typhoons, earthquakes and tsunamis have occurred in some parts of the world. These kinds of calamities do not only destroy people's wealth but also kill thousands.

We often hear about deaths as a result of road accidents, airplane crashes, ferry wrecks, fires, floods, landslides or drowning. Many are also victims of various diseases such as cancer, heart disease, diabetes, stroke, hemorrhagic dengue fever, food poisoning,

etc. Allah the Almighty says in the Quran in Chapter 21 (Surah Al-Anbia'), verse (ayat) 35:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ ۗ وَنَبَلُّوكُم بِالشَّرِّ وَالْخَيْرِ فِتْنَةً وَإِلَيْنَا تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

Which means: *Every soul will taste death. And We test you with evil and with good as trial; and to Us you will be returned.*

Imam al-Baidhawi defined the word 'disaster' as all the hated accidents that befall human beings. Among them are business losses or bankruptcy, loss of property or livestock, illness, unemployment, loss of wealth, starvation, harassment, or be victims of crimes, etc. Allah the Almighty mentioned this in the Quran in Chapter 2 (Surah Al-Baqarah), verse (ayat) 155:

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ

وَالثَّمَرَاتِ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ ﴿١٥٥﴾

Which means: *And We will surely test you with something of fear and hunger and a loss of wealth and lives and fruits, but give good tidings to the patient...*

Allah the Almighty sends these misfortunes as reminders so that mankind will reflect. It is possible that we have committed sins so Allah the Almighty sends reminders and warnings. Every disaster that happens has great lessons among which is to test the level of our faith. In Chapter 29 (Surah al-Ankabut) verse (ayat) 2 in the Quran Allah the Almighty said:

أَحْسَبَ النَّاسُ أَنْ يُتْرَكُوا أَنْ يَقُولُوا ءَامَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ ﴿٢﴾

Do the people think that they will be left alone on saying, "We believe" and they will not be tested?

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The calamity that strikes us is also a sign that Allah the Almighty loves us and wants good for His servants. The Prophet (may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him [pbuh]) said in a *Hadith* which was narrated by Imam at-Tirmizi:

إِذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِعَبْدِهِ الْخَيْرَ عَجَّلَ لَهُ الْعُقُوبَةَ فِي الدُّنْيَا، وَإِذَا أَرَادَ بِعَبْدِهِ الشَّرَّ
أَمْسَكَ عَنْهُ بِذَنْبِهِ حَتَّى يُؤَافِيَ بِهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ.

Which means: "When Allah wants kindness to His servant, then He will hasten the punishment in this world. And when He chooses spitefulness to His servant, Allah delays the punishment until the Day of Judgment."

Allah the Almighty also promises a great reward to those who are tested with calamities if they accept the tests patiently as mentioned by the Prophet (pbuh) in a *Hadith* which was narrated by Imam Ahmad:

إِنَّ عِظَمَ الْجَزَاءِ مَعَ عِظَمِ الْبَلَاءِ، وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى إِذَا أَحَبَّ قَوْمًا ابْتَلَاهُمْ،
فَمَنْ رَضِيَ فَلَهُ الرِّضَى، وَمَنْ سَخِطَ فَلَهُ السُّخْطُ

Which means: "The greater the tribulation, the greater is the reward. When Allah loves a people, He tests them. Whoever is content, for him is Allah's pleasure; and whoever is discontent, for him is Allah's rage.

In addition, a calamity, whether large or small, removes our sin. The Prophet (pbuh) said in a *Hadith* which was narrated by Imam al-Bukhari:

مَا مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ تُصِيبُ الْمُسْلِمَ إِلَّا كَفَرَ اللَّهُ بِهَا عَنْهُ ، حَتَّى الشَّوْكَةِ يُشَاكُهَا

Which means: "No calamity befalls a Muslim except that Allah expiates some of his sins because of it, even if it is only a prick of a thorn".

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

To end today's *khutbah*, let us ponder and take heed of the calamities that have befallen humanity around the world. Let us all be mindful and learn a lesson from all these tragedies. Calamities demand us to alway be patient, be grateful, be calm and have faith in Allah. Keep on reminding ourselves that every disaster that happens brings a lesson to us. Let us remember Allah's reminder in the Quran in Chapter 3 (Surah Ali Imran), verse (*ayat*) 186:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

وَإِنْ تَصَبَّرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ

Which means: *Ye shall certainly be tried and tested in your possessions and in your personal lives; and ye shall certainly hear much that will grieve you, from those who received the Book before you and from those who worship many gods. But if ye persevere patiently, and guard against evil-then that will be the determining factor in all affairs.*

بَارَكَ اللهُ لِيْ وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقُرْآنِ الْعَظِيْمِ، وَتَفَعَّلِيْ وَإِيَّاكُمْ بِمَا فِيهِ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ
وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيْمِ، وَتَقَبَّلَ مِنِّيْ وَمِنْكُمْ تِلَاوَتَهُ، إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيْمُ. أَقُولُ
قَوْلِيْ هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللهَ الْعَظِيْمَ لِيْ وَلَكُمْ، وَلِسَائِرِ الْمُسْلِمِيْنَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ،
وَالْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ، فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَفُوْرُ الرَّحِيْمُ.