

Review Article

A Study of the Islamic Strategies for Prevention and Management of Pandemic Diseases (COVID-19)

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ABSTRACT

Islam is the religion of all ages. It is adaptive, assimilative and accommodating religion that provides its adherents an unparalleled blueprint to lead an exemplary life. It guides its followers about every aspect of life, be it of past, present and future. Therefore, a true believer always looks towards Islam whenever he encounters any calamity or catastrophe. The latest outbreak of COVID-19 also warrants moving towards Islamic teachings for coping strategies. Corona virus, for sure, is an apocalypse for humanity. The aim of this article therefore, is to analyze the guidelines that Islam provides to its followers, for prevention and management of the pandemic. The paper reveals that, what today immunologists and the WHO are suggesting as preventive measures in order to remain protected from global contagion, were also advised by Prophet Muhammad (SAW) about 1500 years back. In addition to these, Islam recommended seeking medical treatment, intake of good foods and drinks, supplications/Dua and submission to the will of Allah (Pre-destination). The paper observes that, it is incredible to think that, about 1,500 years ago, a Prophet with no scientific training already knew, step by step, what to do during a pandemic that are still applicable in this 21st century. It concludes that, both preservation of the religion and preservation of life are amongst the primary objectives of the Shari'ah.

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INTRODUCTION

Coronavirus commonly known as Covid-19 has become a pandemic which originated in Wuhan in China and is spreading across the world affecting and killing millions of people^[1]. Coronavirus spreads through droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes that land in the mouths or noses of nearby person^[2]. People can also be infected by coronavirus through touching contaminated surfaces and thereafter touching their eyes, nose or mouth,

as have explained by experts in the medical field^[3]. They therefore, recommended that to avoid the spread of this coronavirus, one must maintain at least distance of two meters (six feet) between oneself and anyone that is sneezing and coughing; washing hands before and after eating; covering mouth and nose with flexed elbow or tissue when coughing and maintain a high level of personal hygiene^[4].

Islam is a complete religion which perfect for all times and places. As a result of this, Allah says in the Qur'an, Surah

Al-Ma'idah, 5:3 that: "This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you and have approved for you Islam as your religion." Also, the Qur'an, Surah Al-Ahzab, 33:21 confirmed that the Prophet Muhammed (SAW) is the best of examples for all mankind. Therefore, whatever problem or issue that facing Muslim they must return to Allah instructions and that of the Prophet Muhammed (SAW) for guidance. This is because; there is nothing that happens in the life of Muslims except that Islam has provided a solution to it. Hence, Islam has a unique way of dealing with the outbreak of any diseases and it has also called its followers to protect themselves against diseases before and after its outbreak.

Islamic Prevention Methods

Islam is a holistic belief system which takes into account the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing of individuals in particular and societies in general. Therefore, Islam being a divine religion has proffered solutions to all universal challenges. For instance, Islam as a religion which intends to create a community that is healthy and immune against infectious diseases, and the healthy individual (in both body and mind). Hence, it has a unique way of dealing with any outbreak of diseases like coronavirus in two stages: that is, before and after the outbreak of the disease as follow:

A. Before the Outbreak of the Disease.

Before outbreak of any disease, Islam calls its followers to protect themselves against diseases through the following guidelines in the Qur'an and Hadith of the Prophet Muhammed (SAW):

1. Observation of Cleanliness

Observation of cleanliness through the practice of adopting good hygiene and quarantining in order to remain protected from any global contagion was instructed by the Prophet to his followers about 1500 years ago. In connection with adopting this good hygiene, Islam lays great emphasis on observing cleanliness at all circumstances. For instance, the Prophet says cleanliness is half of faith; Islam therefore, made ablution a pre-requisite for the validity of prayer^[5]. It was also reported in *Musnad Ahmad* that, the prophet said to his companions that: "If there were a River at the door of

one of you in which he takes a bath five times a day, would any soiling remain on him?" They replied, "No soiling would leave on him." The Prophet said, "That is the five obligatory prayers. Allah obliterates all sins as a result of performing them"^[6] Also according to the Prophet, the purification includes washing the mouth: "Had I not thought it difficult for my *Ummah*, I would have commanded them to use the *Miswak* (tooth-stick) before every prayer"^[7]. Therefore, in Islam, ablution and using tooth-stick are part of the means of protecting bodies from diseases and viruses. To keep the body fresh and clean in Islam, it's also instructs Muslims several practices that can facilitate it. According to Islam, the private parts must be washed after using the toilet and Muslims must be paid particular attention to being clean before praying.

