

# COVID-19

## MINDSET, RULINGS & ETIQUETTES

BY

DR. AHSAN HANIF

### PEER-REVIEWED BY:

SH DR. WALEED BASYOUNI

SH ABU EESA NIAMATULLAH

SH SAJID AHMED UMAR

SH IMTIYAZ DAMIEL

It is always important to thank Allah for the many countless blessings that He continues to shower upon us.

It is also important to acknowledge and thank the emergency services: doctors, nurses, paramedics and many others who are working on the front line. Amongst them are a great number of people from the Muslim community too. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, “The one who does not thank people has not truly thanked Allah.”<sup>1</sup>

---

1. Sunan Abū Dāwūd, no. 4811.

# INTRODUCTION

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah,  
the Overwhelmingly Merciful,  
the Specifically Merciful

All praise is for Allah alone, He decrees as He chooses and commands as He wishes. We praise Him at all times and in all situations. We testify to His right to be worshipped alone with firmness and conviction, and that Muhammad is His slave and final Messenger, may Allah shower His salutations and blessings upon him, his family and companions, and all those who follow their guidance.

Our religion is beautiful. It contains everything we need in order to live and function in a way that is pleasing to Allah. At the same time, it is dynamic and flexible enough to allow for us to adapt to our circumstances. Allah says,

﴿الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا﴾

“Today I have perfected your religion for you, completed My blessing upon you, and chosen as your religion Islam.”<sup>2</sup>

﴿مَا فَرَطْنَا فِي الْكِتَابِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ﴾

“We have missed nothing out of the Record...”<sup>3</sup>

---

2. Al-Mā'idah: 3

3. Al-An'ām: 38

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, “O people, I have left among you that which if you hold onto, will keep you from misguidance; the Book of Allah and my *Sunnah*.”<sup>4</sup> The Companion Abū Dharr said, “When the Prophet (ﷺ) died, he left us knowledge of even the bird beating its wings in the sky.”<sup>5</sup> In the narration of Salmān al-Fārsī when it was mockingly said to him that the Prophet (ﷺ) had taught us everything including how to relieve ourselves, Salmān proudly replied in the affirmative.<sup>6</sup>

Early 2020 has seen a virus spread across the world in a way that most of us have never witnessed before. This fast-changing and ever-developing situation is unprecedented for many of us. With places of worship and schools closing down, people self-isolating and the change to ‘normal’ life, we find ourselves in a challenging situation. Yet, as with everything in life, for us as Muslims, we approach it with the divine guidance found in the Qur’an and authentic teachings of our Prophet (ﷺ).

There are many etiquettes and rulings that pertain to the current situation; some of which are known and others unfamiliar to us. We are having to implement *shar‘ī* rulings that many of us have never come across before as it relates to the *adhān*, congregational and *jumu‘ah* prayers, funerals and burials. This guide is an attempt

---

4. *Mustadrak al-Hākim*, no. 319

5. *Musnad Aḥmad*, no. 21361

6. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, no. 262

to give clear guidance on issues ranging from general advice about our mindset and approach to major trials, to etiquettes we need to maintain and *fiqh* rulings that are important for us to know.

We ask Allah by His most beautiful names and lofty attributes to protect us and our families from all harm, spiritual, physical and otherwise. We ask Him to lift this disease from the world and to protect our communities, wealth and honour. He is the One who hears, is close to and responds to all supplicants.

# MINDSET

Our faith gives us the strength and resolve we need to face challenges head on whilst maintaining the best of character. It is our belief in Allah and His promises that allow us to navigate through this world, ultimately realising that this world is temporary, and it is the next life that is eternal. True success is measured there and by the standards Allah sets for salvation on that Day.

It is at times like this that Allah sees our faith and character. Now is the time to apply all the lessons we have learned from the lectures and khutbahs we have heard and books we have read and studied. Now is the time to take the example of the Prophet (ﷺ) and his Companions and think about how they dealt with such a challenge, and how they would respond if they were living in our times.

