

# Khutba

08.01.2010

English

Calamities

Dear Muslims,

Calamities are one of the things that can be seen and met very often in life. Everybody is prone and can be exposed to calamities during his life. For us, Muslims, we believe that calamities are for our favor. It is either to clear our sins or to test our faith. It is just a small test before the big exam at the Day of Judgment. If you pass; you are on the right track and if you fail; you have to consider and reevaluate your faith and deeds.

Calamities can be either with good and bad events *“Everyone is going to taste death, and We shall test you with evil and with good by way of trial. And to Us you will be returned”* Alanbiya 35.

Ibn Kathir provided the following translation for this verses: **(and We shall test you with evil and with good by way of trial. ) Meaning, "We shall test you, sometimes with difficulties and sometimes with ease, to see who will give thanks and who will be ungrateful, who will have patience and who will despair."** `Ali bin Abi Talhah reported from Ibn `Abbas:

(and We shall test you) means, We will test you,

(with evil and with good by way of trial.) means, with difficulties and with times of prosperity, with health and sickness, with richness and poverty, with lawful and unlawful, obedience and sin, with guidance and misguidance.

Sometimes we encounter some difficult situation and calamities but it ends, unexpectedly, with very good consequences and vice versa. So we have to accept our destiny with patience because Allah is merciful and knows better what is good for us.

**(Fighting is ordained for you (Muslims) though you dislike it, and it may be that you dislike a thing which is good for you and that you like a thing which is bad for you. Allah knows but you do not know) Al-Baqarah 216.**

Ibn Kathir translate this verses as follow: *(...though you dislike it) means, 'Fighting is difficult and heavy on your hearts.' Indeed, fighting is as the Ayah describes it, as it includes being killed, wounded, striving against the enemies and enduring the hardship of travel. Allah then said:*

*(. ..and it may be that you dislike a thing which is good for you) meaning, fighting is followed by victory, dominance over the enemy, taking over their lands, money and offspring. Allah continues: (...and that you like a thing which is bad for you.) This Ayah is general in meaning. Hence, one might covet something, yet in reality it is not good or beneficial for him, such as refraining from joining the Jihad, for it might lead to the enemy taking over the land and the government. Then, Allah said:*

*(Allah knows, but you do not know.) meaning, He has better knowledge than you of how things will turn out to be in the end, and of what benefits you in this earthly life and the Hereafter. Hence, obey Him and adhere to His commands, so that you may acquire the true guidance.*

Most of the people get confused in the time of calamities; they become scared, skeptical and lose their wisdom and their ability for rational thinking. That is mainly due to the fact that they forget that calamities are from Allah and they are destinies that you can't escape. This fact is mentioned in Quran several times

*“Be sure We shall test you with something of fear and hunger, some loss in goods or lives or the fruits (of your toil), but give glad tidings to those who patiently persevere, \* Who say, when afflicted with calamity: "To God we belong, and to Him is our return":- \* They are those on whom (descend) blessings from their Lord, and Mercy, and they are the ones that receive guidance.” Al-Baqarah 155-157*

*“Ye shall certainly be tried and tested in your possessions and in your personal selves; and ye shall certainly Hear much that will grieve you, from those who received the Book before you and from those who worship many gods. But if ye persevere patiently, and guard against evil,-then that will be a determining factor in all affairs” Ali 'Imran 186.*

*“Alif, Lam, Mim\* Do men think that they will be left alone on saying, "We believe", and that they will not be tested? \*We did test those before them, and God will certainly know those who are true from those who are false” Al 'Ankabut 1-3.*

*“And We shall try you until We test those among you who strive their utmost and persevere in patience; and We shall try your reported (mettle)” Muhammad 31.*

Even Prophet Mohamed and his companion, the first and the best Muslim generation, were exposed to calamities. One

of the great calamities faced the Prophet companion is the death of prophet Mohamed, although it was anticipated in Quran. ***“Truly thou wilt die (one day), and truly they (too) will die (one day)\* In the end will ye (all), on the Day of Judgment, settle your disputes in the presence of your Lord” Al Zumar 30-31.***

***“We granted not to any man before thee permanent life (here): if then thou shouldst die, would they live permanently?” Al Anbiya 34.***

***“Muhammad is no more than an apostle: many Were the apostle that passed away before him. If he died or were slain, will ye then Turn back on your heels? If any did turn back on his heels, not the least harm will he do to God; but God (on the other hand) will swiftly reward those who (serve Him) with gratitude” Ali 'Imran 144.***

Most of the Prophet's companions got confused. Some of them got paralyzed and some, such as Omar Ibn Alkhattab, denied the death. Omar said: the Prophet only went to meet Allah, and he will be back. However the confusion ended when Abu-Bakr reminded them with the fact of Islam. He reminded them that Islam is the religion from God and it is not linked or dependent on the life of one person, even if this person was prophet Mohamed. He said: if you worship Mohamed, then Mohamed is dead; but if you worship Allah, then Allah never dies. Thereafter he recited ***“Muhammad is no more than an apostle: many Were the apostle that passed away before him. If he died or were slain, will ye then Turn back on your heels? If any did turn back on his heels, not the least harm will he do to God; but God (on the other hand) will swiftly reward those who (serve Him) with gratitude” Ali 'Imran 144.***

Interestingly, the latter verse was also linked with another big calamity, the defeat in Uhud battle. The story was narrated by Albukhari in *Al-Maghazzi, the Military Expeditions led by Prophet Mohamed*, book:

Narrated Al-Bara:

We faced the pagans on that day (of the battle of Uhud) and the Prophet placed a batch of archers (at a special place) and appointed 'Abdullah (bin Jubair) as their commander and said, "Do not leave this place; and if you should see us conquering the enemy, do not leave this place, and if you should see them conquering us, do not (come to) help us," So, when we faced the enemy, they took to their heel till I saw their women running towards the mountain, lifting up their clothes from their legs, revealing their leg-bangles. The Muslims started saying, "The booty, the booty!" 'Abdullah bin Jubair said, "The Prophet had taken a firm promise from me not to leave this place." But his companions refused (to stay). So when they refused (to stay there), (Allah) confused them so that they could not know where to go, and they suffered seventy casualties.

Abu Sufyan ascended a high place and said, "Is Muhammad present amongst the people?" The Prophet said, "Do not answer him." Abu Sufyan said, "Is the son of Abu Quhafa present among the people?" The Prophet said, "Do not answer him." Abd Sufyan said, "Is the son of Al-Khattab amongst the people?" He then added, "All these people have been killed, for, were they alive, they would have replied." On that, 'Umar could not help saying, "You are a liar, O enemy of Allah! Allah has kept what will make you unhappy." Abu Safyan said, "Superior may be Hubal!" On that the Prophet said (to his companions), "Reply to him." They asked, "What may we say?" He said, "Say: Allah is More Elevated and More Majestic!" Abu Sufyan said, "We have (the idol) Al-'Uzza, whereas you have no 'Uzza!" The Prophet said (to his companions), "Reply to him." They said, "What may we say?" The Prophet said, "Say: Allah is our Helper and you have no helper." Abu Sufyan said, "(This) day compensates for our loss at Badr and (in) the battle (the victory) is always undecided and shared in turns by the belligerents. You will see some of your dead men mutilated, but neither did I urge this action, nor am I sorry for it."

From these two examples we can learn how to behave during and after calamities. In Uhud battle, although Muslims were defeated, they did not lose their faith and spirit. They were still sure that they are on the right track and they will win at the end. They used this tough experience to strengthen themselves and restore their faith. Even when Prophet Mohamed was dead, they were able to distinguish between right and wrong. They were able to keep their unity and to stay on the track, although with some confusion. Because of that they were able to continue their mission and to succeed in delivering the message of Islam to the whole world.

Dear Muslims,

Nowadays, Muslims face lots of big calamities. This is, unfortunately, not due to our strong faith but rather due to our bad deeds. We have ignored Quran and *sunah*, followed the devil's path and abandoned Allah's way. To survive these calamities, we have to revise our behavior and deeds and restore our faith. We have to do more worships, *sadaqah*, and good deeds. We have to pray for Allah to guide us and make us follow his way.

***"Our Lord! We have wronged our own souls: If thou forgive us not and bestow not upon us Thy Mercy, we shall certainly be lost" Al A'raf 23.***

***".....Our Lord! Condemn us not if we forget or fall into error; Our Lord! Lay not on us a burden like that which Thou didst lay on those before us; Our Lord! Lay not on us a burden greater than we have strength to bear. Blot out our sins, and grant us forgiveness. Have mercy on us. Thou art our Protector; Help us against those who stand against faith" Al Baqarah 286.***

Khutba by Sidi Mohamed Ould Cherif