The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) also, urges Muslims to observe the characteristics of *fitrah*: "Five practices are the inborn characteristics of man; circumcision, shaving the pubes, plucking out hair under the armpit, paring the nails and clipping the moustaches"^[8]. A close look at these practices would reveal that they play a great role in protecting the body from diseases.

2. Hand Washing:

In respect of adopting good hygiene, Islam lays great emphasis on hand washing under all circumstances. In the first instance, a Muslim is supposed to perform ablution before offering *Salat* in which washing hands is an inescapable *sine qua non*. Hence, a Muslim washes his hands repeatedly everyday 30 times each at five different intervals during the day and night times! (Surah Al-Ma'idah, 5: 6). They wash their hands, faces, (including rinsing the mouth and nose) arms and feet, a minimum of five times per day. In *Sunan An-Nasāi*, (258) the Prophet insisted that the believers must wash their hands, before praying, before and after eating; and upon waking up in the morning, he added that, because none knows where his hands lay during his sleeping^[9]. The Prophet also taught his followers through his practice that the right and the left hands should be used to handle pure and impure things respectively, further committing to a high standard of cleanliness on a day-to-day basis^[10].

Hence, shaking hands with other Muslims fellow is not a compulsory in Islam. In fact, it is initiating a greeting that considered a recommended act while only responding to greetings is required. Therefore, shaking hands with infected persons is discouraged and even frowned upon in Islam.

3. Food Intake:

Islam made lawful for Muslims all the good foods and drinks and made unlawful to them all what causes harm to their bodies (Surah Al-A'raf, 7:157). Researchers proved that consuming unlawful meat causes serious diseases. For instance, Pork and pork products, which may lead to various illnesses, are also not allowed. As a result of this, the Prophet said: "Verily, Allah is pure and He loves purity ..." Allah has never put the cure of my Ummah (followers) in substances that have been made lawful (*haram*) for them"^[11]. So far, many researchers have proved that consuming unlawful meat causes serious diseases.

Apart from that, the Prophet urges Muslims to be moderate in consuming lawful foods and drinks: "A human being has never filled any vessel which is worse than his own belly."^[12] He also commands to cover food and drinks: "Cover up the (kitchen) containers (i.e., pots, pans, etc.), tie up the mouth of the water-skin, lock up the doors and extinguish the lamps, because Satan can neither untie the water-skin nor open the door nor uncover the containers. If one can cover the cooking pot even by placing a piece of wood across it, and pronounce the Name of Allah on it, let him do it. A mouse can sometimes cause a house to burn along its dwellers"^[13] Islam also prohibited adultery and homosexuality which are also among the causes of many diseases. As result, Islam has put rules and regulations on interactions with the opposite gender.

Also, in order to protecting food from dust and insects, the prophet commands his followers: "Cover thy vessels and drinks"^[14]. He also forbade urinating and defecating in any of water sources such as wells, rivers and shores^[15].

4. Covering Mouth when Sneezing and Coughing:

Interestingly, the covering of mouth when sneezing and coughing were practiced by the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), because, whenever he sneezed, he would cover his

mouth with his hand or a piece of cloth"^[16]. This basic etiquette can take big part in the stopping of the spread of viruses. He also, instructed the Muslims to cover their faces when sneezing^[17]. This *hadiths*, clearly indicates the Islam's stance on coughing and sneezing openly. This is because the Prophet knew that the most obvious effect of sneezing and coughing without covering the mouth is the spread of airborne bacteria and viruses, in addition, droplets invisible to the naked eye, may fall onto surfaces or other people.

A. After the Outbreak of the Disease.

1. Travel Bans:

The Prophet preached the importance of travel bans to places which were contaminated with any disease like coronavirus in order to prevent the spread of illness. For example, Abd al-Rahman ibn 'Awf reported that: "I heard the Messenger of Allah say: "If you hear that the plague is in a land, do not go there, and if it breaks out in a land where you are, do not leave or fleeing from it"^[18]. Also, the Prophet says: "An ill person should not mix with healthy people"^[19]. He also says in another *hadith*: "Avoid a (contagious) disease the way a person flees from a lion"^[20].

