



THE PANDEMIC OF COVID-19 FROM ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract: Humans have known pandemics from time immemorial. The first true pandemic recorded in history is the Black Plague of 1918. After a century the world witnessed another true pandemic in the form of COVID19, caused by a virus known as Coronavirus, which is just 80-120 nm in diameter. It is submicroscopic, and per scientific knowledge, is the smallest and least valuable known living thing. Five events which are universally predominant during this pandemic are: fear, hunger, loss of wealth, loss of life and loss of provisions. It is amazing that the Qur'an confirms these five events as a test for humanity (Al-Baqarah, 155). In the matter of social distancing, it is amazing that Qur'an states that, Musa AS cursed his deviant follower Samiri, that he will be telling people throughout his remaining life that not to touch him (Ta-Ha, 97). Definitely a similitude to the social distancing practiced worldwide during this pandemic. As far as quarantine is concerned, the Prophet SAW, encouraged the people to follow the universal law of not to approach a land where an epidemic is prevailing, and if an epidemic has broken out in a land where one is staying, then do not leave that place, and bear it patiently (Sahih Al-Bukhari, 3473). Finally, there are good tidings from the Prophet SAW to his Ummah, in one of his sayings that Allah, Ta'ala has made plague, a source of mercy for the believers, for if one in the time of an epidemic plague stays in his country patiently hoping for Allah's reward and believing that nothing will befall him except what Allah Tala has written for him, he will get the reward of a martyr (Sahih Al-Bukhari 3474). In conclusion, fifteen centuries back Islam gave clear-cut solutions to the problems like pandemics.

Keywords: Coronavirus; COVID-19 vaccines, pandemics in Islam, quarantine and isolation, social distancing

Abstrak: Manusia telah mengenal pandemi sejak dahulu kala. Pandemi pertama yang tercatat dalam sejarah adalah Wabah Hitam tahun 1918. Setelah satu abad, dunia menyaksikan pandemik lainnya dalam bentuk COVID 19, yang disebabkan oleh virus yang dikenal sebagai Coronavirus, yang hanya berdiameter 80-120 nm. Virus bersifat submikroskopis, dan berdasarkan pengetahuan ilmiah merupakan makhluk hidup terkecil dan paling tidak berharga yang diketahui. Lima peristiwa yang dominan secara universal selama pandemi ini adalah: ketakutan, kelaparan, kehilangan harta, kehilangan nyawa, dan kehilangan bekal. Menakjubkan bahwa Al-Qur'an menegaskan lima peristiwa ini sebagai ujian bagi umat manusia (Al-Baqarah, 155). Dalam hal *social distancing*, sungguh menakjubkan bahwa Al Quran menyatakan bahwa, Musa AS mengutuk Samiri, pengikutnya yang menyimpang, bahwa dia akan mengatakan kepada orang-orang sepanjang sisa hidupnya untuk tidak menyentuhnya (Ta-Ha, 97). Jelas mirip dengan jarak sosial yang dipraktikkan di seluruh dunia selama pandemi ini. Sehubungan dengan karantina, Nabi SAW menganjurkan orang-orang untuk mengikuti hukum universal untuk tidak mendekati tanah di mana wabah sedang terjadi, dan jika wabah telah menyebar di tanah tempat seseorang tinggal, maka jangan pergi dari tempat itu, dan menanggungnya dengan sabar (Sahih Al-Bukhari, 3473). Terakhir, ada kabar gembira dari Nabi SAW kepada umatnya, dalam salah satu sabdanya bahwa Allah Ta'ala telah menjadikan wabah sebagai sumber rahmat bagi orang-orang beriman, karena jika seseorang pada saat wabah tinggal di negaranya dengan sabar, mengharapkan pahala Allah dan percaya bahwa tidak ada yang akan menimpanya kecuali apa yang telah ditulis Allah Ta'ala untuknya, dia akan mendapatkan pahala seorang syahid (Sahih Al-Bukhari 3474). Kesimpulannya, lima belas abad yang lalu Islam memberikan solusi yang jelas untuk masalah seperti pandemi.

Kata Kunci: Coronavirus; karantina dan isolasi, pandemic dalam Islam, *social distancing*, vaksin COVID-19

Introduction

Mankind has witnessed and endured pandemics and epidemics from time immemorial. From Islamic perspective, pandemics are clear signs from *Allah Subhanahu wa Tala*. In fact, in the present day world, they are the clear signs of *Yomul Qiyamah*, per Late *Mufti Saeed Palanpuri Sahib RA* (personal communication). Definitely, it is an expression of wrath from *Allah Subhanahu wa Tala*, per *Moulana Arshad Madani Sahib DB* (personal communication). But this epidemic of coronavirus, in true sense, per recorded history, is worldwide, it is a real Pandemic. Islam being a religion for the whole humanity and until *Yomul Qiyamah*, it definitely has solutions for universal problems like pandemics. Hence, the muslim ummah has

to go back to Qur'an and Sunnah to find solutions to major problems like pandemics or even for small problems of daily life. Islam per se, does not oppose use of modern tools for disease diagnosis and even use of medicines for cure. But, for any muslim, the faith in *Allah Tala* has to be paramount. Usage of diagnostic tools and medicines, falls under the category of *Asbaab*, (material help). Hence, belief in *Musabbibul Asbaab*, the creator of *Asbaab* i.e. *Allah Tala*, is the core part of *imaan* of a muslim. Using *Asbaab*, i.e. material help is an important *Sunnah* of our beloved Prophet *SAW*, and abandoning them as a sign of *Tawakkul* on *Allah Tala*, is total ignorance.

However, as far as Islam is concerned, having total belief in *Asbaab* (material help), is definitely *Shirk*. So, hence, as far as material help goes, for example, in the matter of quarantine, which were the hallmark of COVID-19 pandemic, interestingly, blessed *Abadith* of our beloved Prophet *SAW*, clear show us the way out. The effects felt due to this pandemic, witnessed throughout the world, is clearly mentioned in the *Qur'an* (*Al-Baqara* 155). As for, social distancing, interestingly Qur'an, discusses the true incident of *Samiri*, a follower of *Musa AS*, which has clear similitude to the situation the world face in this pandemic. Hence, to summarize, it is high time that the *Ummah* realizes the potential of the teachings of the *Qur'an* and *Abadith*, and try to use the advises mentioned there in, to solve the problems for itself and for the greater good of the whole world. Based on the teachings of the *Qur'an* and *Hadith*, the *Ummah* should be able to lead and show the world, the solutions for the situations like pandemics.

Materials and Methods

The work presented in this paper is qualitative and was conducted using the literature search, which involved gathering of various resources including reputed articles published online on the subject.

Result and Discussion

A. Pandemic, Epidemic, Bacteria and Virus

A pandemic (from Greek *pan*, "all" and *demos*, "people") is an epidemic of an infectious disease that has spread across a large region, for instance multiple continents or worldwide, affecting a substantial number of people. An epidemic (from Greek *epi* "upon or above" and *demos* "people") is the rapid spread of disease to a large number of people in a given population within a short period of time. Bacteria (singular bacterium) are a type of biological cell (ICTV, 2020). Typically, a few micrometers in length, bacteria have a number of shapes, ranging from spheres to rods and spirals. Bacteria inhabit soil, water, acidic hot springs, and the deep biosphere of the earth's crust. A virus is a submicroscopic infectious agent that replicates only inside the living cells of an organism (Wu, 2020). Viruses infect all types of life forms, from animals and plants to microorganisms, including bacteria (Koonin et al., 2006).

More than 9,000 virus species have been described in detail ("Virus Taxonomy: 2021 Release) of the millions of types of viruses in the environment (Breitbart & Rohwer, 2005). Viruses are found in almost every ecosystem on Earth and are the most numerous types of biological entity (Edwards & Rohwer, 2005).

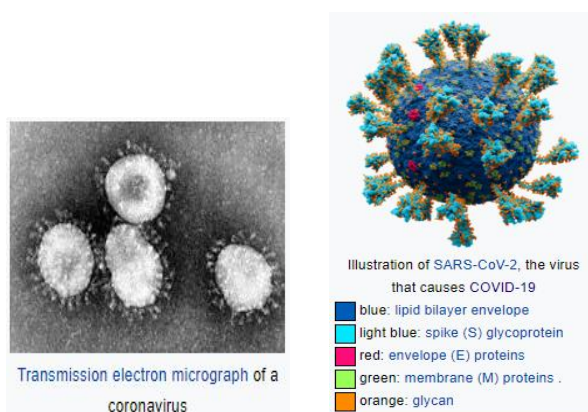


Figure 1. Electron micrograph and schematic diagram of coronavirus (National Institutes of Health, 2020)

Coronavirus, official name is SARS-COV-2 (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus). Coronaviruses (as shown in figures 1 and 2) are a group of related RNA viruses that cause diseases in mammals and birds. In humans and birds, they cause respiratory tract infections that can range from mild to lethal. Mild illnesses in humans include some cases of the common cold (which is also caused by other viruses, predominantly rhinoviruses), while more lethal varieties can cause SARS, MERS, and COVID-19. Generally, there were no vaccines or antiviral drugs available for use against coronaviruses until the COVID-19 pandemic which broke out in late 2019. The diameter of this virus range between 80 nanometers (nm) to 120 nanometers (nm).

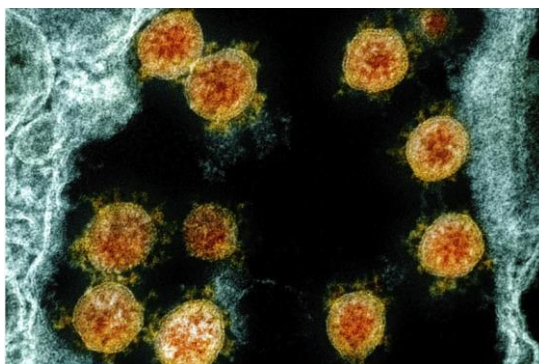


Figure 2. Electron micrograph of coronavirus. This electron microscope image made available and color-enhanced by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Integrated Research Facility in Fort Detrick, Md., in 2020, shows Novel Coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 virus particles, orange, isolated from a patient (National Institutes of Health, 2020)

The diameter of the coronavirus range between 80-120 nanometers (nm). What is a nanometer? 1 meter (m) = 1,000 millimeters (mm) = 1,000,000 micrometers (μm) = 1,000,000,000 nanometers (nm). Or in other words, one meter contains 100 centimeters (cm) or one thousand millimeters or one million micrometers (μm) or one billion nanometers (nm). Another way of calculation is: 1 meter (m) = 100 centimeters (cm); 1 centimeter (cm) = 10 millimeters (mm); 1 millimeter (mm) = 1,000 micrometers (μm); and 1 micrometer (μm) = 1,000 nanometers (nm). How many coronaviruses could be accommodated in a space of one millimeter (mm)? One millimeter (mm) = 1,000 micrometers (μm) = 1,000,000 nanometers (nm). So, $1,000,000/80 = 12,500$ virus particles in one millimeter (mm). Or $1,000,000/120 = 8,333$ viruses in one millimeter (mm)

فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ

An atom bomb or a nuclear missile or for that matter any missile is not going to exterminate this virus or for that matter any virus or bacterial!

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a contagious disease caused by Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). See Figure 3, for the details of how coronavirus infects human cells. For details about the genome of the coronavirus refer Figure 4. The first case was identified in Wuhan, China in December 2019 (Page et al., 2021). Common symptoms of COVID-19 include fever (Islam, 2021), cough (Islam, 2020), fatigue, breathing difficulties, and loss of smell and taste (Saniasiaya & Islam, 2021). Symptoms begin one to fourteen days after exposure to the virus (Oran & Topol, 2021). COVID-19 spreads via a number of means, primarily involving saliva and other bodily fluids and excretions. These fluids can form small droplets and aerosols, which can spread as an infected person breathes, coughs, sneezes, sings, or speaks (CDC, 2020). The standard diagnosis method is by real-time reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (rRT-PCR) from a nasopharyngeal swab (Nucleic Acid Amplification Tests (NAATs), 2020).

In addition to vaccines, preventive measures include social distancing, quarantining, ventilation of indoor spaces, covering coughs and sneezes, hand washing, and keeping unwashed hands away from the face. The use of face masks or coverings has been recommended in public settings to minimize the risk of transmissions as presented in Figure 3 & 4.

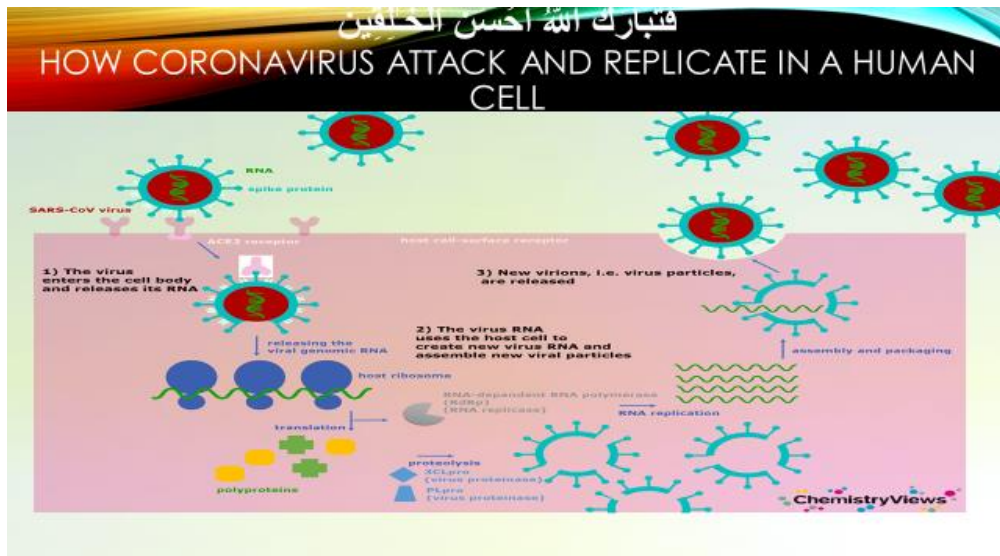


Figure 3. Schematic diagram of how coronavirus attack and replicate in a human cell (The team, 2022)

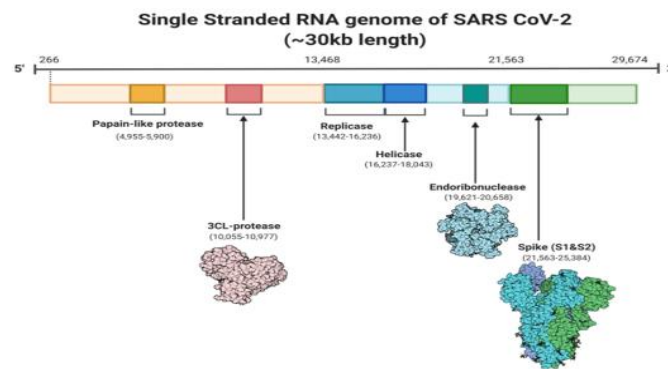


Figure 4. Schematic diagram of the genome of the coronavirus (Singh, 2022)

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ

In 1918, we had a Pandemic and it was Plague. The whole humanity was helpless at that time. Today we got a real Pandemic of COVID 19. And interestingly, even after tremendous development and scientific and medical technology, still we feel helpless and desperate! Isn't it amazing? *Allah Subhanahu wa Tala* does not need an atom bomb or a nuclear missile, or for that matter any heavy armament to punish the people. This time, He used one of His submicroscopic creation, Coronavirus, which per our scientific knowledge is the smallest and least valuable known living thing. It is so small and so invaluable, that it is between living and non-living being. The irony is that, this smallest and least valuable creation has already consumed and still consuming trillions and trillions of dollars worldwide. A huge lesson for the humanity to learn, and heed the warning!

B. Quarantine

Quarantine is a restriction on the movement of people and goods which is intended to prevent the spread of disease or pests. It is often used in connection to disease and illness, preventing the movement of those who may have been exposed to a communicable disease. The word quarantine comes from *quarantena*, meaning "forty days", used in 14th–15th-century Venetian and designating the period that all ships were required to be isolated before passengers and crew could go ashore during the Black Death plague epidemic, (Mayer, 2018). Who could explain us and of course the whole world, what quarantine is, in a better way than our beloved Prophet *SAW* and his blessed *Sahaba RA*? And of course who could

practice quarantine in a better way than our beloved Prophet *SAW* and his blessed *Sabaha RA*? In one *Hadith Sharif*, narrated by *Usama bin Zaid RA*:

حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الْعَزِيزِ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي مَالِكٌ، عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ الْمُنْكَدِرِ، وَعَنْ أَبِي النَّضْرِ، مَوْلَى عُمَرَ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَنْ
عَامِرِ بْنِ سَعْدِ بْنِ أَبِي وَقَّاصٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، أَنَّهُ سَمِعَهُ يَسْأَلُ، أُسَامَةَ بْنَ زَيْدٍ مَادَا سَمِعْتَ مِنْ، رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ
فِي الطَّاعُونَ فَقَالَ أُسَامَةُ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ " الطَّاعُونَ رَجِسٌ أُرْسِلَ عَلَى طَائِفَةٍ مِنْ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ أَوْ عَلَى
مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ، فَإِذَا سَمِعْتُمْ بِهِ بِأَرْضٍ فَلَا تَقْدُمُوا عَلَيْهِ، وَإِذَا وَقَعَ بِأَرْضٍ وَأَنْتُمْ بِهَا فَلَا تَخْرُجُوا فِرَارًا مِنْهُ قَالَ أَبُو النَّضْرِ لَا
يُخْرَجُكُمْ

Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, "Plague was a means of torture sent on a group of Israelis (or on some people before you). So if you hear of its spread in a land, don't approach it, and if a plague should appear in a land where you are present, then don't leave that land in order to run away from it (i.e. plague). *Sahih Al-Bukhari* 3473. In another reference reported by *Amir bin Rabi'ah*:

وَحَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ يَحْيَى، قَالَ قَرَأْتُ عَلَى مَالِكٍ عَنْ ابْنِ شِهَابٍ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ، عَامِرِ بْنِ رَبِيعَةَ أَنَّ عُمَرَ، خَرَجَ
إِلَى الشَّامِ فَلَمَّا جَاءَ سَرْعٌ بَلَغَهُ أَنَّ الْوَبَاءَ قَدْ وَقَعَ بِالشَّامِ . فَأَخْبَرَهُ عَبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنُ عَوْفٍ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ
عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ " إِذَا سَمِعْتُمْ بِهِ بِأَرْضٍ فَلَا تَقْدُمُوا عَلَيْهِ . وَإِذَا وَقَعَ بِأَرْضٍ وَأَنْتُمْ بِهَا فَلَا تَخْرُجُوا فِرَارًا
مِنْهُ . فَرَجَعَ عُمَرُ بْنُ الْخَطَّابِ مِنْ سَرْعٍ وَعَنْ ابْنِ شِهَابٍ عَنْ سَالِمِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ أَنَّ عُمَرَ إِنَّمَا انْصَرَفَ بِالنَّاسِ
مِنْ حَدِيثِ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنِ عَوْفٍ

Umar RA went to Syria and as he came to *Sargh*, information was given to him that an epidemic had broken out in Syria. *Abd al-Rahman bin Auf RA* narrated to him that Prophet *SAW* had said: When you hear of its presence in a land, don't move towards it, and when it breaks out in a land and you are therein, then don't run away from it. So *Umar bin Khattab RA* came back from *Sargh*. *Salim bin Abdullah* reported that *Umar RA* went back, along with people on hearing the hadith reported on the authority of *Abd al-Rahman bin Auf RA*. *Sahih Muslim* 2219d. Hence, in the matter of quarantine, the Prophet *SAW*, encouraged the people to follow the universal law of not to approach a land where an epidemic is prevailing, and if an epidemic has broken out in a land where one is staying, then do not leave that place, and bear it patiently.

C. Effects of the Pandemic

Five events universally predominant during this pandemic were, fear, hunger, loss of wealth, loss of lives and loss of provisions. And what *Allah Ta'la* says in the *Qura'n*, is amazing.

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ ﴿١٥٥﴾

Meaning:

“And We will surely test you with something of fear and hunger and a loss of wealth and lives and fruits, but give good tidings to the patient” (*Q.S Al Baqarah: 155*).

In *tafseer* of the above verse, *Mufti Shafi RA* in his famous book *Ma'ariful Qura'an* says: Whatever their magnitude, accidents are unnerving. But a prior knowledge of such accidents makes it easier to bear them and be patient about them. Since the entire *Ummah* is addressed here, the *Ummah* should realize that the world is a place of hardships and labour; it is a place of ordeal. It will not, therefore, amount to impatience if one does regard such accidents as either strange or a remote chance. And as the *Ummah*, generally, displays the spirit of patience in all its deeds, the reward of Mercy is common to everyone who strives to be patient. But as the quality and degree of patience varies from person to person, everyone will be rewarded individually according to and commensurate with his quality of patience.

In *Tafseer* of the above verse, *Mufti Ashiq Ilahi Buland Sharbri RA*, in his famous book *Anwarul Bayan* (Illuminating Discourses on the Noble Qur'an) says that: “Various Ways of Trials and Tests”. This world is a place of trials. The creation of life and death is, in itself, aimed at testing the human, as Allah says in

Surah Mulk, 'Sanctified is that Being in whose control is sovereignty and Who is capable of all things; He who created death and life to test who amongst you carries out the best actions, [verses 1 and 2]. Allah states in Surah Muhammad, "Most definitely We will examine you until it is ascertained who are the ones who truly strive in Allah's Path from amongst you; and who are the ones who endure; and that We may have knowledge of you [verse 31].

In the verse under discussion, numerous methods of emphasis are employed in the form of the letters "*Lam*" and "*Nun Thaqila*." These imply that the tests are inevitable. Sometimes they will occur in the form of fear, at times one will encounter hunger, while it may also happen that one's wealth will decrease. Lives of friends, relatives, children or grandchildren may be lost, while sometimes produce and provisions may decrease. In this verse, all the main categories of calamities have been enumerated. Fear of enemies, droughts, floods, earthquakes, loss in trade, collapse of buildings, theft, misplacement of wealth, its destruction, closing down of factories, shut down of machinery, power failures, death of near and dear ones, spread of pestilence, deficiency in harvests, their destruction, their infestation by insects, plagues of locusts, etc. Inference is made to all of these. The Believer (*Mu'min*) perseveres through all of these. In the face of any adversity, he realizes that it is a test from *Allah* and remains content with the decision of Allah, aspiring for the rewards promised for it. Tribulations also occur as an admonition for any sins committed, or as an atonement for any evil deeds. It may also be a test or a means of elevating a person's rank. All these facts are clearly expounded in the *Qur'an* and *Abadith* of the Holy Prophet *SAW*.

The Benefits of Calamities to the Believer (*Mu'min*). A verse of *Surah Nisa* states, "Whosoever perpetrates an evil act shall meet its retribution/ [verse 123] The books of *hadith* and exegesis (*tafsir*) report that *Sayyidina Abu Baker RA* once asked, "Oh, the Holy Prophet *SAW*, is there any way to salvation after the revelation of this verse (i.e., verse 123 of *Surah Nisa*) since every evil deed will be accorded its punishment?" The Holy Prophet *SAW* replied, "Oh *Abu Baker* may Allah be merciful to you. Do you never fall ill? Does not any difficulty nor any grief afflict you? Does no calamity befall you?' He responded, "Definitely these things do occur." The Holy Prophet then said, "By means of all this, your sins are removed." In another narration, the Holy Prophet *SAW* is reported to have told him, "Oh *Abu Baker* if you and your companions will receive atonement for your sins in this very world so that you may meet Allah in a condition that no sin remains to your account. As for the *Kafir* (non-believer), all his sins will be accumulated so that he receives their full chastisement in the Hereafter." [*Ibn Kathir*, v.1, p.557-558]. Verse 30 of *Surah Shura* reads, "The adversities that afflict you are a result of the deeds you earn, and *Allah* pardons a great deal. *Sayyidina Abu Musa Al-Ashari RA* reports that the Holy Prophet *SAW* said, "The little or great difficulty which a person encounters is due to his sins, but what *Allah* overlooks is much more. Thereafter the Prophet *SAW* recited the above verse, "The adversities that afflict you are a result of the deeds you earn, and *Allah* pardons a great deal." [*Tirmidhi*]. *Sayyidina Abu Hurairah RA* reports that the Holy Prophet *SAW* said, "*Allah* afflicts that person with difficulty for whom He intends good" [*Bukhari*, v.2, p.843] Another *Hadith* reads, "Whenever *Allah* fixes a high rank for His servant which he cannot attain by his actions, *Allah* afflicts him with a difficulty. *Allah* then affords him the endurance, implementing which, he becomes worthy of that particular rank." [*Abmad* and *Abu Dawud* as recorded in *Mishkatul Masabih*/p. 137]. *Sayyidina Abu Hurairah* also narrates that the Holy Prophet *SAW* said "Whatever difficulty afflicts a Believer (*Mu'min*) will be an atonement for his sins, whether it be a sickness, worry, grief, or even a thorn prick." [*Bukhari*, v.1 p.843]. *Sayyidah Ummus Sa'ibi* was a lady *Sahabiya*. The Holy Prophet *SAW* found her ill one day and asked her what was the cause of her condition. She replied that it was fever and cursed it. The Holy Prophet *SAW* said, "Do not curse the fever because it eradicates the sins of people just as a furnace eradicates dirt from metal." [*Muslim*, v. 2, p. 319]. *Sayyidina Anas RA* narrates that the Holy Prophet *SAW* said, "When *Allah* intends good for any servant, He speeds up the punishment in this world. On the contrary, when *Allah* intends harm for a person, He withholds the punishment which will fully be given to the person on the Day of Judgment." [*Tirmidhi* in the Chapter of Abstinence]. *Sayyidina Abu Hurairah RA* narrates that the Holy Prophet *SAW* said, "The Believer (*Mu'min*) male and female constantly experience difficulties in their lives, wealth and children until they meet *Allah* in such a condition that no sin remains in their account." [*Tirmidhi* in the Chapter of Abstinence"].

Sayyidina Anas RA transmits the *hadith* in which the Holy Prophet *SAW* said, "The Muslim who loses three small children will be made to enter Heaven (*Jannah*) on account of the mercy which *Allah* bestows upon these children." [*Bukhari* v.1, p.167]. *Sayyidina Abu Sa'Id Khudri RA* says that once the Holy Prophet *SAW* addressed a group of women. Amongst other advices given he said, "The person who loses three small children will have them become a barrier for him/her on the Day of Judgment." A woman asked concerning the person whose two children had passed away. The Holy Prophet *SAW* responded by saying, "When one loses two children then this will also give the same benefit." [*Bukhari* v.1 p.167]. *Sayyidina Mu'adh bin Jabal RA* narrates that the Holy Prophet *SAW* said, "The couple who loses three children will be made to enter Heaven (*Jannah*) by the grace of *Allah*." The companions queried regarding the loss of two children, to which the Holy Prophet *SAW* replied, "The same applies for them too." Someone then asked regarding one child, to which the reply was given that the same would apply to them as well. Then the Prophet *SAW* added, "I swear by the Being in whose control lies My life that even the unformed foetus will pull its mother into Heaven (*Jannah*), if the mother had aspired for her reward at the time of its death." [*Mishkatul Masabih*" p. 153]. No difficulty or calamity should be a cause of fear and grief to a Believer (*Mu'min*). It is a source of good for him since a little difficulty in this temporary world will be a source of evading chastisement in the Hereafter and reaping its bounties. This can only be to a person's benefit and is a cheap bargain. One is required to be patient, aspire for the rewards and to be content with the decision of *Allah*. This does not mean that a person should not ask *Allah* to remove the difficulty since such a supplication was a practice of the Holy Prophet *SAW*. One should always ask *Allah* for safety from all troubles and never ask *Allah* to afflict one with calamities and diseases. If it does come, one should be tolerant.

After discussing the inevitability of trials, *Allah* declares. 'And give glad tidings to the patient ones. Thereafter the attributes of the 'patient ones' are discussed in the following verses, "Those who, when any adversity afflicts them, they say, verily to *Allah* we belong and to Him is our return. This phrase includes many dimensions and is a great source of consolation. At the outset, the reciter admits that he belongs to *Allah*. Since a person is the slave of *Allah*, and is His creation, he has to be totally content with *Allah's* decision. We belong to *Allah* and whatever life and wealth *Allah* chooses to take from us, these also belong to Him. Whatever *Allah* chooses to do with His creation is His right and no one has the authority to object nor vent his displeasure, neither by heart nor by tongue. Once, when the grandson of the Holy Prophet *SAW* was about to leave the world, the daughter of the Holy Prophet *SAW* called for her father. He sent *Salam* to her with the following message, "Verily to *Allah* belongs that which He takes and that which He gives. Everything has a prescribed lifespan. So be patient and hope for *Allah's* reward." [*Bukhari*, v.1, p.17 1]

D. Social Distancing

Is social distancing a punishment or a trial from *Allah*. Let go back to the Qur'an, and check what *Allah Tala* says on the issue of social distancing. It is amazing. *Qur'an* while mentioning the story of *Musa AS* states that, *Musa AS* cursed his deviant follower *Samiri*, that he will be telling people throughout his remaining life that not to touch him. Definitely a similitude to the social distancing being practiced worldwide during this pandemic. To quote the verse of the *Qur'an*:

قَالَ فَاذْهَبْ فَإِنَّ لَكَ فِي الْحَيَاةِ أَنْ تَقُولَ لَا مِسَاسَ وَإِنَّ لَكَ مَوْعِدًا لَنْ يُخْلَفَهُ وَانظُرْ إِلَى إِلٰهِكَ الَّذِي ظَلْتَ عَلَيْهِ عَاكِفًا لَنُْحَرِّقَنَّهُ ثُمَّ لَنَنْسِفَنَّهُ فِي الْيَمِّ نَسْفًا ﴿٩٧﴾

Meaning:

"[Moses] said, "Then go. And indeed, it is [decreed] for you in [this] life to say, 'No contact.' And indeed, you have an appointment [in the Hereafter] you will not fail to keep. And look at your 'god' to which you remained devoted. We will surely burn it and blow it into the sea with a blast" (QS. Taha: 97).

In *tafseer* of the above verse, *Mufti Shafi RA* in his famous book *Ma'ariful Qura'an* says: The punishment proposed by *Sayyidna Musa AS* for *Samiri* in this world was that everyone should sever all contacts with him and not to come near him, and he too was commanded not to touch anyone. Thus, he was condemned to spend the rest of his life away from all social contacts - like a wild animal. Whether this punishment was awarded to him by *Sayyidna Musa AS* by means of a law which was binding on *Samiri* as well as on the *Bani Isra'il*, or whether *Samiri* was smitten by some peculiar affliction which deterred people from making any physical contact with him, is not known. Some traditions have it that *Sayyidna Musa AS* had laid a curse on *Samiri* so that if anyone touched him then both the parties came down with fever (*Ma'alim*). Thus, he spent all his life hiding from people and whenever he saw someone approaching him, he would call out (Don't touch me). It is mentioned in *Ruh ul-Ma'ani*, on the authority of *Al-Babr ul-Mubit* that initially *Sayyidna Musa* had intended to execute *Samiri* but Allah stopped him because *Samiri* was a very generous person and helped people who were in distress.

In *Tafseer* of the above verse, *Mufti Ashiq Ilahi Buland Sharbri RA*, in his famous book *Anwarul Bayan* (Illuminating Discourses on the Noble Qur'an) says that: *Sayyidina Musa AS* Speaks to *Samiri*, Curses him and Burns the Calf. After addressing the *Bani Isra'il* and *Sayyidina Harun AS*, *Sayyidina Musa AS* turned his attention towards *Samiri*. "Musa said, 'What have you to say, O *Samiri*?' He replied, 'I saw what they did not see. So I took a handful from the tracks of the messenger and, cast it. Thus did my soul entice me.' While some commentators mention that *Samiri* was from the *Bani Isra'il*, others maintain that he was from the Copts of Egypt and crossed the sea with the *Bani Isra'il* pretending to be a believer. When *Jibril AS* used to come on horseback to assist the *Bani Isra'il*, *Samiri* noticed that every piece of ground on which the horse stepped used to flourish. Realizing that the ground was unique, he placed a handful of it in the calf. He referred to this when he told *Sayyidina Musa AS*, "So. I took a handful from the tracks of the messenger and cast it." The question is asked how did *Samiri* recognize *Jibril AS*? The reply is quite simple. Just as *Allah* made him realize that the tracks of the horse caused the earth to flourish, so too did *Allah* cause him to realize the identity of the horseman. The author of "*Durrul Manthur*" and others have reported that *Samiri* was born to a woman of the *Bani Isra'il*. Fearing that Pharaoh (*Fir'aun*) would kill her child, she hid him in a cave. *Allah* sent *Jibril AS* to tend to the child. *Allah* also caused honey to emerge from the one finger and milk from the other for the child. Therefore, *Samiri* could recognize *Jibril AS*. The soil (dust taken beneath the horse of *Jibril AS* has life giving power.) taken from beneath the horse of *Jibril AS* caused the calf to give off the lowing sounds of a cow. The foolishness of the polytheists causes them to worship anything that seems to be against the norm. Therefore, the *Bani Isra'il* were so taken aback by the realistic nature of the calf that they failed to realize that even if it were real, it was still not worthy of being worshipped. It is often the trickery of many false saints that they exert themselves to practice a strange skill so that people fall head over heels for them. Addressing *Samiri*, "Musa AS said, 'Go! (Because you beguiled people to be attracted to you) Your punishment in this world shall be that you wander around saying, 'Do not touch!'" *Allah* made it such that whenever someone touched *Samiri*, or he touched anyone, both persons would be immediately affected by severe fever. Therefore, people stayed far from him and he vehemently avoided them.

That was his punishment in this world. With regard to the Hereafter, *Sayyidina Musa AS* told him, "You certainly have an appointment (with punishment) that you cannot miss." The Hindus of India hold beliefs with regard to the worship of cows and touching. It is possible that they were influenced by the *Bani Isra'il* and *Samiri* in these beliefs. They could have attached some customary importance to the punishment of *Samiri*, resulting in their present-day practices. To emphasize to *Samiri* and to all his followers that their calf was not worthy of worship, *Sayyidina Musa AS* told him, 'Look at your deity that you remained so devoted to. We will surely burn it and then scatter it well in the ocean'. It is also possible that the Hindus derived their practice of cremation and casting the ashes into a river from this. Another question that arises is that how could the calf burn to ashes when it was made from gold and silver? It ought to melt instead. Some commentators have mentioned that the sand that caused it to make sounds transformed it into a living calf of flesh and blood. Other commentators say that the calf was first broken to pieces before being burnt. However, this will still not cause it to burn to ashes. The best reply therefore, is to say that Allah caused the gold and silver to become ashes. Nothing is impossible for Him. ["*Ma'alimut*

Tanzil" v. 3 p. 63]. *Sayyidina Musa AS* continued to say, "Your deity is only *Allah*, besides Whom there is no other deity. His knowledge encompasses everything." The last sentence refutes the beliefs of all polytheists because if their gods and idols have no knowledge of even themselves, how can they possibly compare with *Allah*, whose "knowledge encompasses everything?"

D. The Good News

Finally, there are some good tidings from our beloved Prophet *SAW* to the whole *Ummah*, till *Yaum Al-Qiyamah*. It has been narrated on the authority of *Abu Huraira RA* (through another chain of transmitters) that the Messenger of Allah *SAW* said:

وَحَدَّثَنِي زُهَيْرُ بْنُ حَرْبٍ، حَدَّثَنَا جَرِيرٌ، عَنْ سُهَيْلٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ " مَا تَعُدُّو الشَّهِيدَ فَيُكْمٌ " . قَالُوا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ مَنْ قُتِلَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ قَالَ " إِنَّ شُهَدَاءَ أُمَّتِي إِذَا لَقِيتُ " . قَالُوا فَمَنْ هُمْ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ قَالَ " مَنْ قُتِلَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ وَمَنْ مَاتَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ وَمَنْ مَاتَ فِي الطَّاعُونَ فَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ وَمَنْ مَاتَ فِي الْبَطْنِ فَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ " . قَالَ ابْنُ مِقْسَمٍ أَشْهَدُ عَلَى أَبِيكَ فِي هَذَا الْحَدِيثِ أَنَّهُ قَالَ " وَالْعَرِيقُ شَهِيدٌ

Whom do you consider to be a martyr among you? They (the Companions) said: Messenger, of *Allah*, one who is slain in the way of *Allah* is a martyr. He said: Then (if this is the definition of a martyr) the martyrs of my *Ummah* will be small in number. They asked: Messenger of *Allah*, who are they? He said: One who is slain in the way of *Allah* is a martyr; one who dies in the way of *Allah*, is a martyr; one who dies of plague is a martyr; one who dies of cholera is a martyr. *Ibn Miqsam* said: I testify the truth of your father's statement (with regard to this tradition) that the Prophet (*SAW*) said: One who is drowned is a martyr. (*Sahib Muslim* 1915a)

In another *Hadith Sharif*, narrated by *Aisha RA* wife of the Prophet *SAW*:

حَدَّثَنَا مُوسَى بْنُ إِسْمَاعِيلَ، حَدَّثَنَا دَاوُدُ بْنُ أَبِي الْفُرَاتِ، حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ بُرَيْدَةَ، عَنْ يَحْيَى بْنِ يَعْمَرَ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ - رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا - رَوْجِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَتْ سَأَلْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَنِ الطَّاعُونَ، فَأَخْبَرَنِي " أَنَّهُ عَذَابٌ يَبْعَثُهُ اللَّهُ عَلَى مَنْ يَشَاءُ، وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ جَعَلَهُ رَحْمَةً لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ، لَيْسَ مِنْ أَحَدٍ يَفْعُ الطَّاعُونَ فَيَمُوتُ فِي بَلَدِهِ صَابِرًا مُحْتَسِبًا، يَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ لَا يُصِيبُهُ إِلَّا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَهُ، إِلَّا كَانَ لَهُ مِثْلُ أَجْرِ شَهِيدٍ

Meaning:

"I asked Allah's Messenger *SAW* about the plague. He told me that it was a punishment sent by Allah on whom he wished, and Allah made it a source of mercy for the believers, for if one in the time of an epidemic plague stays in his country patiently hoping for Allah's Reward and believing that nothing will befall him except what Allah has written for him, he will get the reward of a martyr" (*Sahib al-Bukhari* 3474)

In a similar research paper, Hirani (2020) has reached the same conclusion, concurring with our findings.

E. Vaccines

Vaccines are biological preparation that provides active acquired immunity to a particular infectious disease (Iowa Administrative Code, 2019). A vaccine typically contains a biological preparation from disease-causing microorganism, or since the beginning of the 21st century, made synthetically that resembles it. This preparation is often made from weakened or killed forms of the microbe, its toxins, or one of its surface proteins. The agent stimulates the body's immune system to recognize the agent as a threat and starts producing antibodies against it, so as to further recognize and destroy any of the microorganisms associated with that agent that it may encounter in the future. As of now four vaccines for covid-19 have been produced in the U.S.A. Pfizer-BioNtech, Moderna, Johnson & Johnson and Bivalent Vaccines. The Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine includes the following ingredients: messenger ribonucleic acid (mRNA), lipids ((4-hydroxybutyl)azanediyl)bis(hexane-6,1-diyl)bis(2-hexyldecanoate), 2 [(polyethylene glycol)-2000]-N,N-ditetradecylacetamide, 1,2-Distearoyl-sn-glycero-3-

phosphocholine, and cholesterol), potassium chloride, monobasic potassium phosphate, sodium chloride, dibasic sodium phosphate dihydrate, and sucrose. The Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine contains the following ingredients: messenger ribonucleic acid (mRNA), lipids (SM-102, polyethylene glycol [PEG] 2000 dimyristoyl glycerol [DMG], cholesterol, and 1,2-distearoyl-sn-glycero-3-phosphocholine [DSPC]), tromethamine, tromethamine hydrochloride, acetic acid, sodium acetate, and sucrose.

Now the question is whether these vaccines are *halal* or not. Based on the ingredients in both the vaccines, and per the claims by both the companies (Pfizer and Moderna), sources of all the ingredients are either plants or are synthetic. Per the claims from Pfizer and Moderna, nothing is sourced from animals or humans, in both the vaccines. Hence, based on the ingredient information, and based on the claims by both Pfizer and Moderna, both these vaccines appear to be Halal. **والله أعلم بالصواب**

The Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 Vaccine includes the following ingredients: recombinant, replication-incompetent adenovirus type 26 expressing the SARS-CoV-2 spike protein, citric acid monohydrate, trisodium citrate dihydrate, ethanol, 2-hydroxypropyl- β -cyclodextrin (HBCD), polysorbate-80, and sodium chloride. