

**THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: LESSONS FOR HUMANITY FROM A
RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVE**

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This book is dedicated

To all those who have died by this deadly virus,

To all those who are suffering from this deadly virus,

To all those who have lost loved ones in this pandemic,

To all those who work to wipe out this deadly virus from humanity,

This book is dedicated to all those who are working day and night in the health service sector from doctors, nurses, and other health professionals,

Above all, this book is dedicated to all politicians, security officers and civil servants who work hard day and night to protect people from this deadly virus.

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Preface:

Humanity is in jeopardy due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Humanity has never seen a pandemic on this scale. It has created a volatile situation in the socio-political and economic order of the world, as well as a new world order with its ferocity. It has shocked the humanity and more importantly, the world leaders are stunned with the wide spread of the virus. It has shocked health experts in virology and medicine. It has brought the world to a standstill. It is my objective here to examine the impact of this pandemic from the religious perspective of Islamic teaching. What does Islam say about the pandemic diseases? How did Muslims deal with this kind of pandemic in the past? Why does God send this kind of infectious disease to humanity? Does God allow evil to inflict on humanity? Is this deadly pandemic a divine punishment or a divine warning to humanity? How did classical Islamic scholars deal with pandemics? I will trace the historical account of pandemics within Islamic history. How should we read and analyse the natural calamity that has befallen humanity? As a Muslim community, how should we respond to this natural disaster? Furthermore, there are some conspiracy theories around this covid19 pandemic between contemporary social scientists. I will examine all information available to gauge the accuracy of these theories.

I also examine the different preventative measures Islam proposes to eradicate the virus. This virus and its ferocity illustrate the divine super-natural power. The modern world with all its scientific and technological advancements, finds it hard to deal with it. World leaders, with all their mighty political and military power, find it difficult to control it. The medical experts have not been able to come up with a vaccine for this deadly virus yet. All this signifies the divine power behind the spread of this deadly virus. Man may be the most sophisticated species among the other inhabitants of the planet, yet he finds it difficult when something takes place beyond his control. This invisible

virus proves to us man is weak in the face of the divine power. It also tells us that man's knowledge and skills are somewhat confined within his physical world. The pandemic literature will increase in volumes in coming days. Medical experts, social scientists, academics, writers, and other professionals will start publishing research papers and books on corona virus from different perspectives. Yet, this book will be totally different from all those books.

This book is not written to examine the pathology of this virus. Neither it has been written to examine the socio-political, psychological, medical, environmental, or economic impact of this pandemic. Rather this book is written to examine some philosophical and theological questions behind this pandemic.? Why suffering is unavoidable in human life? What are the moral and ethical implications of producing such a deadly virus by anyone? Why God inflicts such a phenomenal pandemic that kills children, young and elderly indiscriminately? This book explores the relationship between religious teaching and ever-increasing natural disaster in humanity. This pandemic has clearly shown without a shadow of doubt how a divine power controls this world. How could an invisible microbe endanger the entire world like this if there is no superpower behind this microbe? Atheists have been challenging God with their arguments and yet, God has challenged these atheists with an invisible virus. Human history tells us nations have been destroyed when people rebelled against the divine will. The pandemic could be a divine precautionary warning to the entire humanity to amend its way and come back to their Lord. Humanity should learn some lessons from this deadly social phenomenon.

The deadly corona virus should make humanity to realise its purpose in life. What lessons man should we learn from these abrupt deaths? Is this a coincident or is there any divine power behind it? For a faithful Muslim, Jew, or Christian nothing happens in the world without a divine power behind it.

Faithful people always relate natural disasters with divine power. Today, priests, monks, gurus, clerics, preachers, quacks, medics, politicians, writers, herbalists, and many other groups are talking about coronavirus. Doctors, virologists, medical experts, and biologists are academically and professionally qualified people to talk about the corona pandemic. This book is all about the impact of this disease on faith, attitudes, and mindset of people. I am not a medical expert on virology. So, this book does not deal with any clinical or health aspects of this disease. For faithful communities, this pandemic period is a golden opportunity to reach out with the monothetic divine message to the humanity. The three revealed religions namely, Judaism, Christianity and Islam have emphasised on the next life after death. This pandemic reminds us of the temporary nature of the worldly life. Muslims, Jews, and Christians all believe that all human souls have an eternal entity after their death. All these three religions share the belief in the Day of Judgment. People will be brought to account for their actions in the Day of judgment.

This world is not created in vain rather this meticulous universe with its wonders must have been created with a purpose in life. That is to fulfil the divine will on earth. This worldly life is not merely to fulfil human desires. Everything in the world is created for the benefits of man. Yet, what purpose man is created for? The Holy Qur'an tells us that man is created only to obey God. This kind of pandemic tells us that only God can protect us from death. Many medical experts are still struggling to know why some people have strong immunity to protect themselves from this deadly virus while some others do not have. Medical experts and politicians are trying to find a remedy for this deadly virus. Yet, it looks that this virus has gone beyond human control. We do not know how long it will take and yet, humanity should know that many incidents and occurrences take place in the world beyond human control.

This virus is one of such occurrences that signifies the omnipotence of God alone. This book is divided into six chapters. The first chapter traces the pandemic from a historical perspective. The second chapter examines the pandemic in Islamic history. The third chapter examines natural calamities from an Islamic perspective. The fourth chapter evaluates some lessons that we should learn from this virus. The fifth chapter examines some conspiracy theories about the corona pandemic. The six chapter examines the world aftermaths of the corona pandemics. The final part gives a short summery of this book.

CHAPTER 1: PANDEMICS: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The objective of this chapter is to trace the origin of the history of the pandemic in a historical perspective. This chapter also traces the pandemics in Islamic history as well to study the Muslim response to the outbreak of pandemic. Moreover, this chapter examine the outbreak of the coronavirus in a historical context.

a) THE ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF CORONAVIRUS.

Medical experts assertively argue that the coronavirus is not a new virus rather it has been there for decades. Medical experts have defined it

“ Any of a family (*coronaviridae*) of large single-stranded RNA viruses that have a lipid envelope studded with club-shaped spike proteins, infect birds and many mammals including humans, and include the causative agents of MERS, SARS. ([www, Merriam webster.com](http://www.Merriam-webster.com)). “Human coronaviruses, first characterised in the 1969s, are responsible for a substantial proportion of upper respiratory tract infections in children, since 2005, at least 5 new human coronaviruses have been identified” (Kahn, Jeffrey S & McIntosh, Kenneth. 2005, p1). It is believed that “infectious diseases are caused by pathogens. Pathogens are microorganisms that cause infectious diseases. Infectious diseases are diseases that can easily spread. There are several types of pathogens, including Fungi, viruses, protozoa, (Single-celled organisms, and Bacteria. (James Foster & others, P.2012, p.19). Bacteria are single-celled organised that range in size from 0.001um-0.5um. They can be seen using a light microscope. Bacteria usually reproduce by a process called fission, where each bacterium divides into two. If they have enough warmth, moisture and food, some bacteria can reproduce by fission once every 20 minutes. (Peter D Reley,2004, p117). One medical website describes the origin and the history of the coronavirus in the following way. “Coronaviruses didn’t

just pop up recently. They are a large family of viruses that have been around for a long time. Many of them can make people ill with sniffles, or coughing. Before the SARS-Cov2 outbreak, coronaviruses were thought to cause only mild respiratory infections in people. The new (or “novel”) coronavirus is one of several known to infect humans. It’s probably been around for some time in animal. Sometimes, a virus in animals crosses over into people. That’s what scientists think happened here. So, this virus isn’t new to the world, but it is new to humans. When scientists found out it was making people sick in 2019, they named it as a novel coronavirus.... Scientists have divided coronaviruses into four sub-groupings called alpha, beta, gamma, and delta. Seven of these viruses can infect people. The four common ones are:

- 229 E (alpha)
- NL63 (alpha)
- OC43 (beta)
- HKU1 (beta).

The three less- common ones are:

- MERS-CoV, a beta virus that causes Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS)
- SARS-CoV, a beta virus that causes severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS)
- SARS-CoV-2, which causes COVID-19.

..... Coronaviruses have all their generic materials in something called RNA (ribonucleic acid) RNA has some similarities to DNA, but they are not the same. When viruses infect you, they attach to your cells, get inside them, and make copies of their RNA, which helps them spread. If there is a copying mistake, the RNA gets changed. Scientists call those changes mutations. These changes happened randomly and by accidents. It’s a normal part of what happens to viruses as they multiply and spread” (Brunilda Nazario, Web MD medical references, accessed on (5/5/2020). Only God knows how many species are on our planet earth. The microbes have their own world. It is believed that there are over 10, 000 species of bacteria in just one hundred

grams of soil. (V. Torsvik, R, Sorheim and j. Goksoyr, p170). Scientists have highlighted the bacteria diversity in soil and sediment communities to expose the wonders of God. How many thousand microbes may live on the sea and undergrounds? Only God knows.

The earthly atmosphere is full of different kinds of microbes and life is surrounded with friendly and unfriendly microbes in different kinds. It is also believed that the diversity of microbes in the air is greater. “In the air samples, the researchers uncovered at least 1.800 types of microbes, including those such as the diarrhoea-causing *Arcobacter* and ulcer-inducing *Helicobacter* genera that can be dangerous to human health” (David Biello, 2006, P.1). The diversity of microbes on the air is on “par with the diversity of microbes in the soil” (Ibid. p.1). Scientists have described the similarities and differences between these viruses and bacteria. There are armies of friendly and unfriendly viruses and bacteria around us and yet, God has protected people with a defensive mechanism he implanted in human bodies. The air we take has got many viruses and yet, God protects humanity from harmful viruses in the air. The water we drink contains bacterial bugs and yet God protects us with a strong immune system in our guts. This form of biodiversity and ecosystem cannot be in place in this universe by chance without a wise and intelligent Creator.

Is not wise to eat or drink in the name of your God, to protect you from all these visible and invisible microbes and bacteria. The coronavirus reminds us that the humanity needs a divine protection even from the air we breathe in today. Microbiologists have analysed the functions of microbes in many ways. Microbes serve people in many ways, they help in the fermentation of foods, treat sewages, produce fuel, and enzymes. Microbes have also been used in biological warfare and bioterrorism. They are also used as a vital component for the fertilization of soil. In the human body microorganisms make up the

human microbiota including the essential gut flora. There are different types of the pathogens that are responsible for many infectious diseases and as such are the target of hygiene measures. The world Health organization W.H.O defines the coronavirus disease in the following way. “Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. Most people infected with the COVID-19 virus will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment. Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, and cancer are more likely to develop serious illness. The best way to prevent and slow down transmission is be well informed about the coronavirus, the disease it causes and how it spreads. Protect yourself and others from infection by washing your hands or using an alcohol-based rub frequently and not touching your face....The coronavirus spreads primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes, so it’s important that you also practice respiratory etiquette (for example, by coughing into a flexed elbow).At this time, there are no specific vaccines or treatments for COVID-19. However, there are many ongoing clinical trials evaluating potential treatments. WHO will continue to provide updated information as soon as clinical findings become available”? (Accessed On 25-05-2020, W.H.O.Org.).Initially, medical experts assumed that the corona virus causes a normal flu like many other flus and yet, this invisible virus has brought the world into a standstill and created unprecedented panic.

According to some medical surveys “the weight of a virus is measured at 0.85 actograms or 0.85×10^{-18} grams, or about one millionth of a trillionth grams. About 70 billion virus makes a person sick-attract about 0.0000005 gams. Since the total number of cases worldwide is now over 4 million, the total weight of the rogue viruses that descend the world comes

about 2 grams. So, entire humanity is on its knees with a total 2-gram corona virus” (accessed on 10/05/2020). How can this invisible virus get an impetus to make all these mutations? Why do these viruses change randomly? Why do some people have immunity from the infection and others don’t? Why are some viruses harmful to humans and some others are not? Why do the functions of viruses and bacteria bugs differ person to person and place to place? All this cannot be accidental or coincidental rather there must be some sort of divine power behind this event. All this proves that there is some sort of divine power that controls living things in the world. you may call that power God or something supernatural being. This marvellous universe with all its galaxies and planets could not have come into the existence from nothingness. This is because, nothingness cannot produce something. The holy Qur’an clearly illustrates that God created this universe. So, these microbial and bacterial worlds are nothing but a divine design.

Dr Rayes Mustafa in his book (From the diary of a paediatrician) explores the meticulous nature of human body and its functions and argues that God has created man with His subtle and miraculous design. His contention is that Man must be always thankful for his Creator who has created him this wonderful design with a strong immune system to fight all antibodies and diseases without paying a penny. He notes that “literally, we have many factories in the form of organs in our bodies and the liver is just small organ but a huge factory. To put this in context; if we think of our liver as a factory to build, even a tower of the size of Dubai’s Burj Khalifa is not adequate. It would be fair to say that even if we had thousands of employees in a huge building, they would not be able to compete the tiny miracle which happens inside our liver” (Rayes Mustafa. P 152). Likewise, all other parts of human bodies function in a miraculous way designed by God. Yet, people are ungrateful to God. Alexis Carrel in his famous book (Man, The Unknown) has that there are so many

mysteries in human body and yet, modern science has failed to discover. “immense regions of our inner world are still unknown. How do the molecules of chemical substances associate in order to form the complex and temporary organs of cells? How do the genes contained in the nucleus of a fertilised ovum determine the characteristics of the individual deriving from that ovum? How do cells organise themselves by their own efforts into societies, such as the tissues, and the organs? Like the ants and bees, they have advance knowledge of the part they are destined to play in the life of the community.... we are a compound of tissues, organs, fluids, and consciousness. But the relations between consciousness and cerebrum are still a mystery” (Alexis Carrel, p14). The microbes and bacteria are functioning in a miraculous way to maintain the ecosystem of the universe and human bodies and yet, when humanity interferes with nature all sort of diseases start in the world. We should read the corona pandemic from this perspective.

“A pandemic is an epidemic occurring on a scale that cross international boundaries, usually affecting people on a worldwide scale”. (Porta. Miquel, 2008, p.179). Yet, epidemic is an outbreak that affects many people within a community, population, or region. But it is limited into a region or country. For instance, when corona was confined in the Wuhan region it was called as an epidemic and yet, when it is spread everywhere else, it was called as a pandemic. Pandemics, epidemics, and plagues are not unprecedented in human history. Humanity has seen many deadly pandemics and plagues in history. Human interactions and close contacts between people created plagues many times in history. Historical records reveal that plagues existed from ancient times since humanity established human settlements on earth. Historical records tell us that plagues had killed millions of people in the past. Owen Jarus gives us a brief outline to some worst pandemics and epidemic in history. Michael. Dols says that “In recorded history of there have been three major

plague pandemics of considerable medical and historical importance: the plague of Justinian in the mid-sixth century, the black death in the mid-fourteenth century, and the Bombay plague in the late nineteenth century “ (Michael. W. Dols. P. 162).

1)Prehistoric epidemic: Circa 3000 B.C in China	Plagues ripped through this some villages killing thousands of people in some parts of northeast China before 5000 years ago. This area is called as “Hamin Manggha”.
2)Plague of Athens: 430 B.C.	Around 430 B.C an epidemic spread through Athens killing thousands of people.
3)Antonine Plague: A. D. 165-180	A smallpox outbreak killed thousands of people in Roman empire
4) Plague of Cyprian A.D 250-271.	This plague is named after St. Cyprian a bishop of Carthage a city in Tunisia.
5) Plague of Justinian; A. D. 541-542	This is named after the emperor Justinian. It killed millions of people in the Byzantine empire
6) The black death: 1346-1353	Some type of plague spread from Asia to Europe during this period, killing thousands of people.
7) Cocoliztli Epidemic 1545-1548	The viral haemorrhagic fever killed millions in Mexico and Central America
8) American plagues: 16th century	This plague was introduced into America by European explorers
9) Great plague of London: 1665-1666	This plague killed thousands in London.
10)Great plague of Marseille: 1720-1723	This plague spread in France when a ship called Grand-Saint-Antoine sailing from Mediterranean docked in France.
11) Russian Plague: 177-1772	During the time of the Empress of Russia (Catherine II, or Catherine the Great, this plague spread, and she closed factories and places of worship.

12) Philadelphia yellow fever epidemic: 1793	This plague was transmitted by mosquitoes killing more than 5000 people.
13) Flu Pandemic: 1889-1890	This flu pandemic spread from Eastern Russia into Europe killing thousands of people.
14) American Polio Epidemic: 1916.	This spread in New York city killing thousands of people in 1916
15) Spanish flu: 1918-1920	This flu spread in many parts of Europe after world war I. it is an irony to called it as Spanish flu but this did not start in Spain but free Spanish press spread the news of this flu so, people thought it came from Spain.
16: Asian flu 1957-1958.	This pandemic spread in China, Singapore and Hongkong killing over one million people.
17) Aids pandemic from 1981 till present time	Millions of people have been killed by this pandemic
18) H1N1 swine flu pandemic ;2009-2010	This flu originated from Mexico and spread many parts of the world.
19) West African Ebola Epidemic 2014-2016	It spread some countries in Africa killing many people.
20) Zika virus epidemic; 2015 to present day	This virus originated in South America and it spread in infants

Source: accessed on 22/04/2020. www. http. live science. [Owen Jarus - Live Science Contributor](#), [All About History](#) March 20, 2020).

It can be said that the humanity has encountered many pandemics in its history and yet, the novel COVID-19 is different from other pandemics. Humanity lives in a global village. People have closely interconnected one another. People's movement is dramatically increased. People are increasingly interacting than ever before in human history. People travel more frequently than any time in human history. Therefore, people are more likely to be afflicted by this pandemic on a large scale. As a result, the spread of virus is unavoidable. Yet, today there are more preventive mechanisms than ever

before in human history. The corona pandemic has become a global problem and collective political and medical efforts are taken by all countries to control and prevent the spread of this virus. Despite all this effort, many people are dying daily everywhere in the world. It is now beyond human control to prevent it. Now, time has come for humanity to beg for a divine intervention to stop it. There must be some divine power behind this rapid spread of this virus. This pandemic has exposed the weakness and limitation of man. He may have walked on the Moon, and invented so many advanced digital technologies and yet, man is limited by time and space. Man has his own human weakness whereas God is eternal and omnipotent. This pandemic has displayed the mighty divine power that controls the universe.

b) PANDEMICS IN ISLAMIC HISTORY:

Michael. W. Dols states that the primary sources for the study of the plague in Islamic history are the works of Imam Tabari. Works of Ibn Abi Hajalah in 764/1362, Qutaybah (d. 276/88), Ibn Abi al-Dunya (d. 281/894). Baha' ad-Din as-Subki (d. 756/1355), Ibn al-Wardi, Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani's (d. 852/1449) and Suyuti (d. 910/1505). Yet, Michael. W. Dols argues that the earliest reference to the plague is mentioned in the Hadith literature. Ibn Hajar al- 'Ashqalani in his treatise on plagues gives us a brief historical account of pandemic literature in Islamic history. He had collected some books, manuscripts, and treatises on pandemics from the formative period of Islam until his time. He had surveyed 33 manuscripts on plagues from Islamic history. Dols argues that the works of Mada'ini (d. 231/845) were incorporated into the works of Ibn Abi al-Dunya (d. 281/894). History of at-Tabari, Kitab al-i'tibar and Kitab at-Tawa'in by Ibn Abi d-Dunya, and the Kitab ma'arif by Ibn Qutaybah are some of the primary sources for the study of the plague in Islamic history. (Michael. Dols p.374). He further argued that early account of record on the plague "by the Muslim writers after the Black Death is a fairly

uniform chronology of plagues in early Islamic history” (Ibid, p.375). Likewise, Ibn al-Khatib, (d.1374/776H) wrote an extensive medical research article on plagues. It is reported that the Spanish Muslim community suffered from some sort of plagues in 14th century. Ibn Khatib wrote his medical treatise in response to people’s queries about plagues during his time. All this tells us that the Muslim empires and dynasties suffered hugely from pandemics throughout Islamic history.

