

# AS-SIDDIQUE

## السديقة

April 2020  
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Issue Number: 0083

### COVID-19: A Time for Gratitude

The world has grinded to a halt, with billions under lockdown. The Ka'bah is alone. The mosques have emptied. Historical landmarks the world over are deserted. Sports stadia are no longer thronging to cheering crowds. The hustle and bustle of life has been replaced with an eerie silence – a sense of foreboding.

What will future historians make of this time? Will they comment that, having enjoyed the longest period of peace and prosperity, the world was due a jolt? Others will argue: what peace? What prosperity? Look at Syria, Yemen, and Myanmar. Don't forget the detention camps of Xinjiang. These future historians will argue: how could the Western Muslim community feel it could live in the lap of luxury – isolated and to a large part oblivious from the pain of the rest of the Ummah – and not expect a response from Al-Hasib (The Reckoner)?

As we confine ourselves to our homes, concerned about empty supermarket shelves and with school gates closed, perhaps now we can appreciate that every child in Syria under the age of nine has been raised under the sound of barrel bombs. We can at least appreciate the sense of desperation experienced by mothers in Yemen as their babies cry in hunger. As we gaze outside at the beautiful sun-drenched landscape, we can empathise with the numerous scholars and political prisoners

languishing in prisons, many of whom have not seen daylight for months. As we cuddle and appreciate our loved ones, we can think of our sisters languishing in Assad's dungeons.

#### Time for God

Without a moment's hesitation, we believe in the existence of a microscopic organism that has the ability to disable the old and the young, the sick and the healthy, and is transmitted by non-visible particles emitted during a cough or sneeze and can even 'live' for days on surfaces, waiting to ambush us. We believe all of this without question, because we see the effects of COVID-19. However, even though we see, hear, and feel the effects of a Creator all around us each and every day – in the miracle of ourselves and in the singing of birds, in the transpiration system of trees, in the warmth of sunlight – we still somehow are able to justify the denial of the existence of a Creator.

"And they will say: 'Had we but listened or used our intelligence, we would not have been among the dwellers of the blazing Fire.'" [67:10]

How can we deny the design of our immune system for which we will rely upon should COVID-19 strike us? A system in which specific antibodies are uniquely produced to the antigen; a system that further involves memory cells that are created to rapidly respond to any potential future immune



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Day	Date	Islamic	Fajr	Sunrise	Dhuhr	Asr	Sunset	Isha	Fajr	Asr	Maghrib	Isha
Wed	1	7	4:36	6:35	1:09	5:32	7:34	9:08	5:45	5:50	7:37	9:30
Thu	2	8	4:33	6:32	1:09	5:33	7:36	9:09	"	"	7:39	"
Fri	3	9	4:30	6:30	1:08	5:34	7:38	9:11	"	"	7:41	"
Sat	4	10	4:27	6:28	1:08	5:35	7:39	9:11	5:30	6:00	7:42	9:40
Sun	5	11	4:24	6:26	1:08	5:36	7:41	9:13	"	"	7:44	"
Mon	6	12	4:21	6:23	1:07	5:38	7:43	9:14	"	"	7:46	"
Tue	7	13	4:18	6:21	1:07	5:39	7:44	9:15	"	"	7:47	"
Wed	8	14	4:16	6:19	1:07	5:40	7:46	9:16	"	"	7:49	"
Thu	9	15	4:13	6:17	1:07	5:41	7:48	9:17	"	"	7:51	"
Fri	10	16	4:10	6:14	1:06	5:42	7:49	9:18	"	"	7:52	"
Sat	11	17	4:07	6:12	1:06	5:43	7:51	9:19	5:15	6:20	7:54	9:40
Sun	12	18	4:04	6:10	1:06	5:45	7:53	9:21	"	"	7:56	"
Mon	13	19	4:00	6:08	1:06	5:46	7:54	9:21	"	"	7:57	"
Tue	14	20	3:57	6:06	1:05	5:47	7:56	9:23	"	"	7:59	"
Wed	15	21	3:54	6:04	1:05	5:48	7:58	9:24	"	"	8:01	"
Thu	16	22	3:51	6:01	1:05	5:49	7:59	9:25	"	"	8:02	"
Fri	17	23	3:48	5:59	1:05	5:50	8:01	9:26	"	"	8:04	"
Sat	18	24	3:45	5:57	1:04	5:51	8:03	9:28	5:00	6:30	8:06	9:50
Sun	19	25	3:42	5:55	1:04	5:52	8:04	9:28	"	"	8:07	"
Mon	20	26	3:38	5:53	1:04	5:53	8:06	9:30	"	"	8:09	"
Tue	21	27	3:35	5:51	1:04	5:55	8:08	9:31	"	"	8:11	"
Wed	22	28	3:32	5:49	1:04	5:56	8:09	9:32	"	"	8:12	"
Thu	23	29	3:29	5:47	1:03	5:57	8:11	9:33	"	"	8:14	"
Fri	24	30	3:25	5:45	1:03	5:58	8:13	9:34	"	"	8:16	"
Sat	25	1	3:22	5:43	1:03	5:59	8:14	9:35	4:30	6:45	8:17	10:00
Sun	26	2	3:19	5:41	1:03	6:00	8:16	9:36	"	"	8:19	"
Mon	27	3	3:15	5:39	1:03	6:01	8:18	9:38	"	"	8:21	"
Tue	28	4	3:12	5:37	1:03	6:02	8:19	9:38	"	"	8:22	"
Wed	29	5	3:08	5:35	1:02	6:03	8:21	9:40	"	"	8:24	"
Thu	30	6	3:05	5:33	1:02	6:04	8:23	9:41	"	"	8:26	"

**DHUHR JAMA`AH 1:30**

**1ST JUMU`AH 1:25**

**2ND JUMU`AH \*\***

Due to refraction, wait at least 3 minutes from Sunset time before praying Maghrib.  
 Masjid is not accesible for any congregations due to lockdown.  
 Jama`ah times may be used for managing prayer times at home.  
 Live streaming of English Friday speech starts from 12:45 pm.  
 The regular time for second Jumu`ah is 2:20, however it is not being held under lockdown.  
 Adhaan and Iqamah times may be adjusted without prior notice.  
 Islamic dates are subject to moon-sighting.  
 Isha begining times shown are calculated based on one seventh of night (Sub`ul Layl).

assaults. Can anyone seriously argue this design came about by chance?