The following points are crucial to the mindset of a Muslim during these times:

## 1. TRUST IN ALLAH

As Muslims, we entrust our affairs to Allah and depend upon His infinite knowledge and wisdom. Allah says,

﴿قُلْ لَنْ يُصِيبَنَا إِلَّا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَنَا هُوَ مَوْلَانَا وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥١﴾﴾

“Say, ‘Only what Allah has decreed will happen to us. He is our Master: let the believers put their trust in Allah.’”<sup>7</sup>

﴿وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ﴾

“...Allah will be enough for those who put their trust in Him.”<sup>8</sup>

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, “If you trusted in Allah as you should, He would provide for you as He does for the bird. It leaves with an empty stomach in the morning and returns satisfied.”<sup>9</sup> Ibn ‘Abbās said, “Allah is enough for us: He is the Best Protector. Ibrāhim said it when cast into the fire and the Prophet (ﷺ) said it when people stated, “Fear your enemy: they have amassed a great army against you.””<sup>10</sup>

Included in trusting in Allah is to take all reasonable measures to keep oneself from harm or evil. We rely upon Allah and then do our part, as the bird trusts in Allah but still flies out every morning in search of food. To be nonchalant about one’s own wellbeing and that of others is not from the correct understanding of *tawakkul*.

## 2. PLEASURE WITH ALLAH’S DECREE

For the believers, Allah always decrees good,

7. Al-Tawbah: 51

8. Al-Ṭalāq: 3

9. Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī, no. 2344

10. Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, no. 4563

even if we cannot see the benefits in the short term. Nothing happens except with Allah’s permission, but by responding in a manner pleasing to Allah, we are rewarded and our sins are expiated. Allah says,

﴿إِنَّا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَاهُ بِقَدَرٍ﴾<sup>٤٩</sup>

“We have created all things in a manner predestined.”<sup>11</sup>

In this regard, it is important to be positive and remember that relief will soon come from Allah, and to have a positive attitude in the way we deal with the situation at hand. The *Sunnah* demonstrates how the Prophet (ﷺ) was always positive, even in the most difficult and challenging of times.

### 3. PATIENCE & GRATITUDE

Patience and gratitude are the two states that the believer should always be in. We thank Allah for all the ease we have, even in times of difficulty. How many of us took for granted our mosques, the Friday *khuṭbah*, *tarāwīḥ* in Ramadan, etc.? How precious a blessing becomes when it is lifted from us. Yet, we are patient knowing that Allah rewards for our intentions that which we cannot achieve through our actions.

---

11. Al-Qamar: 49



The Prophet (ﷺ) informed us, “Amazing are the believer’s affairs for they are always good, and this is only for the believer. When ease comes, they are grateful and that is best for them, and when difficulty strikes, they are patient and that is best for them.”<sup>12</sup> In another narration, the Prophet (ﷺ) advised his cousin Ibn ‘Abbās, “Know that what struck you would never have missed you, and what missed you would never have struck you. Know that with patience comes victory, with hardship comes relief and with difficulty comes ease.”<sup>13</sup>

## 4. REFLECTION & TURNING BACK TO ALLAH

Whether at a macro or micro level, major events strike us to remind us of our weakness and fragility, and how much we need Allah. They remind us of our limited time on this earth, and should therefore prompt us to remember Allah, turn back to Him in repentance and *du‘ā* and seek to use our remaining time wisely. Allah says,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ أَنْتُمُ الْفُقَرَاءُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ ﴿١٥﴾﴾

“O people, it is you who stand in need of Allah – Allah is rich from all needs and is worthy of all praise.”<sup>14</sup>

The Prophet (ﷺ) showed us this when there was an eclipse during his lifetime. He led the

12. Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, no. 2999

13. Sunan Abū Dāwūd, no. 4700

14. Al-Fāṭir: 15

Companions in prayer and delivered a sermon saying, “The sun and moon are two of Allah’s signs. They are not eclipsed due to the life or death of someone. If you see an eclipse, pray and supplicate to Allah.”<sup>15</sup> For them, this was a major occurrence, like Covid-19 is for many of us. These are times in which we reflect on our lives, what we have achieved and make *du‘ā* to Allah for His assistance. Allah says,

﴿وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَأَنْتَ فِيهِمْ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ مُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَهُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ﴾<sup>٣٣</sup>

*“But Allah would not punish them while you (O Muhammad) are among them, and Allah will not punish them while they seek forgiveness.”<sup>16</sup>*

## 5. THINKING GOOD ABOUT ALLAH

This is a part of our faith in Allah that we always think good about our Lord and Creator and never ascribe evil to him. As it relates to this situation, it’s enough that Allah gives us the complete reward for the actions we are unable to complete in their fully legislated manner. This means that if you regularly prayed in the mosque or prayed Friday prayers etc. and now can no longer go to the mosque due to their closure, you still receive the full reward regardless. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, “If a person is ill or travelling, they will have the full reward of what they would do when they were healthy and resident.”<sup>17</sup>

15. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, no. 1043

16. *Al-Anfāl*: 33

17. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, no. 2996

## 6. SEEING THE OPPORTUNITY

In every hardship there is an opportunity, and part of patience is dealing with hardship in a manner that brings reward from Allah. We can use a difficult situation in a way that benefits us. Under these current restrictions, we have more time to use for good. All those times we complained that we didn't have the time to read or memorise Qur'an, learn and study Islamic sciences, listen to lectures, spend time with our children and close family, give charity and so on, now we find we do have the time.

Allocate for yourself a daily portion of the Qur'an to read, memorise and study. Access the plethora of Islamic online portals available, commit to a detailed online study program, follow a lecture series, read books, learn Arabic, focus on your prayers, daily *du'ās* and *dhikr*, give charity and help those around you in need.

# ETIQUETTES

Allah describes the Prophet (ﷺ) as being of exalted character. This was because he conducted himself in the most exemplary way in all situations. He was amazing with people close to him and distant from him. He was kind, generous, gracious, charitable, considerate and helpful. Even his enemies attested to his character. This nobility manifested itself in daily interactions, at times of personal trial such as the loss of his wife or children, at times of national strife such as when the Quraysh were persecuting his followers and even on the battlefield.

The Prophet (ﷺ) is our role model. We attempt to emulate him in our character and behaviour. We should ask ourselves, ‘What would the Prophet (ﷺ) do if he were here with us? How would he behave?’ Here are a number of etiquettes we can take from the Prophet’s (ﷺ) example:

## 1. *DU‘ĀS & ADHKĀR*

The *Sunnah* is replete with invocations and remembrances we should be making on a daily basis. We often take them for granted or neglect them altogether. In times like this, each one of us should make a concerted effort to ensure we make our daily *adhkār* and increase in *du‘ā*. The

passages of the Qur'an such as *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah*, *Āyat al-Kursī*, *Sūrah al-Ikhlāṣ*, *Sūrah al-Falaq* and *Sūrah al-Nās* are from the greatest forms of protection we can invoke by reciting them daily. Here are some other relevant ones:

**a . Whoever says the following three times every morning and evening will be protected from harm,<sup>18</sup>**

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الَّذِي لَا يَضُرُّ مَعَ اسْمِهِ شَيْءٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

*In the name of Allah, with whose name nothing in the heavens or earth can harm, He is All-Hearing, All-Knowing*

**b . Reciting the *du‘ā* made by the Prophet Yūnus when he was in the belly of the whale.**

The Prophet (ﷺ) told us that whoever supplicated with it will not be rejected,<sup>19</sup>

﴿لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ﴾

*None has the right to be worshipped but You, glory be to You, I was wrong*

**c . Seeking Allah's protection from illnesses and diseases. The Prophet (ﷺ) would say,<sup>20</sup>**

18 Sunan Abū Dāwūd, no. 5088

19. *Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī*, no. 3505

20. Sunan Abū Dāwūd, no. 1554

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْبَرَصِ وَالْجُذَامِ، وَالْجُنُونِ، وَمِنْ سَيِّئِ الْأَسْقَامِ

*O Allah, I seek Your protection from leprosy, paralysis, insanity and all evil diseases*

**d . To make the supplication that the Prophet (ﷺ) would make every morning and evening in which he would seek Allah's general protection,<sup>21</sup>**

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الْعَافِيَةَ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الْعَفْوَ وَالْعَافِيَةَ فِي دِينِي  
وَدُنْيَايَ وَأَهْلِي وَمَالِي، اللَّهُمَّ اسْتُرْ عَوْرَاتِي، وَآمِنْ رَوْعَاتِي، اللَّهُمَّ احْفَظْنِي مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْ،  
وَمِنْ خَلْفِي، وَعَنْ يَمِينِي، وَعَنْ شِمَالِي، وَمِنْ فَوْقِي، وَأَعُوذُ بِعَظَمَتِكَ أَنْ أُغْتَالَ مِنْ تَحْتِي

*O Allah, I ask You for safety in this life and in the Hereafter.*

*O Allah, I ask You for pardon and safety in my religion, worldly affairs, family and wealth. O Allah, conceal my faults and grant safety to my fears. O Allah, protect me from in front of me, behind me, to my right and left, above me, and I seek Your protection from being destroyed from beneath me*