Also, in Islamic history, Caliph 'Umar went to visit Syria when the plague of 'Amawās broke out in 18 A.H. He sought consultation from his advisors on whether to return to Madīnah, the capital, or continue on. One of them said, "You left for the sake of Allah so this plague should not stop you." Others advised him the opposite. 'Umar decided to return to Madīnah. Abū 'Ubaydah rebuked him, "Are you fleeing from the decree of Allah?" He responded, "Yes, I am fleeing from the decree of Allah to the decree of Allah. If you had camels and they entered a land with two sides, one fertile and the other barren, and you grazed them in the fertile area, wouldn't you be doing that by the decree of Allah? And if you let them graze in the barren area, wouldn't you be doing that also by the decree of Allah"^[21]. This 'Umar's statement demonstrates an excellent example of how to balance between relying on Allah and taking sufficient precautions.

The wisdom in these teachings is that when one confronting any outbreak, it is absolutely imperative to assume the worst until we know otherwise (and act accordingly). This represents the very first principle in

Islamic approach to the containment disease. It is that which forbids inadvertent spread of diseases and ailments by potential carriers. It is a principle which conduces to the divine writ in Surah Al-Ma'idah, 5: 32 the rewards that shall be given for any act of benevolence that leads to preservation of human life shall be like that that would be due for any action that leads to the preservation of the entire human race and vice versa.

2. Quarantine:

Quarantine was also one of the various methods prescribed by Prophet Muhammad (SAW) about 1500 years ago. For instance, he gave instructions to his followers on what to do when there is an outbreak of any pandemic disease like coronavirus which includes quarantine. He also commanded them not to travel to places that have been afflicted with illness and he likewise advised those people in the areas or communities that have contaminated not to leave and spread the disease further afield [22]. In another *hadith*, he advice: "Run away from the leper (the one with contagious ailment) as you would run away from a lion." It was said that, plague is a specific disease or any widespread disease (pandemic) that leads to the death of many people [23].

In another *hadith* he said: "Those who stay at home to protect themselves and others are under the protection of Allah [24]. He also counseled ill people not to visit healthy people [25]. Of course, the *Hadith* is not limited to the plague itself, it includes any contagious disease or germs that may move through the air, pollute the atmosphere and can spread around like coronavirus.

3. Social Distance:

Taking precautions like social distance to avoid the spread of infectious disease is something also prescribed in Islam. For instance, the Messenger of Allah said: "An ill person should not mix with healthy people" [26]. In another *hadith*, he commands: "Those with contagious diseases should be kept away from those who are healthy" [27]. Again, he admonishes his followers "Avoid a contagious disease the way a person flees from a lion" [28]. Therefore, anyone tested positive for any pandemic or contagious disease like Covid-19 is not allowed to attend community events in order to

not harm other people. Imam Ibn 'Abdul Barr further explained that: "Anything that can inconvenience to one's fellow worshipers in the Mosque such as anyone afflicted with diarrhea... foul odor due to illness...infectious virus, or anything else that can inconvenience the public, it is permitted for people to keep such an individual away in public, as long as the ailment is present. Once the condition ceases, they will then return to the Mosque". [29] Even, the Prophet himself practiced social distancing as well because it was reported that a leprous man once wished to pledge his allegiance to him, an act that would require him to get touch or hold the hand of the Prophet. He instructed him to Keep his distance and the Prophet kindly sent word to him that his pledge had already been accepted and asked him to return home [30].

The research also shows that, the most infamous plague in early Islam was the Emmaus Plague which was one of the recurrences of the earlier Plague of Justinian. This plague occurred in two waves, and affected the conquering armies of the Companions in Syria as they fought the Byzantine Romans in 18 AH/640 CE [31]. In which over 25,000 Muslims lost their lives, including some of the most famous scholars such as Muadh b. Jabal and Abū Ubayda Āmir b. al-Jarrāh. History has it that, the first wave took many of the senior companions and then, Amr b. al-As took charge and he advised other Companions to scatter amongst the valleys and hills and they should not be congregated together. He then informed them that, plagues are like fires, they cause more havoc when spread in densely populated areas, and they don't spread when people are far apart. [32]

Another Companion stood up to challenge this directive with angry because, to him, this tactic seemed to be cowardly and didn't make sense by said to Amr: "I am one of the person who accompanied the Prophet, and I testify by Allah that you're wrong!! In fact I say you are more misguided than my donkey!!" Amr replied him despite being the leader of the Companion: "I shall not dignify that with a response, nor shall I punish you." And the people followed his policy which was effective. When Umar b. al-Khattab was informed about this incidence, he did not find the policy to be incorrect [33]. This shows that, social isolation

was known to the early Companions and it was worked for them.