Muslim rulers and doctors had encountered some deadly plagues and pandemics in Islamic history. M. Dols notes that “The appearance of epidemics in early Islamic history may be attributed in part to the cyclical recurrences of plague in the Middle East following the Plague of Justinian, beginning in A. D. 541. The history of the plague epidemics through the Umayyad Period has been reconstructed based on the Arabic plague treatises written after the Black Death. These epidemics provoked medical and religious-legal explanations and prescriptions, which have strongly influenced the attitudes and behaviour of the Muslim community towards the disease. Besides the deaths of important men by plague, it is suggested that the endemic nature of plague during the early Islamic Empire may have significantly retarded population growth and debilitated Muslim society in Syria and Iraq during the Umayyad Period” (Michael. Dols. (P.1).

The classical Muslim scholars have also defined the epidemic and pandemic in their religious and medical treatises. Ibn al-Khatib (d.1374) defines the pandemic as “a serious and deadly disease. The virus gets into lungs through breathing and it goes through veins. It pollutes blood. Then, fever and vomiting follow it and then plagues, or swollen lumps of pandemic kinds appear. Ibn al-Khatib in his medical essay noted that the contaminated air is one of the main causes for the spread of the plague. When people breathe in the contaminated air, they are afflicted with the plague. That is why medical

experts have advised people to purify the air with sanitations. People do not know how important is to breathe in clean air. People who have got breathing difficulties will know how the importance of pure air is. This virus damages the entire human body” (Ibn Khatib.P22). Muslim doctors took some scientific methods to stop the spread of the pandemics across the Muslim world. The Islamic history has witnessed the spread of pandemics from the early Islamic history. In fact, the prophet advised his follow companions what to do and what not to do during the pandemics. Some classical Islamic scholars argued that the holy Qur’an punished the children of Israel by pandemics when they altered divine statements given to them by God.

The Holy Qur’an says that “But the wrongdoers substituted a different word from the one they had been given, so, because they persistently disobeyed, we sent a plague down from the heaven upon the wrongdoers” (Qur’an: 2: 59). The Imam Tabari said that they were destroyed by a plague. This is supported by some Hadith. It is reported that “Usama Ibn Zaid asked the prophet about the plague. Then, the prophet said that the plague is the miasma that was sent to a group of children of Israel. Or upon a group of people from a previous nation before you. If you know that any country has been afflicted with the plague, do not go there, if it is afflicted where you live do not leave it” (Bukhari).

The holy Qur’an talks about the sickness and sick people and yet, it mostly speaks about the sickness of the human heart in a moral sense. Some Muslim scholars have argued that the Holy Qur’an has talked about pandemics and this can be seen in the story of king Abraha: A Christian viceroy in Yemen of the Ethiopian king came on elephants to attack the sacred house of Allah in Makkah in pre-Islamic history around (570). Michael W. Dols asks this question about this historical incident. “Does the surah al-fil (the "Chapter of the Elephant") refer to an epidemic of plague? The surah relates the attack

against Mecca by Abrahah, the Christian viceroy in the Yemen of the king of Ethiopia, and the destruction of his army?” (Ibid. p. 375). Almighty Allah revealed this Surah to the prophet Muhammad to comfort and strengthen the faith and to warn the disbelievers.

“(Do you (prophet) not see how your Lord dealt with the army of the elephant? Did He not utterly compound their plans? He sent ranks of birds against them, pelting them with pellets of hard-baked clay. He made them like cropped stubble” (Qur’an: 105:1-5). The Egyptian Quranic interpreter Muhammed Abduh has inferred this surah to indicate that God sent microbes to destroy the army of Abrahah. For him, the phrase” Tayran Ababil” is nothing but a kind of germ or microbes or bacteria which inflicted the army of Abraha. In line with this argument, Dols argues that a pandemic appeared in the Roman empire in the same period in history. So, some historical accounts indicate that there was pandemic in the Roman Empire when the army of Abraha attacked Makkah.

Almighty God could have used the invisible microbes to destroy the tyrant who came to destroy the house of God. So, according to these historical accounts, the pandemics and plagues existed in the Arabia in pre-Islamic history. Yet, M. Dols argues that none of the classical Muslim exegesis has interpreted this Surah in relation to any pandemics. However, he argues that “the early biographer of the prophet, Ibn Ishaq, reported that this was the first appearance of measles and small-pox among the Arabs. The possibility of a small-pox epidemic is given additional weight by the fact that the plague epidemics which struck Europe in the late sixth century coincided with violent epidemics of small-pox. It appears that the first serious epidemic of smallpox attacked most of continental Europe about the year 570. (Dole. P. 376).

c) CALIPH OMAR AND THE PLAGUE of *‘Amawās*: (*Tā‘ūn ‘Amawās*)

The early Islamic empire under leadership of Caliph Omar witnessed one of the deadliest plagues in Islamic history. It is reported that an Arab Muslim army camp was set up in the village of *‘Amawās* by Caliph Omar to conquer the Syrian region. The village of *‘Amawās* is situated presently in Israel-occupied territory of Palestine. It is reported that Israel destroyed the village of *‘Amawās* during the 1967 war. This plague was named as the plague of *‘Amawas* because it started in this village. During the caliphate of *‘Omar*, the Muslim army was stationed in that village under leadership of Abu *‘Ubaydah*. This village is situated near to the capital city of *‘Quds* in Palestine. The plague of *‘Amawās* struck in the Islamic calendar year of 18 according to some historians. It was reported that the plague killed around 25,000 soldiers and their relatives. The plague of *‘Amawās* killed some of the prophet's senior companions. It is reported that Abu Ubaid ibn Jarrah, Yazid Ibn Abu Sufiyan, and Muaz Ibn Jabal died due to this plague. It is also narrated by the historian Baladuri that prior to the plague of *‘Amawās*, a terrifying plague struck the Persian Empire. This included some senior companions of the prophet. The companions of the holy prophet introduced the concept of social isolation during the time of the caliphate of Omar.

It is reported by many narrators that the Caliph Omar intended to visit Syria during his reign to inspect the battlefield situations and the socio-political conditions of the people. The Caliph Umar Ibn al-Khattab took necessary precautions when he came to know about the spread of the plague. It was reported that Umar was on a journey with some of his companions. When they reached a border of town, he was informed of the spreading of the plague in the town for which he was travelling to. Umar consulted his group regarding whether they should proceed or return (to Madinah). Most of the companions suggested that they should return to Madinah. One of them

reminded him of tradition of the prophet in this respect. “if you hear of an outbreak of plague in a land, do not enter it, and if the plague breaks out in a place while you are in it, do not leave that place”. So, Umar decided to return. Then someone ask him if he is running away from the destiny of God. Umar replied that they were moving away from one destiny to another destiny of God. This plague did a greater damage in the history of Muslim. The Caliph Umar sent a letter to Abu ‘Ubaydah saying “I am in urgent need of you. If my letter reaches you at night, I strongly urge you to leave before dawn. If this letter reaches you during the day, I strongly urge you to leave before evening and hasten to me”. When Abu’ ‘Ubaydah received ‘Umar’s letter, he said, “I know why the Amir al-Mu’minin needs me. He wants to secure the survival of someone who, however, is not eternal”. So, he wrote to ‘Umar. “I know that you need me. But I am with an army of Muslims and I have no desire to save myself from what is afflicting them. I do not want to separate from them until God wills. So, when this letter reaches you, release me from your command and permit me to stay on”.

When ‘Omar read this letter tears filled his eyes and those who were with him asked, Has Abu ‘Ubaydah died, O Amir al-Mu’minin? No’ said he, “But death near to him” Omar’s prediction was not wrong. Abu ‘Ubaydah was afflicted with the plague and died. Mu’adh Ibn Jabal took the governorship of Syria and he too was afflicted with the plague and died. Then, Amr Ibn al’Ash, took over the governorship. It was during his time the plague ceased. He introduced some measures to isolate people. He asked them to go to mountain and to live in an isolation to protect people from the plague. All historical record indicates that there was not any plague during the time of the prophet in the holy city of Makkah and Medina. However, the early Muslim community managed to conquer many parts of Persian empire during the plague. It is claimed that the Umayyad empire was defeated by Abbasid due to the death of

some governors and army commanders during the plagues. The city of Basara suffered from a dangerous plague in the year 69 of the Islamic calendar. It had been a challenging time for the Caliph Abdul Malik ibn Marwan. All this tell us that the plagues are not an unusual social phenomenon in Islamic history. The Muslim historians tell us that the social structure and lifestyle of people dramatically changed during these periods of plagues in Umayyad dynasty. It is reported that more than 70 thousand people died for three continuous days. People used to dig their own graves in utter despair. (A.-Hashemi, p. 6).

All these historical accounts tell us that the Muslim community in the formative period of Islamic empire encountered some dangerous plagues. The medical experts imposed some strict measures to control the spread of the plague. What did the caliphs and governors do? The Caliphs and their children isolated themselves in villages and desert areas to protect themselves from plagues. Umayyad Empire encountered severe economic declines. The revenues of Umayyad Empire dramatically decreased during the prolonged plagues. In fact, the caliph Hisham Bin Abdul Malik (d.125 AH) tried to change the capital of the Umayyad Caliphate from Damascus to a place called “Rusafa” to escape from the plague. The Umayyad Caliphate suffered waves of fatalities due to the plagues. The plagues also destroyed cultivation, and crops and changed the demographic map of the Urban and villages.

The plagues continued in the Abbasid empire too but at a slower pace. Many plagues took place during the Abbasid regime in many parts of their empire. The spread of plagues declined in the first centuries of the succession of Bani Al-Abbas, yet, it reappeared during the Mamluk era in the Levant, Egypt, and Hejaz. It was repeated at the rate of a plague in every 17 years. Aleppo and Alexandria had been the epicentres of the plagues in years between 749-787,826,841 AH and 782,788 and 790 A.H. This may have been due to the

central positions of these two cities and the international trade with Europeans in those days. The Ottoman Empire witnessed many plagues. Nukhet Varlik traces the origin and history of plagues in the early Mediterranean world: (1347-1600). She traces the historical accounts of plagues and epidemics in the Ottoman empire and how the plagues shaped the lifestyles and politics, trade, military expansion, and other political connection between Ottoman with the rest of the world could have paved the way for the spread of the plagues. (Nukhet Varlik, 2015.P7). She argues that plagues continued to prevail in most parts of Ottoman Empire. “ we are talking about a series of epidemic outbreaks that kept recurring in periodic intervals, in the empire’s early centuries, it was on average every ten years or so, then it became more frequent to the point of happening almost every year. Ottoman society became familiar with the outbreak plague over time, and in a way learned how to live with it” (Nukhet Varlik.P1). All these natural diseases and disasters would have slowed down the expansion.

The pandemics are not new for Muslim communities. They have encountered these kinds of natural diseases in the past. Muslim medical experts and jurists set out some guidelines what to do and what to avoid during the pandemic. “Starting in the early 16th century, we see that the Ottoman central administration started to develop new regulations for the burial of plague victims in Istanbul and other cities, as the plague deaths surged. They established new communal cemeteries outside the city walls, kept records of daily death tolls, and provided services for the funeral industry. In addition, they tried to keep the streets clean (removing waste) and paved and removed businesses such as tanneries or slaughterhouses outside the city walls, because they were believed to contaminate the air. The state also offered tax relief to individuals and communities affected by the plague and promoted the development of health services. These institutions and practices that developed

in the 16th century continued in one form or another through the modernisation period in the 19th century” (Nukhet Varlik. P1). The Muslim communities have been dealing with the problems of pandemics for a long time. Yet, Islamic attitudes to the pandemics are different from that of modern western attitudes and approaches.

d) PANDEMIC PREVENTION IN ISLAM

Islam proposes two kinds of preventive methods to protect humanity from pandemics. Islam encourages Muslim communities to follow all the precautionary medical guidelines. Ignoring medical guidelines on pandemics can be considered as a collective suicide from an Islamic perspective. Islam proposes some physical and spiritual methodologies to protect humanity from the pandemics. These two methods are imperative to protect humanity from the pandemics. Modern medical experts have proposed so many guidelines to protect us from the corona virus. Yet, ironically, Muslim medical experts too had already proposed some of these medical guidelines hundreds of years ago. Today, modern medics advise us to follow social isolation to protect us from the pandemic. Modern medics advise us to wash our hands frequently with soaps. They also advise us to use sanitisers. They also advise us to wash our hands when we come home from outings. They also advise us to cover our faces with masks and not to cough or sneeze on others. They also advise us to change our clothes as soon as we come home from an outing. They also advise us with other preventive methods to protect us from the pandemic. Ironically, all these methods were proposed by Muslim medics some years ago.

Ibn al-Nafis, (d.687.H) said that the plagues spread due to polluted and contaminated air. “The epidemic arises from contaminated air due to environmental or earthly malicious causes or due to stagnant water. Muslim

doctors initially suggested to clean the air with sanitation. This is somewhat like what health workers do today to clean in the public places with sanitation and hygienic fluids. They also prescribed some food items as a form of medicine. “vinegar, ginger, lemon, meats from birds and some fruits like apples. Moreover, they suggested to disperse plague afflicted people in rivers, reefs, valleys, and mountains as some form of quarantining. They believed that separating people in mountains in small groups will limit the spread of the disease and prevent the transmission of infection into other areas. It is argued that the modern concept of quarantine has been taken from the Islamic traditions. It was Ibn Sina who advised plague afflicted people to stay for 40 days in their homes. At a time when the modern world is grappling with the coronavirus pandemic, the first step the world Health Organization (WHO) took towards flattening the curve of coronavirus positive infections was to insist on deploying the method of quarantine, which was invented by Ibn Sina to tackle the outbreaks of human-to-human transmission of disease. In his masterpiece, ‘The Canon of Medicine’ which was published in 1025, Ibn Sina argued that a 40-day period of quarantine was essential to weaken the spread of contiguous infections” (Ufuk Necat Tasci, p1). 40-day Isolation was introduced in many religious traditions as well. Yet, this concept of Quarantine is taken from the prophetic tradition.

1) Quarantine and travel ban: A.K, Murad says that “plague and pestilence are nothing new or surprising for Islam. Look in our texts, and we find that waba’ defined as an epidemic, and “*Ta’un*” as contagion, and medieval Islam knew perfectly well that that the result could be a massacre. Ibn Battuta, describing the Black Death in Cairo, records that twenty thousand people a day were dying, and the imams would cry out: Shahada, Shahada”. (A.K. Murad, p.1). Some believe that dying in pandemics is a form of martyrdom. Some Muslim groups held religious gatherings in Pakistan, Indonesia, and some other parts of the Muslim world. These people do not know the seriousness of

the pandemic. This kind of religiousness is not viable today in this modern world. Strong faith and trust in God should not prevent them from taking physical measures to avoid the spread of pandemics and plagues. Islam always does not go against the physical laws of the universe. Islam encourages people to protect themselves from illness. It also encourages them to take treatment for illness and tells them that there are remedies for all diseases. So, taking treatment and preventive measures is part and parcel of Islamic teaching. At the same time, not taking preventive measures would be like a self-destruction.

The prophetic advice to isolate people during the pandemic is now adopted in many countries during this corona virus pandemic. He had advised his companions not leave any their villages and towns if they are inflicted by pandemics. At the same not to enter any city that has been inflicted with plagues. This prophetic advice had been put into practice throughout Islamic history. Muslim medical professionals and doctors practiced this since the formative period of Islam. Surprisingly, what today immunologists and WHO are suggesting was also suggested by Prophet Mohammad (SAW) some 1400 years back. So, travel bans, and quarantining are not new to Islamic traditions. “if you hear of an outbreak of plague in a land, do not enter it,”. This is done to prevent the spread of the virus. Social isolation and distancing are not new for Muslim community. Muslim medical experts proposed many guidelines to protect people from pandemics. Ibn Khatib advised that “during the pandemics, people must follow the health guidelines of medical experts and the treatment must be done with the consultation with medical experts and he suggested the spiritual treatment as well. (Ibid, 22 and 25).

2) Social distancing: Ironically, we find some references to the concept of social distancing in Muslim traditions. The Prophet had said that “Do not mix or place a sick person with a healthy person”. This prophetic advice was extended beyond people and include animals as well. “The cattle suffering from a disease should not be mixed with healthy cattle” (Bukhari). People should

avoid areas containing the virus. People must avoid contacting a sick persons and dead persons during a pandemic. They should not touch their personal items such as clothes, mugs, and other utilities. They should not use their living rooms, and they should go near them only in the case of the emergencies, people should take extra precaution. Moreover, he suggested the idea of social distancing during his time. In this modern world social isolation and quarantining are not easy tasks. People are so intricately connected and interacted today than any times in human history. Modern public services make people to interact so closely. Some governments are compelled to impose some fines on people who break the rules of social distancing. For instance, some, local councils in the UK impose one thousand pounds for breaking social distancing rules. Yet, In Islamic law, social distancing is a religious injunction according to these traditions. Ironically, yet, some Muslims do not follow the religious injunctions of social distancing. It is reported that once the caliph Omar encouraged a leprous woman who was circling the Holy Ka’bah in Mecca to go back to her home as it would be better for her and others.

3) Hygiene: With regards to good hygiene, Islam lays great emphasis on observing cleanliness under all circumstances. The Holy prophet once said: cleanliness is part of the faith”. The medical experts have advised people repeatedly to wash their hands. Handwashing techniques and good hygiene practices are encouraged by health professionals. The holy Qur’an says that “Indeed, He (God) loves those who keep themselves clean and pure” (Qur’an: 2: 223). A Muslim will wash his hands repeatedly five times a day. W.H.O (World Health Organization) is now advising people to wash their hands as many times as possible to ward off COVID-19. “Cover your mouth when sneezing” is another advice given by W.H.O as a protective measure from corona virus. Interestingly, this was also practiced by the Prophet. “Whenever

the messenger of Allah sneezed, he would cover his mouth with his hand or something else. This could have been to contain the spread of the microbes.

4) MEDICAL CARE FOR PANDEMICS:

Ibn Khatib proposed two types of preventative measures to protect people from the pandemic. “purify the air with the sanitation and perfumes. This includes all environments around us. This means that people should avoid all afflicted areas with virus. (Ibid, p.72-79). Today, modern medical experts have come up with many preventative measures to protect people from the corona virus and other pandemics. Yet, human experience tells us similar preventative measures were suggested by medical experts in the medieval time as well. Islamic intellectual heritage is very much rich in pandemic literature. More than 30 medical treatises were written by different medieval Muslim medical experts on the plagues dealing with different aspects of the plagues. Yet, medieval medical experts went beyond conventional medical practices and procedures to treat people afflicted with pandemics. Unlike modern medical doctors, the classical Muslim doctors had suggested that the remedy or the treatment for such an infectious disease is not entirely in the hands of medical doctors alone. They suggested that people must trust and hope in God to protect them from deadly viruses. God decides who lives and who dies.

5) SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT DURING THE PANDEMICS.

Ibn Hajar al- ‘Ashqalani proposed some spiritual mechanisms to protect the Muslim community from pandemics. In addition to following all medical guidelines, he proposed a few spiritual measures to protect humanity in times of a pandemic. The prophetic supplications give us extra confidence and faiths. In addition to all physical preventative measures, Muslims ought to

take some spiritual preventative measures. It is God alone who determines the time and place of death of people. So, our prophet instructs us to recite some supplications that connect us with our Creator. Good and bad tidings come from God alone. If God inflicts us with any harms no one could prevent it and if God does a good no one could stop it. So, Muslims have strong theological and supernatural connection with God. So many Qur'anic verses and prophetic traditions can be used to treat the plague afflicted people. Ibn Hajar al-'Ashqalani proposes and suggest the following spiritual steps to treat the people afflicted with plagues.

- 1) He had argued that humanity must amend its way of life and go back to its Creator (God) to protect it from the plagues. People should make supplications to their Creator to protect and free them from these diseases. Making prayers and supplications is a part and parcel of Islamic heritage. The prophet had asked Muslims to pray for those who were sick. Seeking protection from sickness is an Islamic tradition. There are many authentic traditions and supplications that people can recite in time of calamities. Those recitations highlight the importance of making supplication in the time of natural disasters like that of pandemics
- “O God, I seek Your protection from leukoderma, insanity, leprosy and from evil diseases”.
 - “I seek Your protection from the difficulties of severe calamities, from a bad fate, from a bad end and from the malicious joy of enemies” So, there is no better way to protect humanity than to seek protection from its Creator and the Lord of the universe. Muslims are advised to seek protection from God in their prayers.

- “In the name of God with whose name nothing can harm on earth or in heaven, and He is the All-Hearing, All-Knowing. The one who recites it three times in the morning and evening, nothing will harm him.” At-Tirmidhi (3388). It had been a habit of Muslims to make a collective supplications and prayers in congregation during the pandemics. It was reported that Muslims used to recite the Holy Qur’an during the pandemics. They used to fast for three days continuously during pandemics seeking divine intervention to free them from the pandemic and yet, Ibn Hajar al- ‘Ashqalani argued that Muslims should give more charity during the pandemics and repent for the wrongdoings before seeking divine help during the time of calamities.

2) Secondly, people should maintain patience during the time of the pandemics. They must tolerate the suffering from the pandemics. People must accept divine will and divine predestination. It is God who can eventually eliminate all sufferings. Human life is a testing ground. People are tested by different ways on their wealth, health, children and on other things. It is God who tests them through trials and turbulences. So, there is no point in people mourning about them and go against divine wills. There are a lot of Qur’anic verses and the prophetic traditions that praise the merits of tolerance and patience. For instance, “How wonderful is the case of a believer? There is good for him in everything. This applies only to a believer. If prosperity graces him, he expresses his gratitude to God, and that is good for him. If an adversity befalls on him, he endures it patiently and that is better for him. (Muslim). So, people have no option but to bear the sufferings from natural calamities and pandemics. This does not mean that people should become fatalistic during the pandemics, but they should take all preventative measures and yet, eventually it is God who protects us all.

3). People must have hope and trust in God. It is God who has a final say on matters that are beyond human control. Pandemics like that of the Corona virus must increase people's trust and faith in God more and more. It is God who controls all supernatural events in the world.

e) PANDEMICS AND THE SUPERFICIAL BELIEF:

There are some superficial beliefs attached to the outbreaks of plagues in Islamic history. Some classical Muslim scholars maintained some metaphysical connection between the outbreaks of the plagues and demons. It is reported to have said by the prophet that the plague is a prick of demons (Satan) on people. It is an integral part of judo-Christians and Muslim faith to believe in unseen and supernatural beings. The world of the metaphysics is not detectable by the human reason. Supernatural beings are invisible and undetectable by the human intellect. Yet, modern medical experts would not agree to make any superficial or metaphysical connection between the pandemics and devils. It is reported that to have said by Ibn Sina that "the plague is a toxic substance that causes a fighting tumour that occurs only in soft spots, and from different parts of the body. Yet, a prophetic tradition states that the plaque is a supernatural attack of demons by the devil on people. This theological notion does not fit with the modern medical interpretation to the health phenomenon of the pandemics. Ibn Hajar al-Ashqalani argued that the above-mentioned prophetic tradition does not contradict the symptoms of the plague that doctors prescribe (fever, cough, breathing difficulties, infection, and other symptoms). Some Muslim scholars maintained that the plague is not contagion rather it was directly inflicted upon humanity by some supernatural beings or demons.

Modern medical experts can diagnose only physical symptoms on the body, and they cannot diagnose the metaphysical symptoms. Ibn Hajar had

claimed that this is a likeness of identifying the cause of death. Medical doctors can identify many causes for deaths and yet, death occurs when the angel of death takes human souls as the Holy Qur'an describes it. The main contention of Ibn Hajar is that the plague is caused or afflicted upon people by demons. It cannot be proven by human experience and senses. Medical experts with their skills, knowledge and experience have been trying to find the pathology of this disease, they have been trying to find a quick remedy for this virus and yet they could not do anything about it. Why are some people afflicted and some other are not afflicted? Medical experts are stunned. They cannot find the reasons yet. Non-Muslim doctors may say it is because of different genes people have or they may say that this because the immunity of each person differs. They could not come up with some medical reasons and yet, we Muslims find that it is God alone that decides the time of our death. Who gave some people strong genes some others weak genes? No one else except God: The Creator of all human beings.

f) THE IMPORTANCE OF PROTECTING HUMAN LIVES IN ISLAMIC PHILOSOPHY

Protecting human life from death, pandemics, diseases, murder, and suicide is one of the primary objectives of Islamic law. This primary objective of Islamic law has a wider implication in the modern world. It could include issues such as health and safety. It could include the security and defence of individuals and nations. It could include all measures that any government takes to protect its citizens from any form of natural disasters, pandemics, health disasters, fires, accidents, and wars. It could include all measures that any government takes to protect people from suicidal attacks, terrorist attack and nuclear attack. So, the wider meaning and implication of this term should be redefined. Protecting life is one of the fundamental components of the general philosophy of Islamic law. This is known as *haqq al-nafs*. This is to protect human life

from any harmful things and promote the quality of life for all. Protecting human life is one of the universal principles of Islamic law. Interestingly, some classical and modern Islamic scholars argue that protecting human life should be the first and foremost priority of Islamic law among all other higher objectives of Islamic law. This view is held by Imam Razi, Imam Qarafi, and Imam Bidhawi, So, protecting human lives from the spread of virus is number one priority of Islamic law. So, closing the mosques and stopping all other religious gathering does not go against Islamic teaching. This is done to stop the spread of virus among public. But Muslim community will be performing their prayers at homes.

The general philosophy of Islamic law demands the Muslim communities to examine the consequences of their social behaviours and actions. The corona virus is a contagious disease and it can spread so rapidly to endanger lives of people. So, Muslim communities must obey all health guidelines. The world Health organization and the governments around the world have taken some strict measures to stop the spread of the covid19 pandemic. This includes the closure of mosques, schools, universities, religious sites, public gatherings, and all other public meetings. The general philosophy of Islamic law encourages Muslims to take such measures in the interest of public health. These measures are taken in line with the general philosophy of Islamic law. So, the closure of mosques, including the two-holy mosques in Makkah and Medina by the Saudi government is done in accordance with the general philosophy of Islamic law. Therefore, Muslims must follow government's instructions on health and safety issues at this time. They must cover their faces with the masks, maintain social distancing, wash hands as instructed by medical experts, and health professionals. Muslim governments must cooperate with international communities to help to stop the spread of this virus. They will suffer economically and financially when they

close their business and trade centres and yet, protecting human lives should be given preference over economic loss in Islamic law. Yet, some clerics did not abide by these government measures. They wanted to open their mosques and hold religious gatherings. Some Imams, and clerics opened their mosques in some Muslim countries despite the warnings of their governments and the world Health organization. This goes against the principles of the general philosophy of Islamic law. The general philosophy of Islamic law has instituted some exceptional rules to apply in some exceptional situations and emergencies.

The corona virus pandemic situation is an exceptional situation. Therefore, Muslim communities have religious licences and excuses not to open mosques, and not to do some religious rites at this exceptionally difficult time. For instance, “if a ship is caught in a storm at sea and is on the verge of capsizing, merchandise-but no persons- should be thrown overboard, with or without the consent of the owners” the properties or good can be compensated but not human lives. So, the classical Muslims gave priority to protect human lives over wealth and money. Today, in this crucial time in human history, Muslim communities must support all measures taken by international community to protect the health of the entire humanity” (Muhamad Fadel, p 2). Islam is not a blind religion rather it advises Muslim communities to take all preventative measures to control the spread of the disease. Islamic law emphasises that the human lives should be protected at any material cost. So, Muslim communities everywhere around the world have decided to close mosques and sacred Islamic sites in line with the instruction of the World Health Organization. Saudi Arabia too took some drastic measures to ban pilgrims visiting the holy sites. All these measures are perfectly fitting with the principles of the general philosophy of Islamic law. The “plague of Muslim Ibn Qutaibah” took place during the month of Ramadan in 131 A.H and the

great plague that took place in 749 in Syria happened in the month of Ramadan. All prayers were suspended in mosques during these plagues. So, there are historical precedents for the Muslim community to suspend prayers at mosques.

Chapter 2: NATURAL CALAMITIES FROM AN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE:

This chapter examines the underlying connection between the natural disasters and the divine punishments. Some Philosophers and theologians make such an intriguing connection between the divine punishments and the natural disasters. Yet, atheists and rationalists look at this differently. This part also explores the question of good and evil from an Islamic perspective.

a) A QUESTION OF GOOD AND EVIL:

Some Philosophers and theologians have been discussing the question of Good and Evil for centuries. “Is he (God) willing to prevent evil, but not able? Then he is not omnipotent (all-powerful). Is he able, but not willing? Then he is not benevolent (all-good), Is he both not able and willing? Then why does evil exist? (David Hume, p.186). Atheists argue that if God is an omnibenevolent, why does He allow sufferings? if God is an omnipotent being, why does not, He stop a natural calamity like the coronavirus? For faithful people there is no problem in understanding this question. For them God is wise. Therefore, no foolish action comes from God at all. There is a rationale for every incident in this world. Yet, man with his limited knowledge cannot understand a divine wisdom behind this seemingly discriminative plague that kills innocent people. Man’s intellect or reasoning faculty is limited by his sense, time, and place. So, he cannot comprehend the wisdom and rationale of divine action. Theologically speaking, it is not fitting for any Muslim to question divine actions. Divine actions do not come under any

human judgments and jurisdiction rather, human actions and activities come under divine jurisdiction. Yet, this draws the line between divine actions and divine rules. Understanding the wisdom and rationale behind the divine rules is different from understanding the wisdom and rationale of the divine actions. Atheists and the rationalists maintain that the natural disasters are coincidences and automatic natural occurrences. Yet, for faithful people nothing takes place without a divine wisdom.

There is no way that we could make any comparison between the qualities of God and human beings. The holy Qur'an describes God as "there is nothing likeness of Him". No one resembles Him in his attitudes. Yet, the concept of God in Christianity is little bit different from the Islamic concept of God. There is a clear-cut demarcation between God and Man in Islam. It is God who created man and the universe. God in Islam is a wise, rational, omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, and the omnibenevolent. Some western philosophers argue that these divine qualities are self-contradictory: if God is all knowing why does not he stop evils such as plagues that kill thousands of people as we have seen in the case of the coronavirus pandemic. They argue that if God is omnipotent why does not God stop all calamities. This question is irrelevant in Islamic theology. You can ask this question if you and God are equal in power and authority. The classical view on this issue is that the sovereignty and freedom of God cannot be questioned by human reason. Man has no right to question God's actions. No one can question Him if He sends all of mankind to Paradise or otherwise to Hellfire. However, His mercy does not work in that way. It is true that God considers human interests although He is not obliged to do so. However, He chooses to do so by the very nature of his sovereignty. It is mercy and grace that is the foundation of the divine scheme, not a rational necessity. The Qur'an tells us that He is "Doer of what he will" (16:85). Why does He inflict harm on some people through plagues? Why

does He protect some others from plagues through their strong immune systems? Why does he create some babies with down syndromes? Why some people are born with some exceptional skills and some others are not? This may look unfair and yet, humanity cannot grasp the wisdom behind all divine actions. There is no harm in asking these questions for the sake of clarification but not to ridicule God. According to Islam God is wise and intelligent. All His actions are wise. He is just and kind. He is merciful. The rationale of divine action is not always detectable by human minds. People cannot adjudicate divine judgments rather He judges human actions.

Every good and bad events or incidents take place with the divine permission according to the Islamic theodicy. Nothing happens without the divine permission. God is described as “the wisest of the wise, “the most merciful of those who have mercy”, the One “who has knowledge of everything”. Moreover, God “will never wrong anyone” So, all good and evils take place in the world with the divine wisdom. There must be some reasons for all events and yet, man does not always grasp those reasons. We cannot make any comparison between the divine and human wills. We cannot make any comparison between divine and human actions. God may let evil events take place in the world for some reasons, but man does not know those reasons.

“You may dislike something although it is good for you, or like something although it is bad for you. God knows but you do not” (Qur’an: 2:216). Moreover, the worldly life is a testing ground set by God to gauge good and bad deeds of people. The sceptical and cynical cannot understand the concept of the divine power. The Qur’an tells us “These people have no God’s true measure. On the day of resurrection, whole earth will be in His grip” (The Qur’an: 39-67).

It is a firm conviction of each Muslim that if God inflicts any harm, no one could stop it and if God wishes a good thing to befall upon you, no one can stop it. The Qur’an tells us “if God touches you (prophet) with affliction,

no one can remove it except Him, if He touches you with good, he has power over all things. (Qur'an: 6: 17). Moreover, Qur'an says "Say, who holds control of everything in His hand? Who protects while there is no protection against him" (Qur'an; 23;88)? So, a final decree is in the hands of God. This firm faith in God's decree allows Muslim communities to overcome many calamities in life. How many innocent people have been killed in Palestine in 70 years of wars, how many thousand people have been killed in Syria for the last 10 years? how many thousand people have been killed in Afghanistan for the last 40 years by Russia and America? Yet, those communities survived all these man-made destructions. How and why? Because, the Muslim community have strong faith in God and in His decrees.

The secular mind finds it difficult to grasp the metaphysical world. It finds it hard to accept anything beyond their senses. The secular mind accepts what it feels, what it sees, what it hears, what it experiences, and what it experiments. Beyond this, a secular mind is not ready to believe in a supernatural world. It does not believe in the unseen metaphysical world. Therefore, there is no place for God or angels in the secular mind. There is no place for a human soul or belief in the life after death. The secular western mind cannot penetrate all these unseen metaphysical areas with its human senses. Faith does not come under jurisdiction of human reasoning in the western secular mind. It finds faith is a personal matter of individuals. It finds faith and reason are two separate entities. It does not make any connection between faith and science. So, the western secular mind finds it difficult to believe in supernatural matters. It wants to test and experiment God in its laboratory to believe in God. Today, the western secular mind repeats the same question that the children of Israel asked the prophet Moss. They asked him to bring God in front of them if Moss wanted them to believe in God.

"Show us God face to face" (Qur'an: 4:153). Yet, the Qur'an declares that the human vision cannot comprehend God. "No vision can take him in, but He

takes in all vision” (The Qur’an 6:103). Some rationalists and atheists they do not believe in God, because they cannot feel Him, sense Him, and visually see Him. Because of this, they claim that there is no God. So many people have dispelled the arguments of these people. Richard Koch and Christ Smith have described this as “lonely hypothesis”. “What we may call the ‘lonely hypothesis’- that there is no rational and good God, and probably no God at all, that humankind is a speck of insignificance on the edge of a vast pointless universe, doomed to return sooner or later to the nothingness from which we came- has its own splendour, inspiration, and self-justification. If there is no meaning in the universe, how glorious of humanity to have created so much from so little! The achievements of our own civilization are enough to justify the universe, even if the justification is heard utter silence or indifference by whatever non-human force or forces there may or may not be. If nothing else are supply meaning in the universe, the existence and achievements of human intellect, creativity and love are quite enough” (Richard Koch & Christ Smith: pp.88&89). People internet social and natural events in accordance with their cultural and academic background and knowledges. Believers and non-believers read the notion of evil in the world differently with their different socio-cultural constructions and upbringing.

b) A QUESTION OF DIVINE PUNISHMENTS:

Many rationalists have argued that the spread of the deadly virus is nothing but a natural disaster like many other natural disasters. They argue that such a claim does not fit for the modern scientific world. Yet, some religious leaders have argued this pandemic is nothing but a divine warning for humanity. It is argued by theologians in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam that God sends down natural disasters to punish humanity when humanity exceeds divine commandment. It is predicted that a divine intervention takes place when moral laws of this universe is violated by humanity. Atheists do not accept this kind of argument. They would say that the pandemics are natural

disasters not a divine intervention. They would argue that there is not any connection between the natural disasters and the divine power. Yet, Muslims believe that nothing takes place in the world without a divine permission. It is God who controls this world not people as atheists assume it. It is generally believed by Muslims that the Almighty Allah uses the nature and its resources as divine forces in the universe. The Qur'an tells us that the divine punishments came down to the earth as natural disasters in previous nations. Floods, storms, earthquakes, pandemics, and many other natural disasters could be used as means to punish or warn humanity. So, this deadly corona virus is nothing but a divine creation according to some faithful people. Nothing takes places in this universe without the divine knowledge. Abdal Hakim Murad argues that the coronavirus is a divine warning for humanity for its excessive consumerism, materialism, and greed to consume the desires of this world and for its destruction of the ecology of the universe. We read that when kings and rulers rebelled against God in previous nations, God's punishment came upon them.

For instance, Thamud was destroyed by a thunderous blast, "A'd was destroyed by a furious wind, that God let loose against them for seven consecutive nights, eight consecutive days, so that you could have seen its people lying dead like hallow palm-trunks. Can you see any trace of them now? Pharaoh, too, and those before him, and the ruined cities, these people committed grave sins and disobeyed the messenger of their Lord. So, He seized them with ever tightening grip (Quran 69-5-10). God sent miracles into previous nations when they disobeyed divine commencements. It had been a divine way of admonishing people to send miracles in the old days. The holy Qur'an speaks about this in many places. Yet, according to Muslim scholars, the holy Qur'an is a divine miracle that is revealed to challenge humanity with its linguistic convention. Now God will not send miracles to guide humanity

into a right path as He did for the previous generations. Because, the holy Qur'an is the final miracle of all divine messages. Yet, God could use the forces of nature as precautionary warning to alert people so that they could return to a right path. Qur'an tells us "Your Lord's punishment is truly stern".