## 2. ACTS OF GOODNESS

One of the most effective ways of removing harm is to increase in acts of general goodness and kindness. This includes giving charity, helping others, cooking for them, helping them with their groceries or any other acts of kindness. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, “Acts of goodness prevent evil consequences.”<sup>22</sup>

21. Ibid, no. 5074

22. Mu'jam al-Awsat, no. 6086

### 3. NIGHT PRAYER

It may well be that this year we are unable to congregate for the one time in the year most of us pray the night prayer regularly: *tarāwīḥ* in Ramadan. However, using this opportunity to start a nightly routine of waking up for *tahajjud* is recommended not only for its immense reward, but for its benefits of keeping harm from us. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, “Offer the night prayer for it was the practice of the righteous before you. The night prayer is a means of drawing near to Allah. It prevents one from sin, expiates evil deeds and expels illness from the body.”<sup>23</sup>

### 4. COVERING FOOD & DRINK

This is from the general etiquettes recommended in the *Sunnah*. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, “Cover your containers and vessels. Indeed, in the year there is a night in which illnesses descend, it falls into every uncovered container and vessel.”<sup>24</sup>

### 5. KINDNESS AND GRACIOUSNESS

This is a tenet which underpins our faith. Thinking of others, wanting good for them and being empathetic towards them is part of faith. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, “None of you truly

---

23. *Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*, no. 3549

24. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, no. 2014

believes until they love for their brother what they love for themselves.”<sup>25</sup>

## 6. ABIDING BY PUBLIC HEALTH & GOVERNMENT GUIDELINES

Our religion is based on core principles, one of which is the preservation of life and wellbeing. Another is to refrain from harming others. Therefore, when we are informed of guidelines and restrictions that are for the general good and wellbeing of all people, it becomes our religious duty to abide by them. If by neglecting these guidelines, we inadvertently harm others or worse, we are accountable for our actions and decisions. The preservation of life is so important that Allah says,

﴿أَنَّهُ وَمَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا  
وَمَنْ أَحْيَاهَا فَكَأَنَّمَا أَحْيَا النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا﴾

“...that if anyone kills a person – unless in retribution for murder or spreading corruption in the land – it is as if he kills all mankind, while if any saves a life it is as if he saves the lives of all mankind.”<sup>26</sup>

## 7. THE ACCOUNTABILITY OF WORDS, VERBAL AND WRITTEN

Each one of us is responsible for our words and

---

25. Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, no. 13

26. Al-Mā'idah: 32



actions. What we say, do, write or forward is recorded by the angels. In times of confusion and differing opinions, it is important to be responsible in the way we act and the information we convey to others. It is our duty to confirm and verify the reliability of the information we spread. Allah says,

﴿إِذْ يَتْلَى الْمُتَلَقِيَانِ عَنِ الْيَمِينِ وَعَنِ الشِّمَالِ قَعِيدٌ ﴿١٧﴾ مَا يَلْفِظُ مِنْ قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ ﴿١٨﴾﴾

*“With two reporters set to record, one on his right side and one on his left: he does not utter a single word without an ever-present watcher.”<sup>27</sup>*

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِن جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَن تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِجَهَالَةٍ فَتُصِحُّوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نَادِمِينَ ﴿٦﴾﴾

*“O believers, if a troublemaker brings you news, verify it first, in case you wrong others unwittingly and later regret what you have done.”<sup>28</sup>*

The Prophet (ﷺ) saw some of the punishments of the grave. Amongst them was a person whose mouth was being ripped with a hook to the back of his neck. The Prophet (ﷺ) was informed later that this is a person who tells a lie that spreads to the furthest reaches.<sup>29</sup> This is more so in the era of social media where a single post can reach the furthest corners of the world in a matter of seconds.

27. Qāf: 17-18

28. Al-Hujurāt: 6

29. Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, no. 7047

# ISLAMIC RULINGS

There are a number of Islamic rulings which we need to be familiar with in times when congregating in large numbers can be potentially harmful.