### Like a revelation

Former Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks commented that COVID-19 felt like a "revelation". For some, it does, but the question is: what is God's message to humanity as a whole and to us as individuals?

Ibn al-Qayyim said that life is either being in a state of shukr (gratitude) or in a state of sabr (patient perseverance). Let us focus now on shukr in these testing times. First and foremost, let us consider our gratitude to Allāh for life itself, for all the happy memories and times of ease we have enjoyed. The leisurely visits to the shops buying fruit imported from Costa Rica or salt from the Himalayas seem a distant but pleasant memory. Eating from the finest restaurants choosing a different cuisine every time. The unhindered exploration of the world or the impromptu day trips. Our health.

We have lived a charmed life. As we remember and thank Allāh, let us also remember each other: the refuse collectors, the lorry drivers trucking through the night to bring us food, the supermarket checkout staff, the teachers allowing key workers to continue doing their crucial work, the journalists keeping us updated, and all who do so at risk to their own health for our benefit. We have much to be grateful for and many to thank. They are the unsung heroes and we salute them all.

What we should not lose sight of, however, is that we should also be grateful for COVID-19, as strange as that may initially sound. It may be a punishment for humanity's transgressions, but it has also allowed many people to pause and reflect. No doubt, in the dead of the night, many people have asked themselves: What will happen after I die? What have I achieved with my life? Am I ready to meet God?

As you ask yourself these questions, ponder over the verse in the Qur'an:

"And when your Lord comes with Angels ranks upon ranks." [89:42]

And then ask yourself – have you done enough to earn His pleasure? Do you have sins that you need to repent for in order to gain salvation? That must-see TV box set can wait. Use this time effectively to seek seclusion with your Lord and speak to Him. Open your heart, your dreams, your fears, and

vulnerabilities to Him and then wait for the response. It will come. In a hadith Qudsi, our noble Messenger said:

"Allāh the Most High said, 'I am as My servant expects me to be. I am with him when he mentions Me. If he mentions Me to himself, I mention him to Myself; and if he mentions Me in an assembly, I mention him in an assembly greater than it. If he draws near to Me a hand's length, I draw near to him an arm's length. And if he comes to Me walking, I go to him at speed.' [Bukhari]

### Fleeing to Allāh

COVID-19 has also given us the opportunity to know our Rabb better. If we consider that Allāh loves us more than our own mothers, we can ask ourselves: why has our Rabb sent this 'calamity' to us?

Our Rabb wants the best for us and has a plan for each one of us.

COVID-19 has also allowed us to reflect on Allāh as al-Shafī' – the one who cures. How often have we had a fever and reached for a packet of paracetamol without a thought of Allāh as the one who cures? We place our hope and expectation of relieving the fever in medication rather than in Allāh – is this not a form of shirk? To be frank, is anyone free of this? Our religion mandates us to take the means of cure (whether it is medication or social distancing), but we do so knowing they are from Allāh and that He, as al-Shafī', is ultimately the one who cures us. Let us recall what Prophet Ibrahim taught us:

"And when I am ill, it is He who cures me." [26:80]

COVID-19 has also given us the opportunity to reflect over Allāh as al-Qahhār – the irresistible and dominant. Is there a military power in the world that has been able to defeat the coronavirus? Does any dictator, president, or king feel invincible to the coronavirus? Have the richest 1% not fled to New Zealand in their private jets only for the virus to follow them there?

Reflect on Allāh as al-Latīf – the subtle and gracious. Before COVID-19, how many of us appreciated our immune system? How many of us appreciated our earwax, which was designed to stop infections entering our ears? It is al-Latīf who looks after us both by day and night, and yet are we too busy or arrogant to thank Him for His gifts.

### One foot in the grave

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ly in ITU fighting for their lives. Do not add to the burden on the NHS – heed government advice to stay at home.

However, do not be overwhelmed by fear. You are alive – so live! Your date of death has already been recorded in the Preserved Tablet, which was written 50,000 years before creation. Reflect over the final words of Khalid b. Walid, the greatest warrior this world has ever known. On his death bed, Khalid turned to the people gathered around him and rhetorically asked: “Can you see any part of me that doesn’t have the scars of battle? I have plunged myself into the enemies so many times and been in situations where I thought I would be certain to die, yet here I am, about to meet my end on a bed.

May the eyes of the cowards never sleep.”

If you are fit and healthy, help your neighbours and assist the elderly. Replace loneliness with kindness. Donate to food banks, many of which already struggling before this crisis. Replace pessimism with hope. Call your families and lift their spirits up. Play with your children. Fill your homes with laughter, not fear. Make the most of this opportunity and make it the best of times. You will never be given these days back.

Finally, the real issue at hand is what you will build for the day after tomorrow. Allāh will make a way out for us. Humanity will get through this. But will we have learned our lesson?

*Dr Izzadine Chowdhury - islam21c*



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