

Introduction

This khutbah template purposefully does not contain much Arabic text, for the ease of non-Arabic speakers. Most du'as and Quran are in English. For examples of du'as and Quran in Arabic to use for a khutbah, please refer to 'Sample Khutbah 1', or the 'Fiqh of Delivering a Khutbah' document.

Assalamu alaykum.

All praise be to God. The Lord of all the worlds. The Most Compassionate, the Most Forgiving, The Wise, The Loving.

I bear witness that there is no god worthy of worship except God alone, and I bear witness that Muhammad is his slave and Messenger, may the peace and blessings of God be upon him, his family and all of the righteous.

Then recite:

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ ﴿١﴾ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ ﴿٢﴾

Qul a ūthu birabbi-lfalaq. Min sharri mā khalaq.

Say I seek the protection of the Lord of the daybreak, from the harm of what He has created.

Main Khutbah:

Today, the khutbah is about something that has affected all of our lives. We all know people who have caught Covid. It has affected people with different degrees of severity, from fever and shortness of breath to critical conditions and tragically, death. Also, the lockdowns/tier systems have affected our lives in so many ways: our education, our jobs, our social lives, and our family lives have all been adversely affected. It has become clear that many will experience long term debilitating symptoms (long Covid).

What is Covid-19? Covid-19 (SARS-CoV-2) is a virus which can result in extreme breathing problems. It is caught from others by breathing in the virus' air-born droplets. These enter the air when someone with the Coronavirus not only coughs or sneezes, but also when they talk and breathe out etc. The virus spreads even more rapidly within indoor areas (especially crowded ones) which are not ventilated, such as when the windows are not open.

The virus has spread so quickly across the world due to globalisation. Our world is so interconnected due to modern transport, with airflights facilitating business trips, holidays, migration, visits to relations, and academic study across the world. Sadly though, globalisation has not led to substantive mutual aid. Vaccine nationalism has occurred, whereby rich countries have taken most of the vaccines, leaving poorer countries in a far worse situation.

So, what does Islam teach us about pandemics and how to deal with them? We should remember that the pandemic is a test from God.

'Do you [believers] suppose that you will enter the Garden without having suffered like those who passed away before you? They were afflicted with misfortune and hardship and were so shaken that even [their] Messenger and the believers with him cried, "When will God's help come?" Certainly, God's help is near!'

Sample Khutbah 2

God sends us tests to see how we will react and handle them: tests are a means to become closer to Him. So how do we respond to a calamity? God tells us:

‘Those that say when a calamity affects them, “We belong to God, to Him we will return.”’

Moreover, the Prophet (pbuh) said:

‘No fatigue, no disease, nor sorrow, nor sadness, nor hurt, nor distress happens to a Muslim, even if it were the prick of a thorn, but that God expiates some of his sins for that.’

A Muslim is patient during trials; he/she knows that God will never forsake him/her, nor will God burden him/her with a trial that is more than they can handle.

However, Islam also teaches us to take precautions. We should not be reckless about our health, which is a trust from God. The Prophet (pbuh) said:

‘If you hear about it (the plague) in a land that you are in, do not run away from it, and if you hear that it broke out in a certain land, do not enter that land.’

How does this relate to our current situation? Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyya, who lived during the time of another pandemic, the Black Death in the 14th century, explained that this means that we should take precautions by not exposing ourselves unnecessarily to the plague, in our case Coronavirus, as we could catch it and become ill. We could link this to social distancing and not unnecessarily travelling to places which are known to have large populations with Covid. In relation to not running away from a place with the plague, he adds that this is because we should put our trust in God. In addition, we know today that we should be concerned about not spreading the Coronavirus to others, especially the medically vulnerable who could become extremely ill if they catch it.

Interestingly, Ibn Qayyim also wrote that the plague spreads through the air, which as mentioned we have found out is the main way that Coronavirus is transmitted - through sneezing-infected droplets which we can then breathe in. The government’s guidance at the height of the pandemic to keep at least 2m apart in public and to wear face masks therefore made sense. Alhamdulillah, due to the vaccination programme we have become far more protected from severe symptoms of Covid - though we should not become complacent.

Moreover, basic hygiene that prevents transmission is well known in Islam.

‘Whenever the Messenger of God (pbuh) sneezed, he would cover his mouth with his hand or a piece of cloth...’

We also learn from the Prophet that *‘Purification is part of faith...’* Washing hands, wudhu, ghusl and personal hygiene are all important aspects of Islam (this hadith also refers to spiritual purification to help us when we face tests).

Then sit down on the minbar for a short while.

Then stand up.

All praise be to God. We need God’s help. We need God’s forgiveness. Peace be upon His Messenger, Muhammad.

So, what can we learn from Covid?

Firstly, we can use this as an opportunity to strengthen our faith. We need to realise that everything that happens in life is part of God’s plan. We need to put our trust in Him that He will do what is best for us.

Sample Khutbah 2

We also need to reassess/refocus our priorities: spirituality, family, health, self-development, helping others etc are more important than just pursuing careers.

We should also remember those we often forget, whose worlds have already been frightening every day, such as those living in war zones or under oppressive regimes.

We need to remember the importance of community. We live in an increasingly virtual world where people often do not know their neighbours very well. During the pandemic though, people have gone out of their way to help others, especially the isolated and vulnerable. So, what can we do to help to contribute to our community?

Let's use this pandemic as an opportunity to develop our spirituality, increase our Islamic knowledge, develop new skills and prioritise our health (physical and mental). We should spend quality time with our families. Last, but not least, we should help others and show we care.

Oh Lord! You are the Most Compassionate, please alleviate the suffering of those who are persecuted for your deen (religion).

Oh Lord please reconcile the hearts of the believers who are in conflict with each other.

Oh Lord keep us steadfast on your deen (religion).

Oh Lord help us to present Islam in the correct way to others in what we say and what we do.

Oh Lord give us the strength to deal with the tests of life.

Oh Lord please forgive us, please forgive us, please forgive us.

Remember God the Most Great, He will remember you. Thank Him, He will give you more. Seek forgiveness from Him, He will forgive you, and have taqwa (be mindful of Him) and He will provide for you a way out from every difficulty.

Descend the minbar, turn around so that your back is towards the congregation (to lead the prayer), as the mu'addhin gives the iqamah.

Stand for prayer. Straighten the rows and fill the gaps.