4. Isolation:

Regarding the isolation, the Prophet taught that sick persons should not in any way compromise the community at large. He said: "Do not place a patient with a healthy person" [34]. This teaching was also extended to animals as well as he added that: "The disease suffering cattle should not be mixed with healthy one" [35]. The history has it that the Muslims during the life time of the Prophet and thereafter were also practiced isolation. For instance, it was said that, Umar once 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. After Umar's demise, a man told her that the one who forbade her had passed away so she could go and circumbulate the *Ka'bah* as she pleased. She replied, "I am not going to obey him when he is alive and disobey him when he has passed away." Indeed, this is a beautiful example that reflects the spiritual power and impact of the Prophet and his rightly guided Khulafa [36].

Islam also teaches that the individual should avoid the pain and suffering that results from some contagious and fatal diseases. The proof for this is the words of the Prophet: "No sick camel should be put with healthy ones" [37]. The one who owns camels that are sick with mange and the like must not bring them to land or water to which the one who owns healthy camels brings his camels, lest the sickness be transmitted from the sick camels to the healthy camels, and thus spread further. It was also narrated that the Prophet said: "Flee from the leper as you would flee from a lion" [38]. The diseases cannot become contagious by themselves, because the Prophet said: "There is no 'adwa (contagion) and no tiyarah (superstitious belief in bird omens)" [39]. That is, these diseases are not contagious in and of themselves; rather Allah causes them to be transmissible and He has created in them that which cause the disease to pass from one person to another. Thus, mixing became a cause of that, and people should avoid the causes by means of which the disease is transmitted, in compliance with the instructions and guidelines mentioned in the *ahadith*. The evidence clearly indicates that if sicknesses are transmitted as a result

of mixing with those affected by them, that transmission only happens by Allah's wish. A person could mix with others without becoming infected, by the protection of Allah.

5. Don't harm others:

One of the *Hadiths* of Prophet Muhammed (SAW) that constitutes a fundamental rule on which the Islamic jurisprudence is built says "Do not harm yourself and others" [40]. That is, according to *Shari'ah*, one has to avoid anything that may cause harm to oneself or others. It is forbidden for Muslims to do harm to his or other's body. That is why it is emphasized in the Glorious Qur'an that, Muslims should pursue not the path of perdition. Likewise, the Prophet Muhammed (SAW) added that: "Whoever believes in Allah and the last Day should not harm his neighbor" [41]. This can be extended to the person who is physically next to you.

6. Medical Treatment

In Islam seeking medical treatment, as taught by the Prophet, is a practical and progressive faith-based system. It was reported that, during the lifetime of the Prophet, some people thought that using medicine for ailment may go against the concept of (*tawakkul*) that is relying on Allah alone. They asked: "O Messenger of Allah, should we use medicine?" The Prophet replied, "Yes, you may use medicine because Allah has not created any disease without also creating its cure, except one: old age" [42]. The answer of the Prophet clarified that the use of medicine is permissible and even encouraged, and that it does not against the concept of relying on Allah alone. In another *hadith*, he clarified that seeking medical treatment coupled with relying on Allah alone was the key to successful treatment: "Every disease has a cure. If a cure is applied to the disease, it is relieved by the permission of Allah the Almighty" [43]

The history also has it that, the taxes collected in the government treasury (*bait-ul-mal*) which was conceptualized during the lifetime of the Prophet and was formally established during the Khilafat Umar were used to assist the poor, disabled, elderly, orphans and widows by providing medical treatment and others in need [44]. It was even reported that Khilafat Umar he was travelling to Syria;

he came across some Christians who afflicted with leprosy. He ordered to provide medical allowance to them from the government treasury immediately, so they could be able to seek for medical treatment^[45]. He also ordered Muslims to keep a close watch on prisoners and provide for all of their medical needs as required^[46].

7. *Supplications/ Dua /Prayers:*

This is an act of *Sunnah*, it is principle and perhaps the most important to say supplications against infectious diseases. It was the habit of the Prophet to seek refuge with Allah for himself against any diseases, and the greatest means of this is reading the Glorious Qur'an^[47]. Hence, the beautiful thing to understand is that the complete Qur'an is a cure (*Shifa'*), therefore, reading it often will strengthen *Iman*. There are also many *hadith* of the Prophet where he taught how to seek for divine protection against infectious diseases on terrestrial earth. One of such or perhaps the most common one is: "O Allah!, I seek refuge in Thee from leprosy, madness, elephantiasis, and evil diseases"^[48]. It is advised that this prayer should be repeated as many times as possible most especially after the five daily prayers.