Prof Zaghlool Najjar argues that this virus is nothing but a divine wrath upon humanity. He gives his justification for his claim. Today, a lot of conspiracies and geopolitical competitions have increased between countries. Corruption, evil activities, and indecencies are widespread between countries. Moreover, atheism, disbelief, aggression, and polytheism are widespread in the world. There are some faithful people across the globe and yet, most of them in the Muslim world are following the materialistic and capitalistic western world blindly. So called Arab and Muslim rulers are following the footsteps of the western leaders in their wrong materialistic and capitalistic policies. In fact, they have been persecuting pious religious leaders for some petty political and religious differences.

The Muslim minorities are persecuted in many parts of the world. They are persecuted in Kashmir, China, Myanmar, Palestine and in many other parts of the world and yet, these so called Arab and Muslim rulers have done nothing to stop these atrocities. So, when these people have no one to defend them, divine interventions come down to punish all. This has been a divine way of punishing people in human history. Why does God punish good people for the wrongdoing of some corrupt rulers? When good people do not stop the wrongdoers from corrupting the earth with their evil deeds, God punish both good and corrupt people. The Qur'an warns us that "Beware of discord that harms not only wrongdoers among you" (The Qur'an 8: 25). The holy Qur'an describes that God uses nature and its resource to punish people when people disobeyed Him. In fact, the Qur'an tells us all nature's resources are in His

discretion to be used against any nations. (No one knows your Lords' forces except Him (Qur'an: 74:31).

God, Muslims believe in, is not an inactive and idle God rather He is an "ever-loving and the ever-watchful God". (Qur'an: 2;255). The Qur'an describes Almighty God "Every day, He is at work". (Qur'an: 55:29) "Your Lord is always watchful" (Qur'an: 89-14) So, the God of Islam is actively engaging in big or small affairs of the world. "He knows all that is in the land and sea. No leaf falls without His knowledge, nor is there a single grain in the darkness of the earth, or anything fresh or withered, that is not written in a clear Record (Qur'an: 6:59). This is the description of God in all revealed books. Muslim communities strongly believe that no harm or pandemic will afflict the humanity without God's knowledge. So, this deadly virus that keeps the world in a standstill is nothing but an invisible divine creature. This pandemic would not cause such a huge havoc in humanity without the divine plan. Humanity could do nothing in front of the divine power. Everything happens in accordance with a divine will. In short, the universe is in the hands of the most powerful and most watchful God. Therefore, there is no need to panic about this pandemic. The Holy Qur'an tells us how previous nations were destroyed when their rulers violently transgressed. Consider this verse. " Have you (Prophet) considered how your Lord dealt with people of 'Ad of Iram the city the lofty pillars, whose like has never been made in any land and the Thamud, who hewed into the rocks into the valley, and the mighty and powerful pharaoh, all of them committed excesses in their land and spread corruption in there. Your Lord let a scourge of punishment on them and your Lord is always watchful. (Qur'an: 88: 6-8). This is supported by many verses in the Qur'an. "Corruption has flourished on land and sea as a result of people's actions and He will make them to taste the consequence of some of their own actions so that they may return back" Qur'an: 30;41. This is like the concept of Karma in

Buddhism and in some other religions. “Actions affect both doers and those around them in unimaginable ways.

Natural disasters can strike any nation, community, and any individuals any times. China with its mighty armies and technology could not stand for an invisible virus. This tells a lot about weakness of man in front of mighty divine power. Modern man is so arrogant with his advancement in science and technology: He thinks he has conquered nature with his knowledge and yet, natural disasters like this reminds him of his weakness and powerlessness in front of Almighty God. The late Roy Porter, one of great historians of modern medicine notes that empires had triggered the spread epidemic diseases in history. (Roy Porter, (1997. P. 26). It is reported that Umayyad empire was defeated by Abbasid empire due the continuous spread of plague in Umayyad. There is no doubt that the natural disasters have dramatically increased in recent time. Whether scientists agree or disagree, we can see a dramatic increase in natural disasters in recent time. How do we explain these occurrences in the nature? Are these natural disasters a divine punishment for man for his crimes and sins on earth? Or otherwise, are these disasters part and parcel of natural and physical law of the world. Scientists may argue that the earthquakes, floods, landslides, Tsunami, hurricanes, droughts, and disease are natural occurrences. God created the universe with some physical laws. These occurrences are taking place on earth in accordance with these physical laws. Yet, Muslims strongly believe that God has control over all these natural forces in the universe and God uses nature to punish humanity when it exceeds divine limits. Yet, atheists do not correlate between human actions and natural disasters.

It is God who has set all these physical laws in the universe and He will not break these physical laws. So, man must respect these physical laws and learn to live in harmony with these natural laws. When man goes

against these physical laws or against the ecosystem of the universe, the natural destruction is inevitable. Jamal Laadam argues that making any links between corona virus and divine punishment is irrational. He accuses some Islamists and Salafi groups of making connection between the corona virus and divine punishment. This notion of making a correlation between the natural disasters and divine punishment is not a unique religious thinking in Islam alone. Many other religious people to think like this. Some Judo-Christians too think like this.

J.R.R. Tolkien is reported to have said “ A divine punishment is also a divine ‘gift’ if accepted, since its object is the ultimate blessing, and the supreme inventiveness of the Creator will make ‘ punishments’ that is (changes of design) produce a good not otherwise to be attained” (J.R.R. Tolkien. letter 212). This kind of perception is deeply rooted in the minds of millions of people among many religions. Jamal Laadam accuse some Muslim groups of not following the health protocols and guidelines of the world health organizations and the health departments in many Muslim countries. Instead of engaging in unnecessary polemic arguments, Muslims must be sympathetic to all who suffer from this natural catastrophe. Yet, we notice some Muslims are prejudicial and judgemental as if Almighty God has given them a special permission to speak on behalf of Him. Natural disasters such as earthquakes, landslides, avalanches, tsunamis, outbreaks of plagues and diseases are taking place in accordance with some physical and natural laws. We cannot rationalise divine wisdoms behind all these natural disasters.

According to Islamic theology, even a leaf from a tree would not fall without the divine knowledge. A. H. Murad argues that God has sent armies of the smallest creatures to destroy and overthrow the human hubris in human history. According to biblical and Qur’anic historical accounts many arrogant pharaohs and kings were destroyed not by big armies or another equal

superpower but by a mere prophet in rags. God uses nature's smallest kingdom to destroy mighty superpowers in the world. Take for instance, this verse from the holy Quran. "We let loose on them the flood, locusts, lice, frogs, blood: all clear signs. They are arrogant and wicket people (Qur'an: 7:133). It is also reported that the arrogant Nimrud was killed by tiny mosquito. "As for Nimrud, the chronicles mentioned that while he was dispensing his form of justice, a mosquito or a gnat crawled into his nostril. It bit him, and this caused him such excruciating torment that he started to hi the walls of his palace with his head, until, after years of pain, he died" (Ibid. p3).

All these small creatures are used by God to destroy the army of arrogant pharaoh. So, many Muslim scholars argue that this deadly corona virus may be a divine army to warn the world leaders for their unbending arrogance and power greed. Today, some world leaders are so arrogant with nuclear weapons in their hands. These world leaders have been showing their prejudice and bigotry in dealing with international communities. Millions of poor people do not have food to eat and yet, these world leaders do not care about them. Millions of people do not have homes to live and yet, these world leaders have been ignoring them. Millions of children and the early are crying for help in many war-torn countries and yet, these world leaders have not bothered to care about them. Yaqeen Institute in its research on the coronavirus examines the types of divine punishments in human history. This diagram illustrates how and how divine punishment come upon humanity in different times in human history.

	Greater punishment	Nearer punishment
Examples	The destruction of civilizations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The people of Lut • The people of Nuh • The people of 'Aad & Thamud 	The 9 signs afflicting Pharaoh's people: flood, locusts, lice, blood, etc.) The People of the Garden
Prerequisite conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spread of corruption • A clear warner was sent to them • Reform efforts rejected • Nearer punishments ignored 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corruption • Disobedience • Oppression • Heedlessness
Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elimination of transgressors • No redemption possible • Leads to hellfire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tribulations that afflict society. • Opportunity for reform. • Can prevent onset of greater punishment if behavior changes.
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Putting an end to the evildoers • Show us Allah's power & might • A deterrent for people to come 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To turn people towards Allah • Reduce wrongdoing (wake-up-call) • Avert need for a greater punishment • Show us Allah's names & attributes

(Differences Between Greater and Nearer Punishments: Yaqeen institute for Islamic research)

Accordingly, all divine punishments have some purposes. So, this coronavirus may have some hidden divine purpose behind it. So, people who commit crimes and sins should take some lessons from this coronavirus. When people exceed in crimes and sins, a divine punishment descends on them one way or another. Man cannot predict or judge why and how God engages in these worldly affairs in any particular manner. So, the coronavirus may have been a testing for some percentage of the world population, and it may have been a punishment for another percentage of world population. At the time, it may have been a divine gifted blessing opportunity for some people to change their way of life and to return into a right path set by God. Therefore. We cannot make a generalization about it.

c)Pandemics and the divine trials.

It is a firm conviction of Muslims that nothing can befall upon them without God's decree. So, Muslims do not fear the death caused by the corona virus or by any other pandemics. This does not mean that Muslims do not take action to prevent any pandemics. Muslims are not fatalists to leave the spread of virus in the hands of God. There are some sections of Muslim fatalists who think that everything happens as God plans. They strongly believe that the pandemics are divine trials on people. Therefore, people should have faith and trust in God and tolerate them. Some of these people refuse to comply with the government's health guidelines. Human life suffers from destruction and calamities time to time. There is no doubt about this. Millions of people die from natural disasters, flood, earthquakes, Tsunami, and other natural disasters. It is part and parcel of this worldly life. This is how God created this universe.

This is how God made human life. Natural disasters are inevitable. Not only that, suffering is part of human life. We notice a lot of people suffer in life from many calamities, disease, and difficulties. Yet, atheists and the rationalists would argue why innocent people must suffer. If there is God why such a God, does not protect people from such calamities, suffering and difficulties. Generally, this question has been asked by many people. This is because when God created this world, he created it with some physical law and natural laws of the universe. God created some physical laws between creatures of the universe. Each planet swims on its orbit in the galaxies. Sun rises in the morning and sets in the evening. This is a part and parcel of physical law in the universe. Likewise, all these natural disasters and calamities are part and parcel of the physical laws of the universe.

It is a divine plan that God tests humanity in many ways. The Holy Qur'an says: "We shall certainly test you, with fear and hunger, and loss of property, lives and crops. But (prophet) 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 blessing and mercy from their Lord. It is they who are rightly guided" (Qur'an: 2:155). The Muslim communities find the worldly life as a divine testing. God tests people with many things in life. God gives some people the bounties of the world abundantly to test them in their wealth and yet, God limits His provision for some people to test them in their poverty and hardship. "Who, when disaster strikes them, say, 'Indeed we belong to God, and indeed to Him we will return.'" Surely, God, the omnipotent tests His slaves through trials. So, Muslims are not too much worried about what is going to happen. Moreover, Muslims do not worry about all what had already gone by. Muslims strongly believe whatever happened in the past, had happened in accordance with the divine wisdom. So, there is no way we could bring back dead one. The prophet once said that "The one who stays in their land at the time of a plague, has patience, seeks reward, knowing fully that nothing will afflict him except that which Allah decreased for him, he will be given the reward like that of a martyr".

The companions once asked the Prophet: "Oh Messenger of Allah, who from amongst the people were tested the most? The Prophet responded and said, the Prophets, then the next best and then the next best.". The great Prophet Job (*Ayyūb*) was tested with a serious disease. He was resilient and tolerant. He lost everything, his family, wealth, and health. He was bedridden for many years and he was tested with a serious disease, yet we find he did not give up his hope in God and turned to God in his difficulties. According to some historical accounts his sickness was so severe that his flesh dropped from his body and nothing remained on him except his bones and muscles. God

describes his conditions in the holy Qur'an: Remember Job, when he cried to his Lord, 'Suffering has truly afflicted me, but you are the Most Merciful of the Merciful. We answered to Him, removed his suffering, and restored his family to him, along more like them, as an act of grace from us and a reminder for all who serve us". (Qur'an: 21: 83). Good people are tested by God in life. It is part and parcel of divine design in life. "The magnitude of the reward is proportionate to the severity of the trial. When God loves people, He tests them. Whoever accepts that shall be pleased, but whoever is discontent shall be devastated." (*Tirmidhī*: 2396). "When a believer is afflicted with discomfort, illness, anxiety, grief or mental anguish, or even something as trivial as the pricking of a thorn, except that God will compensate his sins on account of his patience. (*Bukhārī*: 5641).

All this is done by God to test people in the worldly life. The worldly life is nothing but a testing ground according to Islamic teaching. Muslim communities see good and bad fortunes in life are testing from God, so they manage to overcome the hardship in life with their strong faith in divine will. That is why we do not have a high-level suicidal rate amongst the Muslim community. It is a rule in Islam that a Muslim cannot commit a suicide. This is because Muslims must take all sufferings as a testing from God to forgive them in the next life. Some fanatic Muslim youths blast themselves in their suicidal kits for some political and other reasons. Yet, no Muslim can commit a suicide in Islam. But non-Muslim communities do not behave like this in their social life. Their faith and traditions are different from that of the Muslim community. They do not believe in the next life. So, they take the worldly life very much dearly. They love the worldly life as much as possible because they do not have any faith in another life after the death. So, they want to enjoy the life as much as possible. That is why we notice that people in other faiths are so scared of death. It is an instinct fact that people love their life. Life is a precious gift and that each one of us would like to enjoy the worldly life. Yet,

an unlimited love of the worldly life is not a desirable thing in Islam. Interestingly, Yaqeen Institute for Islamic Research has done a field survey to pool the opinions and perceptions of some Muslims about the coronavirus. They wanted to know how people perceived the coronavirus pandemic, whether they have perceived it as a punishment or a testing from God otherwise, a kind of divine blessing. Interestingly many people find it as a divine testing for humanity. “The overwhelming majority believe it is a serious test from Allah and many consider it a punishment. We learn from the results that those who read the Qur’an regularly were more likely to see blessings in this hardship, even if they also see the coronavirus as a nearer punishment. The results also show that it may be unhealthy to see the coronavirus as only a punishment and test, as people who felt this way reported higher anxiety and nervousness”.

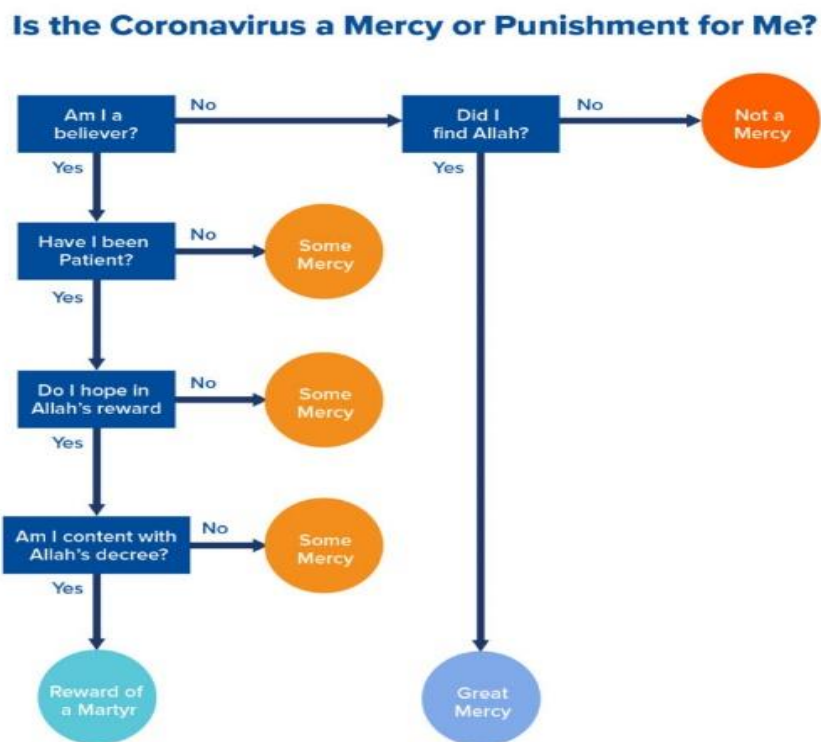


Figure 1. Pathways to Mercy and Punishment:

Yet, it is generally believed that God punishes corrupt people various means. The divine intervention comes on earth in many forms. It could be through natural disasters, it could be through calamities, it could be through infectious diseases like this. We cannot make some sort of affinity and connection between divine punishment and human actions. We could argue that why do the innocent people of China suffer with this natural disaster for the wrongdoing of the Chinese government? A lot of atheists and nonbelievers believe that there is not any connection between this virus and religion. They argue that this is a health problem rather than a religious problem. This virus does not discriminate between Muslims and Non-Muslims, between Chinese and non-Chinese rather this a humanitarian problem that humanity faces today. They strongly believe that there is no need to relate this virus with any religious faith. Anyway, we should not be hastily judgmental on the concept of the natural disasters. Natural disasters can strike any nation, community, and any individuals any times. China with its mighty armies and technology could not stand for an invisible virus. This tells a lot about weakness of man in front of mighty divine power. Modern man is so arrogant with his advancement in science and technology: He thinks he has conquered nature with his knowledge and yet, natural disasters like this reminds him of his weakness and powerlessness in front of Almighty God. This virus has sent a greater message to all dictatorial political leaders around the world. They behave arrogantly with their military and political power and yet, how can an invisible virus like this teach them a memorable lesson in life. Will they learn any lesson from this?

Human beings cannot rationalise divine actions and divine acts. We cannot provide a rationalization for all divine actions. We cannot ask God why He lets all these natural disasters take place? The Qur'an tells us about God and His qualities. "He cannot be called to account for anything He does, whereas, they

will be called to account” (Quran: 21:23). Commenting on this issue, Yasir Qadhi notes that “No one among us is qualified to speak on behalf of Allah. We are not able to declare why something is happening. Or to link a general tragedy to specific evil. And we are not demonstrating mercy when we claim that people being subjugated to this are being punished for a crime most of them have nothing to do with” So, to claim that this calamity inflicted on Chinese people because their government has persecuted Uighur Muslims does not convince us that much.

d) Pandemics and the Ecology:

Today, we have so many groups to protect our ecology and environment. Yet, greedy companies and business industries are destroying this planet earth at an alarming rate. People are destroying forests and cutting down trees in many countries for money. Deforestation in amazon jungles and in many parts of Malaysia and Indonesia clearly indicates the human greed and destruction of natural resource. Moreover, the geopolitical greed and a trade war between China and the US has accelerated the destruction of the natural resources of this world. China expands its development projects all over the world and it does not care about environmental disasters and ecological catastrophes. It has done so many development projects in many Afro-Asian countries without any consideration to the ecological damages and destruction.

According to the Holy Qur’an, this world is nothing but a divine gift for humanity. People must utilize it with maximum care and trust. God created the universe for the benefit of humanity. Therefore, we must handle it with due care and responsibility. Man should not destroy the natural resources of this world. He must use it with a sense of responsibility and accountability and yet, today, many countries do not care about this. A.H. Murad argues that man has failed to maintain the balance of the ecosystem in this universe. He notes that “And now God’s world is paying us back with this invisible miasma which

makes us afraid even to inhale. Putin and Trump, masters of nuclear arsenals, are staggering back from its influence, discovering, perhaps, the Naqshbandi the rules of *khush Dar dam*, mindfulness in every breath. So small an enemy to have overthrown our world: too tiny to see, the corona literally a crown. This microscopic flimsy protein, this almost nothing, is now king of the world” (Ibid,2) Theologically speaking, God has given man this world and its natural resources as trust. Yet, man has utterly failed to honour this trust and misused the natural of resources of the world. That is why we see all these natural calamities. The holy Qur’an tells us “corruption has flourished on land and sea because of people’s action. He will make them taste the consequence of some of their own actions. So that that may return back.” (Qur’an: 30: 41).