## 1. Purification

**Q : Can I make *tayammum* instead of *wuḍū'* if I am ill with Covid-19 or in self-quarantine?**

**A :** The general rule is that water must be used in all ritual purification if available and safe to use. If someone is in self-isolation but has other family members who can pass them water for *wuḍū'* or they have access to a bathroom, then they must perform *wuḍū'*. If water is unavailable or unsafe to use as it may exacerbate someone's illness, they can then resort to *tayammum*. Likewise, if getting to water is too physically demanding, *tayammum* may be performed.

**Q : How do I make *tayammum*?**

**A :** *Tayammum* is performed by striking the earth with your hands and then wiping over the hands and face. Excess dust can be blown off before wiping the hands and face.

**Q : What if I don't have access to earth?**

**A :** In self-isolation, it may be difficult to find earth, especially if someone is unwell. In this case, you can purchase *tayammum* packs that contain sand. Otherwise, a number of scholars allow using a wall for *tayammum* as it is made of materials including earth.

## 2. Prayer

**Q : What is the ruling of praying at home?**

**A :** Men should offer their obligatory prayers in the mosque. However, it is allowed to pray at home in the opinion of the majority of Muslim jurists, especially in the event of illness, adverse weather or fear of some harm. The Prophet (ﷺ) himself prayed at home during his final illness when he was physically unable to pray in the mosque.<sup>30</sup> The Prophet (ﷺ) would recommend praying at home other than for the obligatory prayers.<sup>31</sup>

---

30. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, no. 713

31. *Ibid*, no. 731

**Q :** What is the ruling of mosques suspending all services?

**A :** Due to the principles of preservation of life and removing harm, a number of internationally recognised scholarly bodies have issued fatwas (religious verdicts) allowing for the suspension of services in mosques. This includes AMJA (American Muslims Jurists Assembly),<sup>32</sup> the European Council for Fatwa & Research<sup>33</sup> and the Panel of Senior Scholars of Saudi Arabia.<sup>34</sup> On a number of occasions in the lifetime of the Prophet (ﷺ) and his Companions, Muslims had to pray in their homes, often due to adverse weather. Ibn ‘Abdul-Barr,<sup>35</sup> Al-Nawawī,<sup>36</sup> Al-Qurṭubī<sup>37</sup> and others used these narrations as a basis to allow prayer at home for similar or more severe reasons.

When and where possible and in accordance to public health guidelines, if the mosques can establish the Friday prayers with a small number of people such as members of staff who may be working in the mosque, they should do so in order to continue this act of

32. <https://www.amjaonline.org/a-statement-regarding-the-latest-developments-of-covid-19-outbreak-and-their-impact-on-the-congregational-services/>

33. <https://www.e-cfr.org/2-بيان-المجلس-الأوروبي-للإفتاء-والبحوث-2/>

34. <https://www.spa.gov.sa/2048662>

35. *Al-Istidhkār*, vol. 1, p. 401

36. *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, vol. 5, p. 207

37. *Al-Mufhim*, vol. 6, p. 126

worship. In the event of a total lockdown, this is lifted due to necessity.

## **b** CHANGES TO THE *ADHĀN*

**Q :** Should the *adhān* still be given in the mosque?

**A :** On such occasions, the *adhān* should still be called in the mosque where possible.

**Q :** Does the wording of the *adhān* change?

**A :** The wording of the *adhān* changes to include the statement, ‘Pray in your homes’ [*alā ṣallū fī riḥālikum/buyūtikum*].<sup>38</sup> This is either said after ‘Come to prayer’ and ‘Come to success’, at the end of the *adhān* or in place of ‘Come to prayer’.

## **c** PRAYING AT HOME

**Q :** Is it allowed to have a specific place in the house that I choose to pray in?

**A :** It is allowed to have a specific place in the house where you prefer to pray. It is reported that some of the Companions would ask the Prophet (ﷺ) to pray in their

---

38. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, no. 901

homes, and they would then make that their place of prayer whilst at home.<sup>39</sup> It is still allowed to pray elsewhere in the house. It goes without saying that our places of prayer at home should be clean. It is also recommended to perfume that area.

**Q : Can I give the *adhān* and *iqāmah* at home?**

**A :** It is *Sunnah* for men to give the *adhān* and *iqāmah* at home and pray in congregation with family members.<sup>40</sup>

**Q : Who should lead the prayer at home?**

**A :** The head of the household has the most right to lead the prayer.<sup>41</sup> Otherwise or if he chooses, the one who is most versed in the Qur'an should lead, then the most knowledgeable regarding the *Sunnah* and then the oldest in age.<sup>42</sup>

**Q : Are women allowed to lead men in prayer?**

**A :** Women are not allowed to lead men.

**Q : How do we line up in prayer if there are only men?**

**A :** In terms of lining up for the prayer, if there are only two men, they stand side by side with the imam on the left. If there are more than two men, the imam stands alone in

---

39. *Ibid*, no. 425

40. *Sunan Abū Dāwūd*, no. 592

41. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, no. 673

42. *Ibid*

front with others lining up behind him.

**Q : How do we line up in prayer if there are only women praying?**

**A :** If it is a group of women, they line up in a single line or more with the woman leading standing in the middle of the first row.

## **d** FRIDAY PRAYERS

**Q : What do we do if there are no Friday prayers in the mosque?**

**A :** In the event of mosques closing or not being able to accommodate large numbers of people, it is permissible to miss the Friday prayer and offer *Zuhr* at home in its usual manner of four *rak'ahs*.

**Q : Can we establish a Friday prayer elsewhere?**

**A :** *Jumu'ah* prayers should normally be offered in the mosque or where there is a large gathering of Muslims who cannot make it to the mosque, such as in universities, prisons etc. It is permissible to establish Friday prayers in these places if it is safe to do so. However, in the event of suspension of *jumu'ah* prayers in mosques due to social

distancing measures, this would apply to all such gatherings, irrespective of the location. The alternative in this case is to offer *Zuhr* prayer.

**Q : How many people do we need to pray *jumu'ah*?**

**A :** The minimum number of people required for this is a matter of difference of opinion amongst jurists. The position of a minimum of three is the strongest of those views, and Allah knows best.

**Q : Can we follow Friday prayers online by having it live streamed?**

**A :** This is not permissible. When praying, the rows should be reasonably close together. In the case of streaming, people are spread out over a large distance and far from the mosque.<sup>43</sup>

It is however fine to listen to a live stream of a sermon if there are some mosques doing so, but you would not pray with them, instead offering your own *Zuhr* prayer.

**Q : Do the other *sunnahs* of Friday continue?**

**A :** The general *sunnahs* of Friday continue. These include reading *Sūrah al-Kahf*, sending *ṣalāt* upon the Prophet (ﷺ) and especially making *du'ā'*.

---

43. See <https://www.amjaonline.org/remote-jumah-prayer/>



**Q : Which *sunnahs* do not continue?**

**A :** Some of the *sunnahs* are connected to the Friday prayer and are therefore no longer applicable when this prayer is not being offered. These *sunnahs* are bathing, wearing clean clothes and perfuming oneself.

### **3. Funerals & Burials**

It is one of the core rights of our Muslim brothers and sisters that at the time of their passing, we ensure they are ritually washed, shrouded, prayed over and buried. However, in times of social distancing and the potential fear of contagious diseases spreading, some of these rituals change. In such cases, these are not signs of Allah's displeasure or an evil ending for the deceased. Rather, we hope that those who succumb to this illness have their sins forgiven and their reward increased as a result of the hardship they endured.

The following rulings are when and where there are restrictions from the health authorities. If no such restrictions are in place or do not apply to a particular individual, the usual rituals are followed.

**Q : Who has to carry out the funeral rites?**

**A :** To fulfil the obligations of funeral rites is a collective duty upon Muslims. This means that so long as it is carried out by some people, it is sufficient. These people would usually be close family members, but other members of the Muslim community can take their place when and where possible. This may be the case if close family members are asked to quarantine themselves.

**Q : What if by washing and shrouding the body, authorities ask me to self-quarantine?**

**A :** In this case, and Allah knows best, it is allowed for the health authorities to take the place of others in washing and shrouding. This is due to the major difficulty inherent in quarantining. The *sharī'ah* allows for an ease in obligations in times of necessity and this would be one such occasion. In such situations, expert Islamic guidance should be given to the health authorities to help them understand the rituals that need to be performed.

## **b** WASHING & SHROUDING

**Q :** How is the body washed under health restrictions?

**A :** The minimum requirement for ritually washing the body is that water has reached every part of it. If there are further restrictions in place, and health officials do not allow any type of washing, they should cleanse it with wipes, disinfectant or whatever else they can use.

**Q :** How do we shroud the body under health restrictions?

**A :** The minimum requirement of shrouding is that the *'awrah* be covered. If health authorities are using sealed bags for bodies, health officials can shroud the body before sealing. If they are unable to open the bag, then this obligation is removed due to necessity, and the shroud can be placed over the sealed bag.

## **c** PRAYER

**Q :** Is it allowed to pray the *janāzah* prayer at the graveyard?

**A :** It is permissible to pray at the graveyard.

---

The Prophet (ﷺ) did this for a woman who used to clean his mosque.

**Q : Can we pray the funeral prayer without the body present?**

**A :** The general rule is that the body is present for the funeral prayer. If this is not possible due to quarantine or other health restrictions, this condition is lifted and the prayer can be offered without the body, and is in essence prayer in absentia (*ṣalāt al-ghā'ib*).

**Q : What is the minimum number of people needed for the funeral prayer?**

**A :** As long as at least one person offers this prayer, it is sufficient to fulfil the ritual. Where possible and safe to have more people, it is preferable to do so.

## **d** BURIAL

**Q : What if the body has been sealed in the coffin?**

**A :** If due to health restrictions, bodies are sealed in a coffin before being given to family members or other Muslim community members, it is allowed to bury the body in this way, once again due to necessity.

**Q : How many people are needed to bury the body?**

**A :** There is no minimum requirement. As long as the body is buried, it is sufficient.

**Q : Is cremation allowed under any circumstances during this crisis?**

**A :** It is forbidden for Muslims to be cremated. Islam obligates that deceased Muslims be treated with dignity and that no form of desecration, harm or mutilation can take place. In Islam, the deceased have rights, one of which is the right to burial. If the government decides that there is not enough capacity to bury the deceased as per the norm, every other option must first be exhausted. This includes the burying of multiple bodies in a single grave of a Muslim graveyard/ Muslim section of the graveyard. This already has precedent from the *Sunnah*.<sup>44</sup> Other alternatives then include using a section of a non-Muslim graveyard, the use of alternative burial sites etc.

In an eventuality that the government forces cremation upon Muslims, family members of the deceased should be assured that they are not sinful for this nor is it a sign of a bad ending for their loved ones who have passed. We do our best and Allah

---

44. This was done with the burial of the martyrs in the Battle of Uḥud. See Sunan Abū Dāwūd, no. 3215

45. Al-Taghābun: 16

knows our intentions and what our loved ones would have preferred. Allah says,

﴿فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ﴾

“Be mindful of Allah as much as you can...”<sup>45</sup>

And Allah says,

﴿لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا﴾

“Allah does not burden any soul with more than it can bear...”<sup>46</sup>

## **e** CONDOLENCES

**Q :** How do we give condolences under health restrictions?

**A :** If it is not possible to meet due to social distancing to offer condolences, this can be done via phone. We should continue to make *du'ā'* for our deceased and offer any help we can to their bereaved families.

## **4. Zakāh**

**Q :** Can I delay paying my *zakah* if I currently have a lack of money or fear a lack of income due to Covid-19 and have limited savings?

---

46. Al-Baqarah: 286

**A :** If you are currently short of money due to being affected by illness, self-isolation and/or your business or employment are suffering due to the public health restrictions, it is permissible for you to delay giving *zakāh*. This should only be done so long as that situation remains and once circumstances improve, *zakāh* must be paid immediately.

**Q :** **Can I pay my *zakāh* early due to the current circumstances?**

**A :** It is allowed in the opinion of a number of scholars, as the Prophet (ﷺ) allowed it for his uncle ‘Abbās.<sup>47</sup>

## 5. Self-Isolation

**Q :** **Do I have to self-isolate if I am displaying symptoms of Covid-19?**

**A :** Yes, you must self-isolate if that is the specific or general medical and public health advice being given. In this case it becomes an obligation. It is not allowed to pass on harm to other people, and if you fear that you have contracted Covid-19, you must do your best to keep others safe. Allah says,

---

47. *Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*, no. 679

﴿وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ بَغَيْرِ مَا كَسَبُوا فَقَدْ أَحْتَمَلُوا بُهْتَانَنَا وَإِنَّمَا مَبِينَا ﴿٥٨﴾﴾

“And those who undeservedly harm believing men and women will bear the guilt of slander and flagrant sin.”<sup>48</sup>

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, “A sick person (with a contagious illness) should not mix with a healthy person.”<sup>49</sup>

**Q : Can we still shake hands when meeting others?**

**A :** Shaking hands when meeting people is recommended. However, if there is a potential harm and spread of disease as a result of it, it is allowed to suffice with the verbal greeting and you should refrain from shaking hands.

**Q : Can I refuse to shake hands with others?**

**A :** If there are health guidelines in place instructing people not to shake hands, hug, kiss etc., it is allowed to refuse. We should abide by these instructions and not become offended when others choose to do so.

**Q : What is the Islamic take on social distancing?**

**A :** Social distancing can be permissible, recommended or even obligatory if the circumstances call for it. During the time

48. Al-Aḥzāb: 58

49. Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, no. 2221



of ‘Umar, a plague struck a region of Shām that resulted in the deaths of thousands. The Companions, ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ became the governor of the region and instructed people to disperse into the mountains and countryside so as to stop the spread of the plague. Therefore, if the medical advice is that there is a clear benefit in social distancing, it should be adhered to.

## 6. Buying & Selling

**Q :** What does Islam say about how we should behave in these times?

**A :** In times of mass difficulty where there are general needs for certain items, the sharī’ah has certain rulings that apply to these situations. These rulings take into account the principles of general wellbeing and preventing harm. The etiquettes of being kind, considerate and helpful to others are crucial at such times. Allah says,

﴿وَجَمَعَ فَأَوْعَىٰ ۖ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ خُلِقَ هَلُوعًا ۚ إِذَا مَسَّهُ الشَّرُّ جَزُوعًا ۚ وَإِذَا مَسَّهُ الْخَيْرُ مَنُوعًا ۗ﴾<sup>(٢١)</sup>  
 ﴿إِلَّا الْمُصَلِّينَ ۗ الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَىٰ صَلَاتِهِمْ دَائِمُونَ ۗ وَالَّذِينَ فِي أَمْوَالِهِمْ حَقٌّ مَّعْلُومٌ ۗ لِلسَّائِلِ وَالْمَحْرُومِ ۗ﴾<sup>(٢٥)</sup>

“...amasses wealth and hoards it. Man was truly created anxious: he is fretful when misfortune touches him, but tight-fisted

when good fortune comes his way. Not so those who pray and are constant in their prayers; who give a due share of their wealth to petitioners and the deprived...”<sup>50</sup>

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, “The Muslims are brothers to one another. They do not oppress one another or allow them to be oppressed. Whoever helps his brothers will be divinely assisted by Allah. Whoever removes a difficulty from their fellow Muslim, will have one of the burdens of the Day of Judgement removed from them by Allah. Whoever veils another Muslim will be veiled by Allah on the Day of Judgement.”<sup>51</sup>

## **a** PANIC BUYING

**Q :** What is the ruling of panic or mass buying?

**A :** It is *ḥarām* in the *sharī‘ah* to mass buy essential items and products that are surplus to your normal requirements and that others require such as staple foods and necessary medicines. This is especially if government officials and retailers reassure everyone that there are plenty of items in stock. In times of difficulty, it is the responsibility of everyone to ensure we help

---

50. Al-Ma‘ārij: 18-25

51. Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, no. 2442

others and think of them as we would for our own families. If by hoarding products which are above your need, you deny someone else their needs, you are sinful. Additionally, these actions lead to a rise in general fear, panic and tension within communities, and therefore contribute to more harm than good.

## **b** INFLATING PRICES

**Q :** Is it permissible for shop owners to inflate prices unnecessarily?

**A :** It is *ḥarām* to inflate prices to profit from people's needs without due cause. Allah says,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ﴾

“O believers, do not wrongfully consume each other's wealth...”<sup>52</sup>

**Q :** Is it allowed to withhold essential products that people need in order to inflate prices?

**A :** This is *ḥarām*. Prophet (ﷺ) said, “Whoever withholds products needed by others to inflate the price upon others is sinful.”<sup>53</sup>

52. Al-Nisā': 29

53. Musnad Ahmad, no. 8617

Over the coming weeks and months, there may be additional Islamic rulings that apply if the situation continues into Ramadan, Eid and Ḥajj. If that happens, an updated version will be released, *in shā Allah*.

# CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it is imperative upon us as Muslims to be mindful of Allah's commands during these times. Let us show Allah our best deeds, deal with others in a compassionate and considerate way and help those in need. Let us follow the example of the Prophet (ﷺ) who always showed others how to behave through his own words and actions.

May Allah ease our affairs and remove this disease from us, keep us, our families and communities safe and protect our wealth, businesses and property.

*20th March 2020*

*Birmingham, UK*