On the other hand, Aishah reported that the Prophet used to seek refuge in Allah for his family members by touching them with his right hand, saying: *Allahahuma Rabbin nas adhhabal ba'sa, ashfi wa antashafi, la shifa' illa shifa'uka shifa' la yughadiru saqma* (O Allah! The Sustainer of mankind! Remove the illness, cure the disease. You are the One Who cures. There is no cure except Your cure. Grant (us) a cure that leaves no illness^[49]. In another report, Uthman ibn Abu Al-'As relates that whenever he complained of any pain in his body to Allah's Messenger he said: "Put your hand where you feel pain in your body and say, "*Bismillah* (in the name of Allah), and say", "*A 'udhu bi 'izzatillah wa qudratihi min sharri ma ajidu wa uhadhiru* (I seek refuge in the Might of Allah and in His Power from the evil that I find and that I fear), seven times'. Uthman further said: "I did it for few times and Allah removed the pain. Thereof, I always advised my family and others to emulate the same"^[50]. Also, Muhammad ibn Salim reported: "Thabit Al-Banani instructed me that: 'O Muhammad! When you have any pain, put your hand where you feel pain, then recite: *Bismallah a'udhu bi'izatillah min shari maajidu min waj'i hadha*

(In the Name of Allah! I seek refuge in Allah's Might from the evil of this pain). Then remove your hand and repeat the prayer for an odd number of times. Then he said to me that Anas ibn Malik had informed him that Allah's Messenger had already taught this to him"^[51]. In another report, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas said that the Prophet visited him while he was sick and prayed: "O Allah, make Sa'd well! O Allah, make Sa'd well! Make Sa'd well!"^[52].

Lastly among the best supplications one can make when there is any diseases is the supplication made by the Prophet Ayyub in the Qur'an, Surah Al-Anbya, 21: 83-84: "And Ayyub when he cried to his Lord, Truly distresses has seized me, but Thou art the Most Merciful of those that are merciful.

8. *Submission to will of Allah (Pre-destination):*

In Islam, when incidents such as coronavirus occur, a Muslim must believe that this is Allah decreed. The Prophet explained that, "Allah had written the ordained measures (and due proportions) of the creation, fifty thousand years before the creation of the heavens and the earth..."^[53] He also said: "No slave of Allah will truly believe until he believes in *al-Qadr*; its good and bad are from Allah, and until he knows that whatever happens to him will not miss him and that what missed him will not happen to him."^[54]

Therefore, the plague (contagion) person who patiently remains at his home with expectation of reward, believing that nothing will happen to him other than what Allah has decreed will get the reward or a martyr^[55]. In another *hadith*, Allah's Messenger said: "He who dies in an epidemic is a martyr"^[56]. Also, in Al-Muwatta, Yahya related from Malik from Abdullah ibn Abdullah ibn Jabir ibn Atik that Atik ibn al-Harith informed him that the Prophet asked: What do you consider dying a martyr to be?" They replied, "Death in the way of Allah." The Prophet added that: "There are seven kinds of martyrs other than those killed in the way of Allah. Someone who is killed by the plague is a martyr was first mentioned^[57].

As a result of the above methods, the following methods were also adopted by the Muslims:

9. Suspension of Congregational Prayers

There is need to ask whether banning collective obligatory and optional prayers in mosques for fear of the spread of the coronavirus or alike is justified by the Qur'an and *hadith* or is an overreaction:

1. Obligatory Prayers: *Jumu'ah* and Five Daily Prayers

Jumu'ah and five daily prayers are compulsory on males adult of sound mind who are neither on traveling nor on sickness. In order for this obligation to be lifted, there must be credible warnings by public health institutions that there is actual harm in holding them in congregation. For instance, a man who has a contagious disease must be excused in attending congregation prayers in order to not harm other worshippers. Even, such person may be prevented from entering the mosque until his illness has gone away, because the Prophet forbade bringing a sick individual among healthy ones, and it was narrated from Abu Hurayrah that he said: The Prophet Muhammed (SAW) said: "No sick one should be put with a healthy one."^[58] In another *hadith* he said: The Prophet Muhammed (SAW) said: "The entire earth has been made a *Masjid*, except graveyards and washrooms"^[59].

Sulaymaan ibn Waa'il at-Tuwaijri added that, "One of the excuses that can waive the obligation five daily prayers and *Jumu'ah* in congregation is sickness. It also includes contagious diseases, because the harm of which may be passed to others. In this case, such individual is must be excused and is not more obliged to pray in congregation because the Prophet forbade the anyone who has eaten garlic or onions to come to the mosque lest the people be bothered by his smell, and this one (i.e. the one who is sick) is obviously more bothersome than one who has eaten something that has an offensive smell"^[60].

There is also historical legal precedent in exempting people from the Friday prayer for reasons which may be considered less severe than Covid-19. For instance, the Hanbali legal scholar Imam Ibn Qudamah wrote, "A man may be excused for not praying Friday prayer [*jumu'ah*]... because of rain that can wet clothes, or mud that can cause annoyance or stains the clothes^[61]. It was also narrated that, Ibn 'Abbās instructed someone who was calling for the prayer on a very rainy day: "When you say: I bear witness that there is no god but Allah and I bear witness that

Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, do not add 'come to prayer' instead of that say 'pray in your houses'. On hearing this, some people found it strange, and he asked them that 'Are you surprised with what I just said? And he said further that, a person better than me did it that is the Prophet"^[62]. A contemporary scholar Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymīn explained this exception that in the past, people used to suffer of mud, because the places were dirt floors, and when rain fell it became muddy and slippery, so it was very difficult for people to attend the mosque. If this happens, then he is excused. But nowadays, that does not cause any problem, because the places are paved and there are no dirt floors^[63]. It may be legitimately argued that concerns about heavy rain, even in the past, are less severe than the current infection concerns in certain areas.

2. Optional Prayers: *Tarawih*, *Eid* and Funeral Prayers

A. *Tarawih* Prayer

As regard the origin of *tarawih* congregational night prayer of Ramadan, owes its existence to the order of the second Khalifa, 'Umar b. al-Khattab. For instance, Zayd bin Thabit narrated that: The Messenger of Allah made a small room with a palm leaf mat. He came out of his house and prayed *tarawih* in it and some men joined him to pray. Again, in the next night they came out for the prayer, but the Prophet deliberately delayed his coming out to the Mosque. So they raised their voices and knocked the door with small stones to draw his attention. He (SAW) then came out to them with anger by saying, "You are still insisting on your deed and I fear this prayer might become obligatory on you. So, O you people! Offer this prayer at your homes, because the best prayer of a person is the one which he offers at home, except the compulsory prayer in congregation"^[64].

Letter, when Allah's Messenger died, the people continued observing the *Tarawih* personally at individual house even up to the time of Khalifa Abu Bakr until the early days of Khalifa 'Umar. Abdur Rahman bin 'Abdul Qari reported that, "I went out in the company of 'Umar bin Al-Khattab one night in Ramadan to the mosque and found the people praying alone while some were praying with small group. Then, 'Umar told them that, 'In my own opinion, I would better gather these people under the

headship of one reciter (*Qari*) in order to pray in congregation!'. Therefore, he made up his mind to gather them together to behind Ubayy bin Ka'b. Then, on another night, I went again in his company and the people were praying behind one reciter in congregation. On that, 'Umar remarked, 'what an excellent *bid'ah* (innovation) is this" [65]. He called it *bid'ah* because the Prophet did not pray it in congregation, and neither was it prayed like that in the time of the first Khaliph Al-Siddiq. Therefore, Umar was the first person who initiated the *Tarawih* night prayer in congregation in the year 14 (*hijri*) [66].

Hence, the performing of the optional prayers like *tarawih* personally in the home is highly recommended by the Prophet because it brings more blessings for the home and family and helps in upbringing of children Islamically. That is why the Prophet instructed that: "O people! Perform your prayers at your homes, for the best prayer of any person is the one he performs at home, except the compulsory prayers which are to perform in congregation" [67]. In another event, once Abdullah bin Mas'ud asked the Prophet: "Which one is better? Is it to pray in my house or in the mosque?" The Prophet asked him that: "Don't you see how near my house to the mosque is? Yet to pray in my house is more beloved to me than to pray in the mosque except the obligatory prayers" [68].

B. *Eid* Prayers:

As regard the ruling regarding praying *Eids* prayer at home due to Coronavirus pandemic, there are various rulings by the scholars on it, deeming it a communal obligation, an individual obligation, or at least a highly stressed *sunnah*. Because that which is easy is not voided due to difficulty, so long as it is possible, even in the most stringent of circumstances, it should not be neglected [69]. The issue of performing *Eid* prayers at home for those who missed it in congregation is rather lenient, because the *khutbah* is one of condition for validity of *Jumu'ah* prayer, whereas, it is only a recommendation that is not mandatory for both *Eids*. This is evidence in the narration of 'Abdullāh b. al-Sa'ib that: "I attended the *Eid* with Allah's Messenger and he said, 'We are going to deliver a sermon, so whoever wants to sit for the sermon should sit, and whoever wants to leave should leave" [70]. Therefore, neither

the *khutbah* nor listening to it is a requirement of *Eid* prayers. The *Eid* prayer is primarily performed outdoors, in an open space outside of the Mosques. That is why the majority of the jurists, apart the Hanafis, have declared that it is permissible to perform it at home for whoever missed it in congregation [71].

It was also narrated on the authority of Anas that, whenever he missed *Eid* prayer behind Imam, he would congregate his family and servants, and 'Abdullāh b. Abi Utbah would lead in the two *rak'at*, making *takbir* [72]. Al-Muzani also related from al-Shāfi'i in Mukhtasar al-Umm, that "the individual can pray both *Eids* in their home, and so the same thing applicable to the travelers, the bondservants, and the women" [73]. Also, according to al-Khurashy, a Maliki jurist, "It is recommended for whoever misses the *Eid* prayer with the Imam to pray it at home" [74]. Should that be done in a congregation or alone? There are two opinions as regard" Al-Mardawi, a Hanbali jurist, said in al-Insaf, "If they miss the *Eid* prayer, it is recommended to make it up in the manner it is normally prayed that is just as the imam prays it" [75]. The fatwa of the Permanent Committee in Saudi Arabia is based on this opinion that, there is no harm in performing the *Eid* prayer at home either individually or congregationally at one's household, for those who miss the *Eid* prayer in congregation or are unable to perform it in congregation due to some constraint. They observed that, there is also nothing wrong by listening to a sermon on TV, online, and so on, after performing the *Eid* prayer at home, either alone or in a private congregation, as a general reminder; because general reminders are permitted regardless of the time or setting [76].

C. Funeral Prayer

Should in case a Muslim died as a result of contagious diseases like coronavirus, and it's happened that the corpse cannot be washed with water, *tayammum* can be used instead, then the *Janaza* prayer can still be performed. If washing with water or *tayammum* cannot be performed, the *janazah* prayer can still be performed before bury the deceased. This is because the Prophet recommended that the *janazah* prayer should be hastened and not be delayed, by commanding that, hurry with the burial [77].

Should in case the body is sealed in a plastic bag or a body-bag as a result of contagious diseases and the legal restrictions by the authorities do not allow the bag to be opened, neither washing nor *tayammum* is possible. The plastic body bag will be shrouded in three large cloth sheets, and then performed *janazah* prayer before the burial. If the restrictions do not allow large numbers of Muslims to pray *janazah* for the deceased and its happened that the close relatives and friends miss the *janazah* prayer by force, then it is incumbent upon a small group to pray *janazah* for the deceased and then bury him. For these categories of people can still visit the grave either in small groups or individually and even pray the *janazah* over a period of a few weeks after the burial. The Prophet did the same to a woman who had died in the night and it was happened that, it was his Companions prayed her *janazah* and buried her, but when the Prophet was informed, he went to her grave and prayed the *janazah*^[78].

It is even recommended that, where many people were unable to attend the burial; small groups can make three rows behind Imam to perform the *janazah* prayer. This is evident in Abu *Umamah* (RA) statement that: "The Prophet prayed *janazah* with only seven people with him by arraigned them in to three rows. He placed three of the in the first row, two in the second row and two more in the last row" ^[79]. He explained further that, if a deceased Muslim was buried by the authorities without performed *janazah* prayer by anyone over him, then the Muslims must ask for the location of the grave and pray at the grave as explained previously. And if the Muslims do not know where he was buried, they can still establish the *janazah* prayer in the absence of the body as the Prophet did for a *Najjashi*, the King of Abyssinia. In this situation, the *janazah* is performed in the normal manner except that the body is not present. However, if the restrictions prevent that, then keep the required gaps between each person and pray the *janazah* in that fashion. This is due to the saying of Allah: "Fear Allah and keep your duty to Him as much as you can." (Qur'an, Surah At-Taghabun, 64:16). According to him also, this is due to the saying of the Prophet: "And whatever I command you with do as much of it as you are able" ^[80].

10. **Suspension of Hajj due to Coronavirus:**

War and pandemic diseases like coronavirus are two major reasons for the possibility of suspension or cancellation of *Hajj*. For instance, *Hajj* has been cancelled several times over the centuries, though, since the time the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's foundation in 1932 took over the administration of *Hajj* it has never missed a year, nor even during the Spanish flu pandemic of 1917-18 that killed millions of people worldwide ^[81]. But if happened that the *hajj* is cancel again this year Hajj, it will be added to a list of almost 40 dramatic cancellations since the first in 629.

Cancellation as a result of conflicts and massacres:

In 930, Abu Taher al-Janabi, the chief of the Qarmatians heterodox sect based in Bahrain, launched an attack on Mecca. Historical accounts say the Qarmatians killed 30,000 pilgrims in the holy city and dumped bodies in the sacred Zamzam well. They also looted the Grand Mosque and stole the Black Stone from its Kaaba, taking it to the island of Bahrain. *Hajj* was then suspended for a decade until the Black Stone was returned to Mecca. The Qarmatians were an Ismaili Shia sect who believed in an egalitarian society and considered pilgrimage a pagan ritual ^[82].

In 983 political disputes between the rulers of two caliphates the Abbasids of Iraq and Syria and the Fatimids of Egypt got in the way of Muslims travelling to Mecca for pilgrimage. It was eight years until *Hajj* was held again, in 991^[83].

B. Cancellation as a result of Plagues:

A plague from India hit Mecca in 1831 and killed three-quarter of the pilgrims, who had endured weeks of travel through dangerous and barren lands to perform *Hajj*. Also, in a span of almost two decades, *Hajj* was halted three times, leaving pilgrims unable to head to Mecca for a total of seven years. In 1837, another plague hit the holy city, putting things on hold until 1840. Then in 1846 a bout of cholera hit Mecca, killing more than 15,000 people, and plagued its inhabitants until 1850. In 1858, another global cholera pandemic arrived in the city, prompting Egyptian pilgrims to run away en masse to Egypt's Red Sea shores, where they were held in quarantine ^[84].

Recommendations/ Conclusion

1. Muslim researchers and scientists should unite and put their best efforts forward to come up with a vaccination against this virus as soon as possible. It is a part of Islamic teaching to believe that Allah has created a cure for every disease; hence diligence is needed in this matter. To avoid rumors and spreading false news and information, Muslim should try to give hope and spread positivity because everything that may happen is by Allah's will and decree. Those who get infected with the virus should follow and accept the safety regulations and should be patient and ask Allah for full recovery and also be sure that patience is greatly rewarded during sickness and times of distress.

2. Individuals who suspect being infected are obliged to stay away from mosques and all other crowded gatherings until they are examined and ensured that they are not infected. Doing otherwise is considered a harmful and sinful act in Islam. Islam forbids self-harm and bringing harm to others. Furthermore, Islamic rules were very sensible in the matters of respect to other to the point that the Prophet requested from his Companions to avoid going to the mosque after eating garlic as to not bother other worshipers with its odor. If you follow these general guidelines, it will be clearly a priority to not go to the mosque in case of an infectious virus harming others.

3. It is not allowed to leave the country in which the virus has spread for the sake of self-protection. According to the *Hadith* of the Prophet: "If leaving, the country or region infected, has justifications other than escaping the disease and is approved by health authorities, such as helping authorities with efforts to contain the disease, then it is Islamically unobjectionable.

4. It is permitted to interrupt Friday and common prayers in the Mosques because of the epidemic. Since, human preservation is respected as one of the primary goals of Islamic jurisprudence and therefore if strong evidence is presented showing that the epidemic will spread faster through big gatherings like Friday prayers and common prayers, then these communal prayers should be canceled until the country recovers from the epidemic and the emergency status is lifted.

5. If Muslim doctors have decided that the gathering of pilgrims will cause the virus to spread faster and pose a risk

to pilgrims, the pilgrimage and *Ummrah* may be canceled until the danger is over and the virus has been fully eradicated. There were incidences in the history of Islam whereby *Hajj* was suspended as a result of war and epidemic diseases.

7. Islam encourages every means of protection from infectious diseases like coronavirus. When the prophet was once asked whether such protective measures prevent Allah's fate, he (SAW) said that it is part of Allah's will.

Disclaimer

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Conflict of Interest

There are no financial, personal, or professional conflicts of interest to declare.

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