“we madly ravage and violate nature and walk upon the moon, every other species cringe from us as ecosystems dies, our gamed financial system is increasingly parasitical upon the poor. From our human perspective Covid-19 is an inflection which disorder our world, but seen from the world’s perspective humanity itself has, over the past age, become a still more deadly disease: like fungus or a hookworm we suck the blood of the host, multiplying insanely until the ecosystem itself, the planet which we vampirize, starts to sicken and dies. Bani Adam, released from the natural restraints urged by religion, has itself become a disease, in its planning and its wisdom no more intelligent than a microbe. We have become a Qarun virus”; (A H. Murad. P2). The Holy Qur’an has documented the destruction of previous nations in history. It tells us that the excessive greed for materialism and power has caused competition and destruction between previous nations. It looks like history repeats itself in this geopolitical rivalry between the West and East once again. Some developed countries and more importantly, China and US fight for the domination the wealth and power. Now they fight one another to grab the lion share of the wealth of the world as hungry animals fight for a piece of meat in the jungle.

All kinds of crafty political and economic strategies are used by both sides in this geopolitical rivalry. This time it is not Russia that challenges the western domination rather, China challenges the west for a domination of the world.

This Qur'an verse is well fitting to depict the prevailing geopolitical rivalry between nations. “ When we decide to destroy a town, we command those corrupted by wealth, (to reform), but (they persist in their) disobedience, our sentence is passed, and we destroyed them utterly, How many generations, we have destroyed since Noah. Your Lord knows and observes the sins of His servants well enough. (Qur'an 17:17). Today, natural resources are exploited by many countries. Robert.J. Burrows has exposed this greedy exploitation by these super rich people in his writing. He says that “If one investigates the state of Earth's biosphere, it quickly becomes evident that the biosphere is under siege on many fronts: There is the ongoing threat of nuclear war (perhaps started regionally) as the Cold War infrastructure containing this threat has been progressively dismantled. There is the ongoing threat posed by the progressive collapse of biodiversity as habitat is destroyed at an accelerating rate while animals, birds, insects, fish, amphibians, reptiles, and plants are killed in vast numbers by a multitude of concurrent assaults. There is the ongoing threat posed by the climate catastrophe. There is the ongoing threat posed by the deployment of 5G (and electromagnetic radiation generally). And these threats are complemented by the imminent collapse of the Amazon, the widespread radioactive contamination of the Earth, the use of geoengineering and the ongoing ecological destruction caused by the many ongoing wars and other military activity. Among a wide variety of other threats” (Robert.J. Burrows, (23/03/2020). Man-made self-destruction of humanity is clearly illustrated by Bryan Walsh in his book end times. “with very passing year, billions upon billions of tones of man-made greenhouse gas emissions are added to the atmosphere, increasing man-made climate change. Given enough

time – along with some bad luck- global warming could begin to threaten our existence. Even more frightening- and far harder to predict or control- are the existential risks arising from new technologies like synthetic biology or artificial intelligence, technologies that could create threats we can hardly imagine, bombs that could explode before we even know they've armed.(Bryan Walsh. 2019. P 6)

It can be argued that that human hubris is using all-natural resources of this world with their greed and exploitation. As a result, this excessive use of natural resources and the exploitation of the super-rich to make money and wealth, the ecosystem of this planet earth has been dramatically damaged. As a result of human greed to make money, the animal kingdom, forests, plantations, and all other creatures are suffering. This has dramatically damaged, the ecosystem of the universe, Even, human body is losing its immune power and resistance from deadly viruses. So, it could be argued that when humanity fails to adhere to the divine instructions of the Creator of this universe, the humanity will immensely suffer. When humanity fails to enhance the spiritual developments, human hearts become like ghost towns rotten with toughness. These secular people are afflicted with love of materialism, excessive greed, and human desires. Today, we can observe the impact of the human greed and desire everywhere in the world.

A.H. Murad argues that “Microbes, then, which are part of the symphony of the world’s balanced ecosystem, also belongs to the army of God. At times they serve us thorough the divine name al-Razzaq, al-Latif: our stomachs and intestines are crawling with them, and without them we could not digest our dinners, on the land they then break down dead matter and return it to the soil: they limit populations naturally, maintaining the balance, mizan of creation, in which every species has the right to its space . But at other times, no less necessary for the balance, they serve the divine name of *al-Qahhar and al-*

Muntaqim, the compeller , the Avenger, and thus did Allah use them to strike down the oligarch Abrah and his elephant, his commandos and his marines” (A. H. Murad. P2). So, he argues that the coronavirus and many other natural disasters come down to due to the unlimited greed of humanity to exploit the natural resources of the world.

e) Pandemics and Injustices in the World:

The Qur’an tells that “And so We have put chief evildoers in every city to perpetrate their schemes there-but they scheme against them, without realise it. (Qur’an: 6: 123). Today, who controls the world? who takes the important geopolitical decisions of major political and financial affairs of the world? Who control international organizations such as UN, IMF, and other international organizations? No one else but some elite politicians and their cohort. These people are morally and ethically bankrupt. The religious teaching and moral values of the major world religions are ignored in the policy making of these international organizations. Neither Christian values of love and affection nor the notions of kindness and unconditional justice of Islamic or Buddhist teachings are reflected in the policy making of these organizations. The policies of these international organizations are designed to protect the interest of the elite nations at the expense of many poor countries. There is some intriguing connection between human actions and the distressing conditions of people on Earth. Every human action produces some reaction on Earth. These world leaders are plotting against poor nations without realising it. They do it knowing or unknowingly and yet, these schemes of plot have backfired on them. Nothing manifests this backfiring than this corona virus pandemic. There is no scientific or a rational evidence to correlate the actions of world leaders with the corona virus pandemic. There is no scientific evidence to suggest that this corona virus is created by these world leaders. Yet, their greedy policies may have paved the way in harming the ecosystem.

We see a widespread of injustice, mass killings, corruption, exploitation, and transgression in the world. Innocent people are being killed for no reason, Yet, world leaders do nothing to prevent the mass murders everywhere. These leaders need to realise there is a God whom they must give an account. So called rationalists and atheists have been ridiculing the divine power. This contagious virus is teaching a bitter lesson to those who deny the divine existence. So called rationalists and atheists have been ridiculing the divine power. They have been challenging the divine existence. This contagious virus teaches a bitter lesson for all those who deny divine existence. More recently, Yuval Noah Harari: an Israel historian and atheist has claimed that AI will conquer divine power and religion. He has claimed that AI will fulfil all human needs and man no longer in need of religious and divine guidance. World leaders must stop stockpiling weapons of mass destruction. Rather they must act swiftly to protect humanity from poverty, starvation, and famines. Millions of people struggle to make end meets each day in the world. Yet, rich countries do not have any remorse on these poor people who die across the globe out of poverty and starvation. God has given humanity a golden opportunity to amend its past mistake. 1% of supper rich have been controlling 90% of world wealth, while millions of people live on one dollar to survive.

Humanity should be united to encounter these capitalistic pharaohs of modern world. Yet, with the spread of this deadly virus, God has demonstrated his power and we see how people are begging for a divine intervention to protect them from this virus. Religious guidance moral or ethical values are ignored today in the geopolitics. Chinese ruling elites do not respect the religious values of their own people. The Chinese government cares only about its material gains at the expense of moral and ethical values. It has

been persecuting its own people to maintain its grip on power. The Russian government has been persecuting its own people for its grip on power.

Contrary to this, people in western countries enjoy freedom and democratic values. But their leaders are trapped in geopolitical cold wars between world powers. Behind this scene, so many geopolitical cold wars and trade wars take place between all these powerful countries. Unfortunately, innocent people have become the victims of these hidden cold wars. World leaders must stop stockpiling weapons of mass destruction, rather they must act swiftly to protect humanity from poverty, starvation, and famine. Globally, People are going to die from this pandemic. Millions of people struggle to make end meets each day yet, richer countries show no remorse for those poorer people who die from poverty and starvation.

The one percent who are rich have been controlling 90% of the world's wealth, while millions of people live on one dollar a day just to survive. This disparity cannot go on for any longer. Humanity should unite against the capitalists of the modern world. This tragedy has united the humanity beyond all religious, racial, national, linguistic differences to protect humanity from the virus. The sense of unity among humanity should always prevail to fight many other global issues that pose an existential threat to the human family. What kind of corruption has man made on earth? When humanity ignores divine guidance, it is prone to follow its own human greed. This excessive greed is manifested in the form of capitalism and geopolitics. Exploitation and materialism have become some form of economic corruption. As result of this greed, the natural resource of the world has been misused by many countries. Man has failed to honour the planet earth and its natural resource. The impact of human behaviour on Earth is immense. The exploitation of natural resources, overuse of earth materials, destroying rainforests, overfishing in oceans with modern technology, and polluting the environment with green

toxic gas omission are nothing but the manifestation of this greed. Unless we become Earth friendly, Earth can no longer handle these exploitations.

Natural resources or nature is not Man's property, but they are God's gift to humanity. It is like a tenancy agreement between a tenant and his landlord. The tenant must take care of the landlord's property with care. He does not have right to destroy or exploit it or damage the rented house. Likewise, man must take care of the earth. He must maintain the ecological balance in the universe with his usage. Islam also forbids the extravagant lifestyle and the wasting of natural resources. Yet, today man does not follow this in his interaction with nature and natural sources. In Islamic law, man is morally responsible. I.R. Faruqi notes that the (*al-Taklif*) (responsibility, and obligation) laid down upon man exclusively knows no bounds, as far as his possible scope and theatre of action. It comprehends the whole universe. All mankind is the object of man's moral action, all earth and sky are his theatre. He is responsible for all that takes place in the universe, every one of its remotest corners, for man's *taklif* is universal, and cosmic. It comes to end only on the day of judgment (*I. Faruqi, pl62*). Do these world leaders behave with this kind of responsibility and accountability in the use of destructive weapons? Wars destroy the ecosystem of the universe than anything else. Who are responsible for all the wars of the world? Many developed nations have engaged in the production of high tech-weapons and they use them to protect their geopolitical interest. Today, developed countries have weapons of mass destruction to wipe out a large part of the world. This is all what humanity has produced with the human skills for its own destruction. This is nothing but a form of corruption. Abdallah El Harif and Vijay Prashad expose this geopolitical manipulation and corruption in this way.

“The United states already has the largest military arsenal and the widest military footprint in the world. According to the most recent data, U. S

government spent at least \$732 billion in 2019 on its military, we say “at least” because there are secret disbursements of funds to the massive intelligence wings that are not publicly available. From 2018 to 2019, the United States increased its military budget by 5.3 percent, the amount of which is the same as the total German military budget. Almost 40 percent of global military spending is done by the United States. The United States has a combined total of more than 500 military bases in almost every country on the planet. The United States Navy has 20 of the world’s 44 active aircraft carriers, while other U. S allies have 21 of them, this means that the U.S and its allied states have 41 of the 44 aircraft carriers (China has two and Russia has one). There is no question about the overwhelming superiority of U.S military forces. Yet, the United States is now using its full ability to expand its nuclear and conventional domination into space and into cyber-warfare with its Space command (re-established in 2009) and cyber command (created in 2009). The United States has developed an interceptor ballistic missile (SM3) that it has tested in space, and it is testing such fanciful weapon as particle-beam weaponry, plasma-based weaponry, and kinetic bombardment. In 2017, Trump announced his government’s commitment to such new weaponry. The U.S government will spend at least \$481 billion between 2018 and 2024 to develop new advanced weapons systems, including autonomous vehicles, counter-drones, cyber-weapons, and robotics, The U.S. Army has already tested its advanced Hypersonic weapon that can travel five times speed of sound, so that it can reach any place on earth with an hour, this weapon is part of the U.S military’s conventional prompt Global Strikes program. The U. S military complex has advanced its hybrid war program that includes a range of techniques to undermine governments and political projects.

These techniques include the mobilization of United States power over international institutions (such as the international monetary fund and the

world bank, and the SWIFT wire service) to prevent governments from managing basic economic activity, the use of U.S diplomatic power to isolate governments, the use of sanction methods to prevent private companies from doing business with certain governments, the use of information warfare to render governments and political forces to be criminals or terrorists..... U. S and European weapons manufactures continue to flood the world with the deadliest weapons. The top five arms exporters (Lockheed Martin, Boeing, Northrop Grumman, Raytheon, and general dynamics) are in the United States. These five firms alone account for 35 percent of the top 100 of the world's arms dealer sales in 2018(the most recent figure), the total U. S. arms sales account for 59 percent of all arms sales that year. This was an increase of 7.2 percent over the U.S sales in 2017. These weapons are sold to countries that should instead spend their previous surplus on education, on health and on food programs. For example, in West Asia and North Africa, the greatest threat to the people is not only the terrorist in his Toyota Hilux, but it is also the arms dealer in the air-conditional hotel room. The Stockholm Appeal is now obsolete. A new appeal is needed. We developed it.

- Stand against the warmongering of the U.S. imperialism, which seeks to impose dangerous wars on an already fragile planet.
- Stand against the saturation of the world with weapons of all kinds, which inflame conflicts and often drive political process toward endless wars.
- Stand against the use of military power to prevent the social development of the people of the world, to allow countries to build their sovereignty and the dignity". (Abdallah El Harif and Vijay Prashad p.2).

The above quote vividly describes the precarious status of the geopolitical world that we live in today. Humanity lives in a dangerous world today than ever before. An unprecedented injustice, aggression, and economic exploitation between nations are widespread in the modern world. Poorer

people in many parts of the world are suffering, yet, there exist super rich who are enjoying luxurious life. Some of these people have accumulated wealth excessively and yet, millions of people live in poverty and starvation. This capitalistic world has created such a huge gap between the rich and poor. Religious leaders and educated people do not have power to bring these world leaders into the court of justice to do justice for poorer people of the world. Likewise, unnecessary wars and conflicts are created in the third world to keep the weapon industries open in certain developing countries. This is done to make a huge amount of profit out of these conflicts. All these conflicts and wars have created more ecological and environmental damage than any other industries in the world. Wars and conflicts have created more environmental damage to the world than the natural disasters. Yet, no world leader could challenge America and its western allies on this environment damage. The planet Earth is an interconnected global body or like a human body. If one of part of human body is inflicted with any kind of injury, it will harm entire human body. Likewise, if any part of the planet earth is damaged, it will harm the ecosystem of the entire world.

Modern scientists and environmentalists know the far-reaching impacts of all these modern wars on the planet earth and yet, they do not have any influence over the world leaders. Who dares challenging the Chinese government and tell them not to expand unsustainable and environmentally detrimental development projects in many Afro- Asian countries? Likewise, who dares challenging western leaders by telling them not produce weapons of mass destruction? Modern man has damaged the ecological and environmental system enormously and disproportionately than any generation in the past. The ecosystem of the world has been greatly damaged by greedy policies of some developed nations. UN and other human right commissions have no power to bring all these world leaders into book. The moral of the world politics has

dropped into this level of falsification, political twist, and manipulation. Humanity see all these destructions and ecological disasters in the world today and yet, people are powerless and cannot speak against all this injustice. Corruption has flourished on land and sea because of wrong policies that some world leaders make. Now, humanity has begun to taste the consequences of their own action on this earth. God has gifted the universe to the humanity as a trust to look after its natural resources. Now, it looks that due to the deforestation there appears an ever-increasing conflict between people and animals. Elephants alone kills thousands of people across the globe annually. But this is only because man has invaded and destroyed their habitats in many parts of the world. Likewise, man has endangered many other animals and species. Yet, due to political incorrectness, the humanity cannot deal with it.

When humanity transcends the natural and physical laws of the universe, God intervenes to correct human actions. Sometimes to warn humanity of the dare consequences of their actions and behaviours. Muslim communities strongly believe that God is watching each human action. The divine intervention is inevitable when nations transcend divine laws. An invisible microbe is challenging the entire humanity in the world. Man has achieved unprecedented advancements in science and technology. Human interference with nature has gone far to design human babies “We may see designer babies in near future, along with a wholes series of other edits to our humanity-from eradicating genetic diseases to augmenting human cognition. These will raise some of the biggest ethical and spiritual questions we face as human beings” (Philip Larry (2017. P100. Take for instance, the case of designer babies. Does this go alone with the Qur’anic prediction of “surely they will change God’s creation” (Qur’an: 4:119). Prof Zaghlool al-Najjar is one of leading Islamic scientists. He argues that “Human cloning or designer babies’ projects’ are human attempts to alter God’s creation. God created

human beings with some characteristics. Human reproduction is one of divine signs in this universe. Allah created some emotional, psychological and romantic bonds between man and woman to produce babies in a natural way.” (Accessed to his talk on YouTube on (20/4/2020).

Man has been playing with nature in the name of science and technology. Today, many western scientists argue that the global warming and environmental disasters are outcomes of human interference with nature. Man has failed to take care of natural resources of the world around him and as result of this exploitation and misuse of natural resources, the natural world is paying us back with this kind of deadly virus. Robert J. Burrowes argues that “The global elite is conducting a coup that is designed to destroy all of the key elements of human society. It is doing this by destroying the essence of what it means to be human, by destroying the nature of existing human relationships and by destroying the political, economic and social institution of nation-states” (“Robert. Burrowes’ p1). All these geopolitical and financial manipulations in the world suggest that these elite groups are plotting to control humanity with their political and financial power. The government institutions, establishments and the bureaucracies have been exploited to take the control of humanity by these elite groups. Chris Hedge has highlighted this in his recent writing saying that “The ruling elites no longer have legitimacy. They have destroyed our capitalist democracy and replaced it with a mafia state. What the Roman philosopher Cicero called a commonwealth, a *res publica*, a “public thing or the property of a people” has been transformed into an instrument of naked pillage and repression on behalf of a global corporate oligarchy. We are serfs ruled by obscenely rich, omnipotent masters who loot the U.S. treasury, pay little or no taxes and have perverted the judiciary, the media and the legislative branches of government to strip us of civil liberties

and give them the freedom to commit financial fraud and thefts” (Chris Hedge. P1).

This deadly virus whether it had been created in some sort of biological lab or it is a natural one, it sends a precautionary warning for humanity to amend its ways. Today, world leaders do not adhere to moral and ethical principles in their dealing in international politics rather each nation is greedy to get material gains from other nations at any cost. Yet, world leaders today are not able to confront this invisible virus with all their mighty power and skills. World leaders could play politics with humanity and yet, God is watching each movement of human beings. For a faithful Muslim nothing happens with the wisdom and knowledge of God. Everything that is going to happen in the world is already predestined in the Book of God and all that happened has happened in accordance with the will of God. So, no Muslim should fear a death by the corona virus or by another pandemic. Man can plan many things covertly and yet; God is the best planner.

All human actions and intentions come under divine jurisdictions. China and the US could compete for the domination and geopolitical hegemony and yet, nothing happens without God’s will. God can use visible and invisible forces in nature to destroy any one or any nation when they rebel against the divine wishes. Corruption and injustice are widespread in the world. There is only a conditional justice in the world. Poorer nations are exploited badly, and innocent people have no voice in the world. Science and modern technology are used to exploit poor nations. “The Qur’an says, “All authority goes back to Him” (Qur’an 11:123). All matters of the universe return to Him alone. So, this deadly virus has attacked humanity with the divine wisdom. This is nothing but a clear-cut divine warning from God to all of humanity to evaluate its behaviours and attitudes. This virus is nothing but a

testing to see if humanity returns to God or it follows its own desires and destruction.

Chapter 3: LESSONS FROM PANDEMICS

This invisible coronavirus teaches the humanity many lessons. It has made humanity to kneel in front of divine power. It has shocked the world leaders. It has stunned medical professionals. It has made world economies to crumble. It has brought the bustling world into a standstill. A tiny invisible army of the corona virus is endangering the entire humanity with its magical power. The modern man has been boasting about his technological and scientific advancement in recent decades. Yet, today, he cannot stand in front of this tiny invisible divine creature. What does it tell us? It tells us that there is a super-power behind all universal events in this world. No, a big or small event takes place without divine wisdom and a divine plan. This virus has been afflicting people indiscriminately. It does not discriminate between the rich and poor, old and young, or male, female nor between weak and strong. No one is immune from the merciless attack of this tiny virus. The rulers and the public are equally affected. It tells us that man is weak and feeble in front of divine power. It tells us that the humanity depends on some supernatural or divine power for its protection and survival. It tells us that the humanity needs divine mercy and divine grace. It tells us that the humanity is always in needs of divine help. It tells us that life and death are in the hands of God. It tells us what doctors can do and what they cannot do in the time of the emergency like this. More than 500.0000 thousand people have perished but doctors could do little to save them. More than 10 million people are afflicted with this deadly virus and yet, doctors could do little to protect them.

It teaches the world leaders a bitter lesson not to be arrogant. So called veto powered countries have been arrogant with their high-tech weapons. In

fact, some countries have been spreading corruption in various parts of the world. These leaders should know that there is a super-divine power (God) to hold them to account. The virus has made them realise that their power and their technologies cannot stand in front of divine power. How many millions of people may have been affected by wars in all these third world countries? How many millions of people may have cried for help? How many thousand children may have been killed in all wars? Some world leaders have behaved with arrogance in many international affairs. People of Palestine have been suffering for 70 years. Yet, US, Russia, China, and all western countries have been supporting aggressive Israel. Similarly, India has been persecuting innocent Kashmir people and yet, no one dared to question India.

The coronavirus has united entire humanity beyond all religious, racial, national, linguistic differences to work for one goal. That is to protect humanity from this lethal virus. Today, the entire global population is united in its fight against this deadly virus. This sense of unity among humanity should always prevail to fight so many other global issues that pose existential threat to humanity. May God guide world leaders to work for the unity of humanity. The Muslim perception of this health phenomenon is different from that of other faith groups. The faithful Muslim community learns a few lessons from such a phenomenal event in life. It reminds them of their purpose in life. It connects them with the Creator and the Lord of the universe. It gives them a true meaning in life. It makes them to think of who controls the life and death. It reminds them of the temporal nature of the world life. It reminds them of an eternal life after death. It makes them humble human beings to obeying the divine commandment in life. It makes them to realise that this worldly life is nothing but a testing from God. It makes them to realise that this pandemic is not merely a health problem but rather, there is a divine power behind all events in the universe. It makes them to realise the limits and limitations of man in

front of divine natural disaster. It makes them realise, how an invisible creature could threaten humanity with its mighty power. It reminds us of sudden deaths. It reminds us that that we should give preference to human values over materialism. It reminds us that we should give preference to our spiritual development over material progress. It reminds us that human greed that destroys the planet earth. In short, this corona virus leaves so many lessons for humanity to learn from it.

More importantly, this deadly virus reveals the true nature of human life on Earth. It should invigorate some fundamental questions about human life. The old and new philosophers have repeatedly asked some fundamental questions about the reality of man on earth. Who I am? Where do I come from? What is my mission in life? What is the meaning of my life? Where do I go from here? Or what happens to my soul as and when I die? This deadly virus has created some questions about the death and the nature of human life. We have seen people to die around us everywhere due to this corona virus. Children lose their parents, wives lose their husbands, parent lose their children, countries lose their citizens indiscriminately. Does human life end like this abruptly? Do not these human souls have any other opportunities to meet one another? It looks like the modern man is asking the same question as the pagan Arabs used to ask. They used to say that the human life is nothing but to indulging in luxury and enjoyment.

“when we are dead and have become dust and bones, shall we then have raised up” (The Qur’an: 56:47). Today, the humanity overindulges in luxury and enjoyment. It cares only its physical needs nothing else. It does not care about its spiritual and religious needs. It looks like this global pandemic outbreak has erupted to send a message to the humanity about its destiny and its purpose in life. Today, the entire human race lives in an uncertainty. People everywhere live in panic and fear. Young and healthy people die with the deadly virus

within days. For the last few months, humanity has been living in an utter shock and panic mood that it has ever experienced. The entire world's hustle and bustle ended abruptly; flights have landed, trains are stranded, transport services are abandoned, shops and markets are deserted, school and colleges are closed, and all public offices are closed. In short, people are in lockdown in their homes. People's day to day life came to a standstill abruptly without any human imagination. This unusual social phenomenon tells us that there is a super divine power who controls all universal affairs beyond human control. It tells us that human power is very much limited. It tells us that there is a divine power to controlling human life. It tells us that there is a God to monitoring human life. It tells us that life and death are in the hands of God. This social phenomenon should make man to think about his destiny, his life mission, and his purpose in life.

a) Pandemics and the Divine Power.

Man does not appreciate and acknowledge that there is a God who has created man and the universe. He controls each physical and social phenomenon in the world. All affairs come under His jurisdiction. Nothing happens in the universe without His permission. He is the Lord and Master of all cosmos and worlds. Jews, Christians, and Muslims call Him with different names and yet, there is only one God for all of humanity. The perceptions and interpretation of the notion of God may differ person to person and yet, there is only one God for all of humanity. According to the Holy Qur'an God of all the prophets are one and the same. The Qur'an does not make any distinction between prophets. All prophets got divine inspiration from one divine source. This faith in the unity of God is called in Islamic theology as a science of *Tawhid*. It means that God alone is the Creator who created everything in the universe. He is the ultimate cause of every event in the universe and the final ends of all events go to Him. To believe in God is to accept this everything

takes place in accordance with the divine will. Yet, man is entrusted with relative freewill and reason to live with responsibility and accountability. God in Islam is a living God and active God. He is always omnipresent. He is the ultimate agent of all events and the cause of all things and beings in the world. So, the corona pandemic or any other social phenomenon would not take place without His permission. We share some theological notions with our Jews and Christians brothers. The holy Qur'an invites people of the Book to acknowledge the unity of God. "We sent a messenger to every community, saying, that "serve God and shun false gods" (Qur'an 16:36)". "Say, come, I will tell you what your Lord has really forbidden you. Do not ascribe anything as a partner to Him" Qur'an 6:151)". This and many other similar Qur'anic verses clearly emphasize that the primary purpose of Man's creation is to declare the unity of God. To deny the notion of unity of one God is one of the greatest crimes that Man does on Earth. Islam does not accept it at all. God will not forgive the joining of the partners with Him (Qur'an; 4:48). Today, humanity has rejected its Creator and has begun to follow their own desires. Yet, Islam says that God has created man capable of knowing God.

It is an instinct of Man to know his Lord. This is called as fitra: a status of nature in which everyone is born to know his or her God. Yet, humanity has tarnished this natural status with man-made philosophical and theological ideologies and doctrines. The pure monotheistic belief in the unity of God, has been spoiled by manmade human ideologies and philosophies. God is the eternal and everlasting. He is the Lord of all cosmos. It is He who created all in the universe. Islam correlates the intriguing relations between God, man, and the universe. God is at the centre of the universe. It is He who has created man as his vicegerent on earth to fulfil divine will on earth. So, man must live by divine commencements. Yet, today, humanity has doubted the existence of God and created false gods. The Muslim community gets its ethical, moral, and

social values from the principle of unity of God (*Tawhid*). They firmly believe that the divine will should prevail on earth to prosper and secure peace in the world. Yet, there is no place for divine commandments in the modern world.

When humanity exceeds divine commandments, God punishes them with a natural force. We sent messengers before you to many communities and afflicted people with suffering and hardship so, that they could learn humility. (Qur'an 6: 42). Today, humanity suffers immensely from the pandemics and plagues. We could offer many scientific and medical explanation for the spread of virus like this and yet, it seems that this pandemic ordeal has gone beyond human control now. It looks like even medical experts with all their advancement in medicine, cannot identify the pathology of this disease. It means that there is some divine power beyond human control to afflict this disease. Humanity must enhance its spiritual connection with its Lord and creator of the universe if it wants to live peace and social harmony on earth. There is a close connection between the spirituality and peace on the earth. Today, the world is controlled by some capitalistic groups in the west and east. All these political leaders and money-making companies do not follow any ethical and moral principle in accumulating power and wealth. All international organizations and bodies are protecting these capitalistic groups. Today, excessive political and economic power controls the natural resources of the world. UN, IMF, and other international institutions are keen to protect the right of rich countries and not the right of poor countries. Millions of people all over the world, suffer due to the political manipulation of rich countries.

Today, injustice, aggressions, transgression, corruption, and exploitation have exceeded their limits and poor people cannot get justice. Poor and weak communities are left helpless. So, it can be argued that the divine intervention comes like this, to warn all these aggressors to amend their way and help weak and poor communities. otherwise, a divine punishment could engulf the entire

humanity. This invisible microbe tells us that some super natural power or divine power is watching human behaviours on the Earth. It tells us mighty political powers cannot stand in front of divine power. It tells us that all humanity is equal. There is no difference between black and white. All are equal in front of divine power. No one could escape from this pandemic except those who God protects them, it has struck people discriminately rich and poor. So, this pandemic tells us God alone is most powerful when it comes to controlling all human affairs. "When people see an oppressor but do not prevent them (from their oppression and evil), it is likely that God will encompass them all with a punishment."

b) Pandemics and the Death.

One of the most important lessons that the humanity should learn from the corona pandemic is that people should be ready to depart the world at any time. No matter young or old, people must be ready to leave this world at any time. No matter Muslims or non-Muslims people must be ready to leave this worldly life at any time as and when God takes them. Death is inevitable and people must be mentally, and spiritually prepared to leave the worldly life at any time. Islam constantly reminds us of this inevitable human phenomenon. In fact, the global social phenomenon like this pandemic reminds humanity to live on earth with the consciousness of this inevitable human reality. Life and death are determined by God. No one can escape death. It is an undeniable social reality. The timing of death of each human being is fixed by God. The Qur'an and the Prophetic traditions remind us about the temporary nature of the worldly life. For instance, the Qur'an tells that "Bear in mind that present life is just game, a diversion, an attraction, a cause of boasting among you, of rivalry in wealth and children.... the life of this worldly life is an illusory pleasure.". (The Qur'an: 57:20). Hundreds of prophetic traditions have highlighted the temporary nature of the worldly life. "Be as if you are a stranger or a traveller

in the world. (Al-Bukhari). Yet, for faithful people death is nothing but a transition from this worldly life into an eternal life of Hereafter. In fact, the next life is an eternal and true life according the holy Qur'an. So, no Muslim should worry about the death, but Muslims should live with God consciousness in their worldly life.

The coronavirus pandemic has created a great suffering, trauma, fear, and panic among people. Thousands of people die each day and yet, a collective bereavement is inevitable. People feel sad and sorry to see losing their beloved ones. The strong faith of Muslim community in the next life protect them mentally, spiritually, and psychologically to about the loss of life. So, when a beloved one dies in the Muslim community, they do not go crazy to cry loudly or to make any cursing. Rather they maintain patience and find comfort in the divine will and predestination. Muslims know well that the death is a temporary separation. Moreover, prayers and the recitation of the holy Qur'an give them more comfort and they can get on with life well after the period of bereavement and sorrow. Yet, in some other cultures people suffer when a beloved one dies. Sometimes, they are mentally, emotionally, and psychological affected. Margent Stroebe, Henk Schut, Wolfgang Stroebe have highlighted the health outcomes of the human loss. They argue that "bereavement is associated with excess risk of mortality, particularly in the early weeks and months after loss.... bereaved individuals report diverse psychological reactions. For a few people, mental disorders or complications in the grieving process ensue" M. Stroebe, H. Schut, Wolfgang, 2007.p1). These finding tells us that the faith in the next life plays a greater role in the health of people and yet, many people do not care about this. That is why we see an increasing rate of suicide among non-Muslim communities. Many research studies find the suicidal rates among Muslim communities are less than any other communities.

Moreover, Muslims believe that our life and death are in the hand of God who created us from nothing. Only what God dictates takes place. “Say, only what God has decreed will happen to us. He is our master, let the believers put their trust in God” (Qur’an. 9;51). That is why, Muslim communities are not afraid of natural calamities and accidental deaths. This does not mean they do not have human worries and human feeling. They are like any other communities to suffer in time of calamities and pandemics; yet their attitudes and reactions to natural disasters differ from other communities. They will say that we belong to our Lord and we return to Him when any calamity strikes them. Islam implants such a deep spiritual and moral value in the mind. For a strong Muslim there is no need to panic at any time during any calamities. How many people plan their day to day affairs in the world and yet, they do not have chances to fulfil their plan? Many examples could be cited to illustrate how human plans are shuttered in life when a divine invention comes above from the sky beyond human control. How many human plans and activities are disrupted due to the corona virus pandemic? Human beings plan something and yet, there is a powerful God above them to decide each action of human beings. How many lives have been taken by God abruptly through the corona pandemics? Yet, humanity rarely learns any meaningful lessons from calamities like this. The holy Qur’an tells us that man cannot escape from the grip of death at all. “Say, running away will not benefit you. If you manage to escape death or slaughter, you will be only permitted to enjoy life for a short while: (Qur’an 33; 16). “Death will overtake you, no matter where you may be even inside, high towers. (Qur’an 4; 78).

c) Pandemics and the Eschatological Belief in Islam

Death is our gateway to our life in the *Hereafter*. It is our ultimate destination. It is an inevitable personal experience in everyone's life. No one could escape it. No one is exempt from it. In fact, each one must taste death. So, man is going to enter a different world with his death. Science has not yet come up with any scientific evidence to tell us what is going to happen after death. Science cannot go beyond the physical world to tell us what is in the metaphysical world. Muslims strongly believe in the eschatological world and the corona pandemic reminds them of their ultimate life in the eschatological world. The holy Qur'an in its numerous verses vividly describes the scenarios of death and the next life. Nearly one third of the holy Qur'an deals with the phenomenon of next life.

The holy Qur'an describes the worldly life as a temporal life and the next life as an eternal and permanent life. It is a firm conviction of Muslims that human souls never die rather, they will be in Heaven or Hell eternally. The corona virus and the panic it has created across the hospitals resembles a mini rehearsal to the scenarios of the phenomenal events that take place on the day of Judgment. It is impossible to compare this worldly event with the events that are going to happen on the day of judgment and yet, to bring near to human minds we could make some comparison between the panic movements that took place during the peak day of corona virus and the panic scenarios that the Qur'an describes about the events on the day of judgement. We learn from medical doctors, health workers and nurses across the world that many patients were terrified when they came to know that they were afflicted with corona virus. We learn that some relatives of the patients scared to meet the corona afflicted loved ones. Some did not meet them in accordance with health protocols. Many people ran away from the corona afflicted persons in fear and

panic. The holy Qur'an describes the scenarios of panic and fear among people on the day of reckoning in the next life.

“The Day man will flee from his own brother, his mother, his wife, his children, each of them will be absorbed in concern of their own, on that Day”. (The Qur'an: 80-34). Man, by nature returns to some superpower to seek help when he is in a difficulty. The Qur'an describes the last movement of the pharaoh, and other historical figures in human history. The Qur'an is a book of historical verdicts on the fate of previous nations and people. It tells us how arrogant and unjust rulers sought a divine help in their death beds in a desperation of saving themselves. Today, world leaders can behave arrogantly with proud and pride. They do that with their political and technological power and yet, when they are in a greater trouble, they all seek some help from an external power beyond human control. “The guilty person will wish he could save him from the suffering of the Day by sacrificing his son, his spouse, his brother, the kinsfolk who gave him shelter, and everyone on earth, if it could save him” (The Qur'an: 70:12-15). “On that Day, you see it, every nursing mother will think no more of her baby, every pregnant lady will miscarry, you will think people are drunk, when they are not” (The Qur'an: 70:12-15).

This is how, the Holy Qur'an describes the panic mood of people on the Day of Judgement. No doubt the corona virus has created some panic mood in the minds of patients during the peak time. We have seen how, people in Wuhan, Italy, Spain, New York, and other cities have suffered from panic mood. The front-line doctors and nurses have revealed these panic moods on palliative and intensive care. I will quote some doctors here to depict the vivid pictures of panic mood during peak time. Dr Rosena Allin-Khan: The Labour MP for Tooting in South London and an A&E doctor describes her experience of working at the peak of the coronavirus pandemic in this way. “More and more patients are arriving severely breathless and terrified. They cannot even have

relatives by their side because the virus is so contagious. One of the hardest things is having to tell loved ones to say goodbye at the door to A&E, because they could risk their own life by holding their partner or parent's hand.”. Likewise, thousands of health workers and front lines doctors have described the graphic scenes of panic and uncertainty among patients. A doctor from California describes her experience of working during the peak time of the pandemic as follows.

“The pandemic has basically created a level of anxiety and fear in our workplace about exposure. And you really want, advocate yourself, and to your colleagues, and your patients. We need to find a way to feel protected, so we can do our jobs. At homes, my spouse, and I are a two-physicians household. We have already separated ourselves and are sleeping in separate rooms. We come into the house and go straight to the shower, and use alcohol to clean our things (cellophanes, pagers, badges, eyeglasses, we try not bring anything into the house” Dr Henna, Borneo, Oakland, CA. Another doctor from New York describes his panic mood in this way.

“It’s not like what we see with the flu or pneumonia- it’s more rapid and it’s affecting younger and healthier people than we would otherwise expect. A close family member has it, I’m living with a lot of stress now worrying about them, worrying about patients, worrying about myself” Dr Julia Paris, New York.

Mirna Fawaz, and Ali Samaha argue that “Quarantine practices among the general public have started to give rise to psychological distress and specifically PTSD symptomatology among a notable proportion of the public which is suspected to augment in the coming days..... The qualitative analysis has revealed four themes namely ‘Fears of contracting and spreading the virus’, ‘Conflict between professional duty and family obligation’, ‘Stigma of being infected’, and ‘Inadequate or inaccurate information’. one nurse said,

“since the start of the outbreak, I have started to be really obsessed with handwashing and disinfecting everything I touch. After I started serving in the Corona unit, the fear got even worse as I am now more vulnerable to catch the virus and spread it to my family . . . that minute I knew I was going to say goodbye to my family for my safety and theirs. I do not want to be the source of their illness”. (N3).

A physician similarly proclaimed, The first few days of serving in the unit I was doing fine but then I started anxiously checking my vitals . . . always desperately looking for any symptoms I’m showing that might indicated my affliction as if my mind is always playing tricks on me that I might be infected and I am not aware of it. (P1)”. (Mirna Fawaz, and Ali Samaha, pp 1-3).

During the corona pandemic, many health workers and doctors were worried that they might get afflicted with the coronavirus. Some of them resigned in fear of death. We heard from frontline health workers what kind of panic this corona virus created in the minds of some people. It is reported that some relatives of corona patients run away from them in fear of their own life. Some suspected corona patients were beaten to death in some parts of India. Some corona patients were looked down and neglected in many countries in fear of death. Mothers and fathers were not ready to see their children with suspected corona virus. Some children too frightened to see their parents with the corona virus. People began to run away from suspected corona patients. Panic and worries penetrated minds and hearts of many people in the world for the last five months. There is no doubt, we should take all preventative measures and there is a genuine reason for fear and yet, what is most important is to know the reality of this worldly life. if we have a purpose in life and a true mission in life. we do not need to worry about it.

Thousands of horrific patients went through life and death situations. All these stories and panics tell us that there is metaphysical power behind these deaths and suffering. Many patients escaped near deaths. Doctors and

medical professionals have recorded the stories of thousands of patients who escaped the near death. I just share a story of a near death survival of a coronavirus afflicted patient from Bradford hospital intensive care unit to illustrate that the life and death is in the hands of God. Dr John Wright from Bradford Hospital describes the pathetic condition of Mohamed Azeem when he arrived in Bradford Royal Infirmary. “When Mohammed arrived in A&E it was clear that his life was in immediate danger. This was a young man who was dying in front of us and he was whisked straight to the intensive care unit. It was touch and go from his first day and his perilous journey was only just beginning. He ended up in coma in ICU for 48 days and in hospital for 68. The doctor treating him throughout was ICU consultant Dr Michael McCoy, who describes him as the sickest young man he has ever seen. A healthy person has blood oxygen saturation levels of 95% or higher – in other words their red blood cells are carrying almost as much oxygen as possible (100%). Mohammed’s saturation levels were 60% to 70%, and that was after ventilation with undiluted oxygen. Even when he was intubated in ICU it was a struggle to keep his oxygen levels above 80%, the point below which there is a risk of damage to organs such as the heart and brain....The ICU team had numerous heart-breaking conversations with his family, preparing them for the worst, but Mohammed had other ideas..... His blood gases got better, his oxygen requirements reduced, and we were able to permanently keep him on his back ...when we woke him, he was neurologically fine. He was Ok- his strength was surprisingly good for what he had been through. Remarkably, he was able to engage with physio quickly and from that point he just raced to recovery” (John Wright, BBC report). What does this story tell us? It tells us that the exact time and the day of our death are fixed by God alone. This fact has repeatedly been mentioned in many places in the holy Qur’an. Doctors and medical professionals do their best to save people from death and yet, there is a divine power behind all these metaphysical events in human life. So many

healthy people have died during the corona pandemic and yet, so many sick people have survived from the grip of the coronavirus pandemics. So, it is God alone decides our lives and deaths.

The NHS staff in the UK has done an excellent service during this pandemic. They have provided a dedicated care and service. There are so many emotional and heart-touching stories of survivals and deaths. They have respected the last wishes of dying corona-inflicted patients. They have provided pastoral religious care as well. It was reported that two Muslim elderly people were seriously suffering from the coronavirus in one of UK's hospitals. They expressed that their last wish was to hear the recitation of the holy Qur'an from someone. The nurses on duty contacted some local clerics over the phone to recite some parts of the holy Qur'an to fulfil their last wishes at their deathbed. This kind of palliative care without any discrimination should be greatly appreciated by all. This should have eased the pain and suffering of those two patients. Medical professionals must have this kind of sympathy and empathy for their patients and yet, we hear some horrific stories from India. The corona afflicted patients from minority communities in India are badly treated by doctors against the ethical and moral practice of medical profession.

The holy Qur'an describes the panic mood of human beings on the Day of Judgement. These graphic pictures of patients in hospital floors and the anxious mood of relatives should remind us what is going to come on the day of judgement in the next life. For a faithful Muslim community, a true and meaningful life begins with the death. Yet, it looks that God reminds us the sceneries of the day of the judgement through these graphic pictures of panic during the corona virus. The notion of life differs from culture to culture. The world view too differs from culture to culture. The philosophy of life too differs from one religion to another. So, meaning and perception of life differ from

one group to another. For some people, material success in this worldly life is an end goal. They have limited their life mission and vision with this worldly life. Success and failure are limited and confined with this worldly life. Yet, the meaning of life in the perception of Muslims totally differs from some other religious people. Jews, Christians, and Muslims have somewhat same philosophical ideas about life. People of revealed religions have somewhat similar view about life.

They believe that when people die, their physical bodies becomes dust and yet their souls stay in another metaphysical world until the day of the judgment. They believe that people be resurrected on the day of Judgement. Good and bad people will be judged for their deeds. So, for these people human life has two sides. The Earthly life and the next life after death. There is a huge difference between the earthly life and the next life. The earthly life is limited within a few years, but the next life is unlimited. The earthly life is inundated with difficulties and hardship and yet, the next life is a peaceful life for. For this reason, the faithful Muslims dedicated their life to securing the true meaningful success in their next life. They will undergo sufferings and difficulties in this life, to secure their eternal success in the next life. Therefore, the faithful Muslims will not commit any crimes or sins to harm the success of their next life. Muslims will try to make maximum use of this life for the success of the next life. The goal of the Muslims is to secure their success in the next life. So, for pious Muslims any natural disasters like this pandemic would not bother them too much, because, they strongly believe that the true human life starts after the death. Human life will not be completely wiped out with death as some pagan Arabs believed. They believed that people would become just dust after their death and yet, the Holy Qur'an tells us that true life starts after the death, So, no Muslim should worry and panic about the death. Yet, disbelievers do not have such a broader perception and world view about

the next life. This difference between believers and disbelievers makes a huge difference in life.

Yet, this kind of fear is natural but, we cannot avoid death at all. Each human who is born will die one day, and the death is not in our hand. We all will die one way or another at some point in our life and yet, what Islam tells us is to be in preparedness to die any time and at any day. What does it mean? It means that we should understand our mission and vision in our life. Why do we live and what is our purpose in life? Our strong belief in the next life gives us a true meaning for our life. It gives us a true purpose in life. Human beings are not created by God just to eat and die as cattle do but rather with a purpose. God has dignified humanity with reason. He has created man differently from all His creatures on earth. God made him as his vicegerent. Man has been created not to become just dust after death rather, his soul will live for ever in his next life. Thus, Muslims have a wider and comprehensive meaning for life. So, they do not need to worry too much about death, but they must worry about their duties and obligations on earth.

“Disbelievers may take their fill of pleasure in the world and eat as cattle do, but Fire will be their home” (47:12). It reminds us that all lives and all deaths are in the hands of the Almighty God. It reminds us that eternity is only for God alone. Everyone and everything are going to perish one day and yet, the eternity belongs to God alone. “Everything will perish except His face. His is Judgment and to Him you all shall brought be back” (28:88). The Muslim community strongly believe that life and death are determined by God alone. The time of death is already predestined by God. So, we cannot do anything about it. It does not mean that we put our life in risk and danger. We are blessed with free will and reasons to take on all measures to protect our life.

All that a good Muslim could say during this type of pandemic is that we all belong to God and we all return to God one day. So, the Muslim community faces all this suffering to pass the worldly test set by God, Therefore, pandemics like that of the coronavirus pandemic should not bother faithful Muslims as it has bothered so many other non-Muslim communities. After all, world affairs are being monitored and controlled by God alone beyond human capabilities. Human beings are like tenants in this worldly life. Each tenant moves out when their tenancy agreement expires. Likewise, each one of us dies when the times of death comes. That is the true picture of this worldly life and yet, Donald Trump and Chinese prime Minister do not accept this perception about life. That is why they have engaged in all this geopolitical and trade war to control this material world and yet, when their life comes to an end they will die in their fixed times. So, this is an inevitable fact about life and yet, they have a different perception about life and death. Their ego, and the power grip blind them from reading the reality of this worldly life. Lack of faith in the next of life has caused many evils today. How did Adolf Hitler kill millions of Jews? Why do world leaders engage in wars today? They do not believe in the next life and because of that; they think that they can get away from their crimes against humanity. So, if this corona virus is created by some agents, they all will be accountable on the day of judgement for their crimes.

This tragedy teaches us that the humanity is one. Today, people are classified based on their colour, religion, caste, race, language, nationality, and tribes. Yet, the tragedy of the coronavirus teaches us the equality of humanity. There is no protection for us when this kind pandemic attacks humanity. All are affected without any discrimination. White and black, rich, and poor, faithful, and non-faithful, westerners and non-westerners all are affected by this pandemic. Therefore, we must respect human dignity without any discrimination. Islam promotes a sense of universal human brotherhood.

According to Islamic teaching, humanity is one family. Islam tells us there are there two kinds of brotherhood. The first one is the brotherhood in faith and the second one is the brotherhood in humanity. It is reported that our prophet had said that. “Your faith will not be complete till you love for your brother what you love for yourself”. So, sharing and caring for others is part and parcel of Islamic teaching. Muslim communities must share their sympathy and empathy with the international community during this difficult time. Islam teaches us to take care of people in their suffering, even if they do not share our faith and culture. Islam demands that we look after people when they are sick and in a difficult situation. We are obliged morally and religiously to offer our moral and material support to all those who have been afflicted by this contagious virus in this way. All three revealed religions (Judo-Christian and Islamic) have clearly defined the purpose of human life and yet, today, the humanity has ignored the religious teaching of the revealed religions. Teaching of Christianity has immensely been ignored in western countries. It is reported that Church attendance has dramatically reduced in recent times. There is no place for spirituality development in the modern education. There is no place for metaphysical world or supernatural world in the modern education. People have become secularists and materialists. The atheists and rationalists have totally rejected the faith and supernatural world. They only believe in what they see, what they sense, what they hear. They only believe in the apparent physical world. It looks that this global pandemic erupted in an exponential way to reiterate there is God behind all these events in the world. It looks that this pandemic has erupted to reminds them the reality of human life and to remind them of the purpose of human life.

Man ought to think about this invisible microbe. How could it create such a havoc in human life? Who created it? where did it come from? Who decides life and death? Who decide where and how to die? According to

medical reports from different hospitals in many parts of the world, medical experts find it hard to understand the pathology of this pandemic. They do not know why some people are afflicted with this virus and some other are not inflicted with it. They do not know why some people get away with it and some others do not get away with it. They do not know why the immune system of some people work and some others do not work. All this tells us that some metaphysical power is behind this pandemic and its impact on humanity. Today, man is boasting about his scientific and technological advancement. No doubt modern man has created an unprecedented civilization. No time, the humanity has seen rapid technological and scientific advancement as seen today's world. Yet, humanity is compelled to kneel in front of this invisible microbe.

Islam dose not encourage Muslim communities to denounce the bounties of the world and yet, Islam tells Muslims not to be overwhelmed by worldly affairs and material things. The Qur'an records the mindset of some disbelievers towards the worldly desire. "Prophet, you are sure to find them clinging to life more eagerly than any other people, even the polytheists, any of them would wish to be given a life of a thousand years (Qur'an; 2:96). So, the Qur'an depicts the attitude of some non-Muslims towards life in this way. That is why we find them greedy for all material things. The Muslim perception of life is totally different from this. Yet, Islam does not encourage Muslims to denounce the bounties of this world to succeed in the next life rather Islam tells them to use the wealth of this world for the success in the next life. During the pandemics, some people will inevitably lose their wealth, income and even their lives. Prophet Muhammad tells us that those who die because of pandemics will be considered as martyrs.

Modern science has not yet discovered anything about the reality of the eschatological life. one of the fundamental teachings of Islam is to believe in the unseen world. Muslims believe in the world of angels, spirits, and the

eschatological life. Muslims consider the worldly life as a time of preparation for the next life. Muslims prepare for that eternal life. Muslim strongly believe that the human souls never die. After death, all human souls will encounter a divine court on the reckoning day, or the Judgment day. Man will be brought into accountability and responsibility. Each action of human being on the earthly life will be judged by God on that fateful day. The good and bad action of the human being will be shown to them on that Day. Today, modern science is so advanced to record human actions and even to record human breaths with the help of the modern technology. If it is the handy craft of a human brain, God who created this universe and all creatures can resurrect all human beings on the Day of judgment. He will reveal and display the recorded account of each human being.

Islam along with Judo-Christian religions have laid the foundations of faith on the day of judgment and yet, today, most Jews and Christians do not believe in the day of Judgment as Muslims do. The belief in the day of Judgment has faded away from the hearts and minds of Christians and Jews. The lack of faith in the day of Judgment is one of the main causes of all human problems in the world today. Why western countries exploit poor countries? why rich people exploit poor people? why do we see corruption, injustice, and aggression in the world today? Lack of faith in the judgement day is the cause of many evils in this modern digital world. Enjoying the temporal life is the ultimate objective for disbelievers. So, they do not care about the moral and ethical principles. The top policy makers and the politicians of the modern world are products of the western education system that has no place for faith in the eschatological life. That is why they exploit poor nations without any kindness. Because they want to enjoy the material wealth of the world before they die. That is a why few super rich people accumulate a huge amount of wealth with their love and greed for the temporal worldly life. They believe

that their life ends with the worldly life. There is no place for any spiritual development and religiosity in the western education. The western education is designed to develop human intellectual skills and capabilities at the expenses of spirituality. The secular education system of the world has utterly failed to fulfil the spiritual needs of human souls. God created man with a human soul, mind, and physical body. Yet, the system of the western education has managed to enhance the human minds and cognition. But the spiritual requirement of human souls is neglected by western education system. Even, the religious education is designed in the western countries to educate children on the philosophical and dogmatical aspects of religion. There is no place for the spiritual development in religious education.

The secular education system has created the politicians and policy makers of the modern world who care for nothing but about the material benefits. It is generally believed by some people that the corona virus may have been created in some laboratories. This is an assumption and there is not any scientific evidence has been produced for this claim yet. Let us assume that there is a 50% percent chance that the coronavirus is artificially created in some laboratories. Who would create such a deadly virus to endanger lives of millions of people around the world? if scientifically proved that this virus is created by some people in some laboratories, such an inhuman activity will tell us a lot about the mentality of the modern secular man. It can be said that the lack of faith in the Day of judgment and the absence of spiritual development may have encouraged these people to create such a deadly virus for their geopolitical control. Because, they do not care about the consequence of their actions. Moreover, they do not believe that they will be brought into account in their next life. Let us assume that this virus is not created by man, but it is a natural one. Yet, today, we could see the geopolitical competition and trade wars between some developed countries to control the natural resources of the

world at the expense of moral and ethical values. Therefore, it can be said that the faith in the eschatological life will make a huge difference in human attitudes and perceptions.

Chapter 4: CONSPIRACY THEORIES ABOUT CORONA VIRUS.

No recent social phenomenon has created conspiracy theories as large as the coronavirus has. Politicians, journalists, writers, gurus, priests, monks, clerics, academics, historians, some health professionals, and the public all come up with conspiracy theories on coronavirus across the world. Misinformation, false information, fake news, and disinformation are propagated among the public to create confusion. Islam encourages people to verify the news before they spread them. The Holy Qur'an tells us to confirm any information that comes to us from any source. Islamic ethics in spreading news or information is to check the truthfulness of the news item before we spread it.

“If a trouble maker brings you news, check it first, in case, you wrong others unwittingly and later regret what you have done” (49:6). Yet, Today in the age of information and technology, misinformation is viral. People are spreading unauthenticated and unchecked information. Muslims are told to verify the news items that come to them. Today, conspiracy theories are coming out about COVID-19 pandemic. Sometimes, wrong medical advice and guidance go viral. Now, people have begun to believe in conspiracy theories about the outbreak of the Corona virus pandemics. It is claimed that the corona virus had been created in some Chinese laboratories. It is claimed that this virus had been created by the US to harm the Chinese economy. People are confused and mystified about the origin and sources of the corona virus. People are left in darkness on this pandemic. People no longer believe what newspapers and media report on the corona virus.

Any discerning student of politics and geopolitics would know that there are some geopolitical competitions between China and the U.S. David ICKE, Michel Chossudovsky, Robert. Burrows and many others have come up with conspiracy theories on the coronavirus. University of Oxford published a research on conspiracy theories about the corona virus. Some people are convinced by conspiracy theories and they are not ready to follow government’s guideline on the coronavirus and yet, most respondents do not believe in these conspiracy theories. The research finding in the below diagram indicates that the most people in the western countries are no longer ready to accept all these conspiracy theories that the social media and newspapers publish. Yet, the mindsets of people in some Afro- Asian countries are different from the western people.

	Do not agree	Agree a little	Agree moderately	Agree a lot	Agree completely
Coronavirus is a bioweapon developed by China to destroy the West.	54.6%	20.2%	11.7%	8.0%	5.5%
Jews have created the virus to collapse the economy for financial gain.	80.8%	5.3%	6.8%	4.6%	2.4%
Muslims are spreading the virus as an attack on Western values.	80.1%	5.9%	7.0%	4.6%	2.4%
Bill Gates has created the virus in order to reduce the world population.	79.0%	6.4%	6.6%	5.1%	3.0%
The WHO already has a vaccine and are withholding it.	70.9%	10.6%	9.3%	5.4%	3.8%
Celebrities are being paid to say they have coronavirus.	74.5%	8.5%	7.9%	5.6%	3.4%
Politicians (e.g. Boris Johnson) have faked having coronavirus.	73.5%	9.2%	8.1%	5.7%	3.6%

(www.ox.ac.uk) accessed on 22-05-2020..

a) There are some other conspiracy theorists who believe that this virus had been created by 5G mobile phone networks. “Telecommunications companies worldwide, with the support of governments, are poised within the next two years to roll out the fifth-generation wireless network (5G). This is set to deliver what is acknowledged to be unprecedented societal change on a global scale. We will have “smart” homes, “smart” businesses, “smart” highways, “smart” cities, and self-driving cars. Virtually everything we own and buy, from refrigerators and washing machines to milk cartons, hairbrushes, and infants’ diapers, will contain antennas and microchips and will be connected wirelessly to the Internet. Every person on Earth will have instant access to super-high-speed, low-latency wireless communications from any point on the planet, even in rainforests, mid-ocean and the Antarctic”. (*Arthur Firstenberg, 5Gspaceappeal, p1, accessed on 25/06/2020*) These conspiracy theorists have substantiated their arguments with some medical evidence. “Despite widespread denial, the evidence that radio frequency (RF) radiation is harmful to life is already overwhelming. The accumulated clinical evidence of sick and injured human beings, experimental evidence of damage to DNA, cells and organ systems in a wide variety of plants and animals, and epidemiological evidence that the major diseases of modern civilization—cancer, heart disease and diabetes—are in large part caused by electromagnetic pollution, forms a literature base of well over 10,000 peer-reviewed studies”. (*Ibid p1*) Yet, many medical experts and scientists have argued against this notion. W.H.O has already said that viruses cannot penetrate and travel on mobile networks. Moreover, COVID 19 has spread all over the world and it is known that many countries do not have 5G networks and yet, COVID19 has spread to those countries. Mark Lynas argues that “it is biologically impossible for viruses to spread

using the electromagnetic spectrum. The latter are waves/photons, while the former are biological particles composed of proteins and nucleic acids. But that isn't really the point — conspiracy theories are enticing because they often link two things which at first might appear be correlated; in this case, the rapid rollout of 5G networks was taking place at the same time the pandemic hit” (Mark Lynas, p1, 202/04/ 2020).

b) Some claim that some political elites are trying to create a global governance and are trying to control the world's financial market. In March, NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden warned that governments are using the temporary corona crisis as an occasion or pretext for the permanent expansion of social surveillance and control, thereby establishing an “architecture of oppression”. The measure is currently being discussed or already implemented and includes in particular:

- The introduction of applications for society- wide contact tracing.
- Building unites of enforce tracing and isolation of citizens.
- The introduction of digital biometric ID cards that can be used to control and regulate participation in social and professional activities.
- The expanded control of travel and payment transactions (e.g. cash abolition).
- The creations of legal foundation for access to the biological systems of citizens by governments or corporations (through- so called “mandatory vaccinations”). More than 600 scientists have warned of an “unprecedented surveillance of society” through problematic apps for “contact tracing”. In some countries, such ‘contract tracing’ is already carried out directly by the secret service. In several parts of the world, the population is already being monitored by drones and facing serious police overreach” (Swiss policy research, accessed on (14/06/20)).

Pertter Koenig argues that there is a collaborative collective effort by some countries to create this farce of the coronavirus. “First comes the farce,

an (almost) universal government lie around the globe about a deadly virus, W.H.O named COVID-19. The decision for a global lockdown – literally for the collapse of the world economy – was already taken at the WEF conference in Davos, 21 – 24 January 2020. On January 30, WHO declared COVID-19 a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC). At that time, there were only 150 known COVID-19 cases outside of China” There is no coincidence. There were a number of preparatory events, all pointing into the direction of a worldwide monumental historic disaster. It started at least 10 years ago – probably considerably earlier – with the infamous 2010 Rockefeller Report, which painted the first phase of a monstrous Plan, called the “Lock Step” scenario. Among the last preparatory moves for the “pandemic” was Event 201, held in NYC on 18 October 2019. The event was sponsored by the Johns Hopkins Centre for Public Health, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) and the World Economic Forum (WEF), the club of the rich and powerful that meets every January in Davos, Switzerland. Participating were a number of pharmaceuticals (vaccine interest groups), as well as the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)’s of the US and – of China” (Peter Koenig, Global research, May 26/2020). The political and diplomatic relation between the US and China has been deteriorating since the start of the Corona virus. Each country tries to blame one another for the outbreak of the virus. In fact, China has been portrayed by some western politicians as an enemy of the west. Peter Osborne has argued that “China is presented as the new existential enemy, just as Islam was 20 years ago. And by the very same people. The same newspapers columnists, the same think tanks, the same political parties, and the same intelligence agencies. After Huntington’s famous essay that led the charge against Muslims- or what they often call radical Islam-now they have turned their attention to the far East” (Peter Osborne. P1).

c). It is believed that this virus had been created to control world's population growth. Some people have accused Bill Gates of trying to depopulate the world. Robert J. Burrowes argue that a massive vaccination program, probably through compulsory vaccination- Bill Gates's dream and brainchild is vaccinating 7 billion people. Massive population reduction a eugenic plan-in part through vaccination and other means. Bill Gates, if we are doing a real good job vaccinating, we may reduce the world population by 10% or 15%. Bill Gate made this claim in one of his YouTube talks. (TED 2010 annual conference, California).

Many medical experts dismiss all these conspiracy theories on scientific evidence. Trevor Bedford a leading international coronavirus investigator says that "There is no evidence whatsoever of genetic engineering that we can find". He concludes that " The evidence we have is that the mutations (in the virus) are completely consistent with natural evolution... mostly likely scenario, based on genetic analysis, was that the virus was transmitted by a bat to another mammal between 20-70 years ago. This intermediary animal-not yet identified-passed it on to its first human host in the city of Wuhan in the late November- or early December 2019" (Cookson, financial times, 14/02/2020, retrieved on 05/06/2020). Kamal Nasar in his unpublished article has discredited to some conspiracy theories. He claims that people come up with conspiracy theories about pandemics for 6 reasons.

- 1) Most conspiracy theories originate from USA. It is because of the medical system in the USA where everything is a business. People are suspicious of the system and they easily believe conspiracy theories. There are doctors who become popular with conspiracy theories and arguments their earnings.
- 2) Their YouTube videos become a hit and can earn a lot of money.
- 3) They invariably write a sensational book and earn a lot of money

- 4) Like Dr Andrew Wakefield, sometimes, they get money from other sources. Dr Wakefield came up with a theory of association between autism and the MMR vaccine. He was backed by law firms which were involved in compensation claims and was paid by them
- 5) Like Rashid Battar, they claim to cure incurable diseases and earn a lot of money in USA by treating people with unproven chemicals such as hydrogen peroxide, which is cheap, but sold for thousands of dollars.
- 6) Conspiracy theories always come from the same group of people. Either they are anti-vax or believers of other alternative form of medicine which are not scientifically proven to be effective. At the same time, they change their stands time to time. depending on new developments. None of them predicted any of the epidemics/pandemics or whistle blow in advance. They only come to media after the pandemic has started. Just to gain popularity and boost their own unscientific arguments they used to create a conspiracy theory. There is science or common sense (Kamal Nasar, p.1).

People should not believe in all these conspiracy theories rather they should seek advice from experts in medical fields. Yes, medically, and clinically we could agree with the refutation of conspiracy theories. Yet, there are so many social scientists, academics, politicians, health professionals and others who believe in the conspiracy theories from geopolitical and economic perspectives. Many health professionals have exposed the level of corruption, fraud, and unethical practices in the health industries. The corrupt system of the US medical insurances and pharmaceutical mafia practices have made people believe in these conspiracy theories. Peter Gøtzsche in his book “Deadly medicines and organised crimes: "Deadly Medicines and Organised Crime: How Big Pharma has Corrupted Healthcare” and many others have exposed these corruptions. “Not only does the pharmaceutical industry contribute to detrimental health outcomes through biased research, deceptive

marketing, and disease mongering, but the industry's business model meets the criteria of an organized criminal operation" (Justin B. Biddle, 2016). As result of these corrupt practices in drug and health industries people are made to believe in conspiracy theories about the coronavirus pandemic.

Robert. J. Burrowes argues that “ event such as the COVID-19 virus- like the long list of such threats (including Aids, Severe Acute Respiratory- Syndrome (SARS), mad cow diseases, and Ebola) that proceeded it are created to expand elites political, economic, social and geopolitical control as well as to generate greater profits in some sectors of economy(including through stock market windfalls by short-selling), our fear is deliberately played upon by the propaganda distributed through various elite agents. The resulting panic ensures that the bulk of the human population- willing to surrender control on the promise of greater material security-serves elites precisely interested (Rebert. J, Burrowes, **Accessed on 18/06/2020**). Yet, medical experts do not back up with medical evidence to support any of conspiracy theories. Robert. J. Burrowes makes some general statements without scientific evidence. The holy Qur'an advises Muslims to seek the advice of experts in their own fields. “(People) you can ask those who know if you do not know” (16:43). Public have no clue about the virology of infectious diseases, so, they should seek the advice of experts on the infectious disease before they believe in all these viruses. There is no doubt that certain political and technocratic cults control and manipulate the world's economic and financial powers. Yet, the medical experts have not yet, scientifically proved that the coronavirus has been created in any laboratory. So, people should go with scientific evidence rather than believing in conspiracy theories.

Unlike, Judo-Christian and Muslim people, Chinese people eat many wild animals, insects, and creatures. It is claimed that this virus has spread through human interaction with snakes, bats, and other animals. It is claimed

by some Muslims that Chinese people are eating some animals that are prohibited in Islamic law that is why this virus has spread. Qur'an and prophetic traditions have laid some general rules about eating animals. Each edible animal, insect and creature are not mentioned in the primary sources of Islamic law. All what Qur'an says is that " (Prophet) say, " in all that has been revealed to me I find nothing forbidden to people to eat, except for carrion, flowing blood, pig's meat-it is loathsome or a sinful offering over which any name other than God's has been invoked" (9:145). In addition to this, the prophetic traditions have alluded to some animals and birds that are forbidden to eat. The Prophet forbade the eating of any wild animals with a canine tooth. This includes predatory animals such as lions, wolves, dogs, and cats and of any bird with talons. This includes falcons, eagles, and other similar birds. Yet, we cannot make a generalization to say that Chinese people have eaten unlawful things in Islamic law and that is why they have been inflicted with this disease. One can argue that they have been eating all these animals for centuries and yet, this is the first time they have been inflicted with this disease. Moreover, people in Middle East and Africa did not eat dogs and snakes. Yet, they were inflicted similar virus such Mers and Ebola. Some sections of the Muslim community believe that this contagious virus is a divine punishment for the Chinese government for its atrocities against innocent Uighur Muslims. There is no secret that the Chinese Government has been persecuting over one million Uighur Muslims for no reason except they are Muslims. Islamic identity of this Muslim community has been wiped out, their names have been changed, their Islamic dress has been changed, their mosques have been demolished, their children have been separated from their parents and Chinese officials have stopped Muslims from praying and fasting. They have burned down the holy Qur'an, they have been indoctrinated with Chinese communist ideology in their so called -Re-Education camp.

It is reported that the Chinese government has written their version of Bible and Qur'an. It is reported that Uighur Muslim ladies have been raped and killed by Chinese armies. Chinese armies have been beating and torturing Muslims in this so-called modern world for no reason, but these people are Muslims. Yet, international community could not do anything about it. 1.6 billion Muslims in 53 Muslim countries could not do anything about it. The entire world-maintained silence over this broad day atrocity. UN could not do anything about it. Human right commissions could not do anything about it. over one million innocent Uighur Muslims are being tortured for no legal reason except they are Muslims. According to some Islamic scholars, divine intervention comes down when there is no human protection for innocent people. They argue that the entire world let them down and God intervened with his divine punishment on Chinese government by sending his army of Coronavirus. This is in fact, a theological and philosophical argument. Qur'an tells us "God sent his invisible forces" (Qur'an: 9: 26). According to this group of Muslim scholars, this coronavirus is nothing but an invisible divine force that sends a warning to Chinese authorities. No doubt that contagious virus is has shaken Chinese establishment. It is reported that the Chinese premier went to some Chinese mosques asking Muslims to pray for the country to recover from this disaster. It is illogical to accept this argument because the corona pandemic is a global pandemic not limited to China alone.

In conclusion, we can say that scientists and medical experts read the subject matter of conspiracy theories differently from social scientists. Academics and political scientists read these conspiracy theories from a geopolitical perspective. People are compelled to believe in these conspiracy theories due to unethical geopolitical manipulation and exploitation by some cruel political leaders of the modern world. People do not find much ethical and moral values in the modern-day geopolitics.

Chapter 5: The World Aftermaths of The Coronavirus

No medical expert can tell us when the coronavirus pandemic will end. Some people say that the humanity should learn how to live with the phenomenon of the coronavirus. They claim that this virus will stay with the humanity forever. This invisible virus has created a lot of upheavals in the world. Experts say that the socio-political and economic structures of the post corona world would be different from that of the present world conditions. It is expected the diplomatic relations and trade dealings between the western countries and China would be different from that of present-day terms. It is expected that the economies of many third world countries will be badly affected by the corona virus. It is also predicted that the geopolitical and trade wars will start soon after the coronavirus pandemic has ended. No one can predict the future and yet, experts tell us the world will be different after the coronavirus pandemic has end.

This greedy capitalistic world has created a new world economic order to exploit poor nations with some sophisticated financial institutions and banking systems that exploit the poorest of the poor in the world. Zahid Parvez argues that the coronavirus pandemic “exposes numerous human vulnerabilities including powerlessness against the forces of nature; the inequalities embedded in contemporary economic models and social systems that hamper society’s ability to cope and manage the impacts of the pandemic effectively; the desperate need for intellectual humility and cooperation between people, communities and society; and highlights the limits of employing solely materialistic values and objectives (both economic and technological) to assure social and environmental protection and sustainability” (Zahid, Parvez, p1). The socio-economic, political, religious, and educational systems of the modern world do not promote human values. People are more educated today than any times in human history and yet, those

educated people exploit poor countries using all their knowledge and skills. The modern man has managed to enhance his mind, but his heart is empty of the spiritual, religious, and human values. That is why, we see all this injustice in the world.

It is predicted that the collapse of modern capitalism is immense according to many economists and financial experts. We have seen how the concepts of communism vanished from the world. Now, it is expected that the capitalism too will follow the pursuit of the collapse of communism. What could be the alternative? There is no doubt that the modern economic and financial system has failed to distribute the wealth equally amongst the people. Both the capitalism and communism have utterly failed to protect the welfare of people. There is not an alternative other than the divine commandments in wealth acquisition and distribution. Islam is not a new religion rather it is a compilation of all previously revealed divine messages. So, it is high time for humanity (Judo-Christian and Islamic world) to spread the divine message to the rest of humanity before it plunges into an utter destruction and economic collapses. Neither western nor Eastern economic policies will save humanity from greedy human desires except divine instructions on wealth accumulation and distribution. It is expected that the capitalistic economic world order will be changed. Paul Mason in one of his articles predicts that capitalism is unlikely to survive, long term- and in the short term it can only survive by adopting features of “post- capitalism.” (Paul Mason, p.3, 3/4/2020). He predicts that this pandemic will bring about massive changes. “first, the partial shutdown of daily life in larger parts of China, India, and most of Europe and numerous states in America. Second, the significant damage to the reputations of governments and political elites who either denied the seriousness of the crisis, or in the initial stages proved incapable of mobilising their healthcare systems to meet,

Third, an immediate slump in consumer spending across all major economies which is certain to provoke the deepest recession in living memory: share prices have already collapsed and this, in return, hurts middle-class families whose pension funds have to invest in shares. Meanwhile, the solvency of airlines, airports and hotel chains is in doubt. In response, states have launched economic rescue packages so massive that most people have not yet got their heads around the implications. The US government will inject two trillion dollars into the economy through a mixture of direct payments to citizens and loans to business-more than half of what it collects in taxes in a year”. (Ibid, p.1). Paul Mason predicts that governments will be forced to take these actions “ In the long term, stagnant growth, and high debt were likely to lead to these three policies: States paying citizens a universal income as automation makes well-paid work precarious and scare, central banks’ lending directly to the state to keep it afloat, and large-scale public ownership of major corporations to maintain vital services that cannot be run at a profit” (Ibid, p.3). One Austrian investment group (Macquarie Wealth) one of the most capitalist companies in the world, tell investors: “conventional capitalism is dying, or at least mutating into something closer to a version of communism”.

It is expected that the rich western countries will get away with this economic downfall with their rich national assets, reserves, rich human resources and high tech-products and yet, third world countries will suffer dramatically with unemployment, poverty, and debt traps. So, the gap between rich and poor countries will be broadened. The modern world badly needs the final divine guidance of Islam to resolve world conflicts like this. Yet, a recent development in geopolitical conflict does not have that much of optimism for humanity.

Conclusion:

This study has revealed that nothing takes place in the world without a reason and every social phenomenon takes place as God has designed and predestined it. Moreover, man does not have control over some natural calamities that take place beyond his human power. Many social phenomena and events take place according to the Divine Will not as man plans. Islam tells us God is all powerful and all knowing. So, it can be said that the invisible corona virus is nothing but God's manifestation of power. The atheists and non-believers have been challenging the existence of God and yet, God demonstrates his mighty power time to time as a precautionary warning to the humanity. According to the Holy Qur'an, God uses nature and its natural resources as a divine force to inflict harm and calamities in human life so that humanity amends its way. We find that there is a meticulous correlation between divine and human actions. When humanity goes astray and exceeds divine commandments, a divine intervention becomes an inevitable fact.

Human right studies indicate that human rights are violated today more than any other time in human history. Political leaders of some rich countries exploit the natural resources of the world. Moreover, the geopolitical competitions and trade wars have been widening the gap between rich and poor countries. Millions of people die out of hunger and starvation while rich countries do not care about this. Likewise, as we have indicated the natural resources are misused and exploited. Divine interventions may have descended to the earth in the form of natural calamities and pandemics because of irresponsible and crafty human behaviours. The political leaders of some rich countries and cooperative companies should take some responsibilities for their exploitation and corruption. This study reveals that there is a meticulous connection between grave sins that man commits on earth and the divine punishment according to the Holy Qur'an. The God of Islam is a living and

watchful God. Each second of human action is written and recorded by angels, so, if the God of Islam permits crimes and injustice take place on earth, there must be a reason for that. God knows the atrocities of wrongdoers and yet, He gives them times to indulge in the crimes and sins. Yet, when His punishment comes on them, it would be a severe punishment.

“The disbelievers should not think that it is better for them that We give them more time, when we give them more time, they become more sinful, a shameful torment awaits them: (3: 178). This is a divine verdict on the geopolitical powers. The rich people who manipulate the world economy and exploit poor countries should think that they cannot get away with their injustice and exploitation. These political mafia and thugs indulge in this exploitation even though millions of people suffer from poverty and starvation. The Holy Qur’an warns these political mafia. God gives them enough time to amend their way of life and to be kind with poor people. Humanity is going to suffer for a long time due to the coronavirus pandemic and yet, the world leaders do not care about the millions of poor people who suffer in the world today. Despite loss of lives and jobs, we find the faithful people are more resilient and stronger to meet any challenges in life. Faith gives them more confidence in times of difficulties and hardship. We find that Muslim communities are more resilient and more confident during the pandemic period than any other communities. Muslims do not worry too much because they believe that everything happens in life as God predestined it. This corona virus has tested the faith of the Muslim community and has indeed, strengthened their confidence in God.

We also find that the social hierarchisation of people in accordance with their caste, religion, race, language, wealth, and class is immaterial when a pandemic of this scale afflicts humanity. This pandemic has not discriminated between rich and poor, young, and old, Muslims and non-

Muslims. All are affected without any discrimination: This tells us that there is no superiority for one race over another race. Yet, humanity is divided today in the name of religion, race, and caste. This classification is meaningless when human souls depart this material world. Yet, world leaders do not care about this and indulge in exploitation and corruption. The corona pandemic tells us that the world political leaders are manipulating even this global pandemic for their geopolitical interest. The modern world is sandwiched between the geopolitical influence of China, Russia, US, and other western countries. It appears that the geopolitical competition is more dangerous than this global pandemic.

It can be concluded that this geopolitical competition between these countries has created a precarious world even at this crucial time of global pandemic. The world today needs more cooperation than any time in human history. Dramatic changes are taking place in the world today due to man's interference with nature. This study confirms that there is an intriguing connection between human actions and the natural calamities in the world. It appears that there is some truth in conspiracy theories and yet, the medical experts do not find enough scientific evidence to say that this virus is created by man. However, it is very much clear for any students of geopolitics that immoral and corrupt political leaders are playing politics with the corona pandemic. They are not honest in their politics and they do not care about poor countries. All what they care is about their national interest. We cannot be judgmental about this coronavirus pandemic and say whether it is a divine punishment or a divine trial. All what we could say is that there is a belief among people that God sends his punishment when the humanity rebels against the divine wishes. There is not any scientific evidence for this claim. But there is a scientific evidence to suggest the microbes react differently as and when people harm and damage the ecological system of the earth.

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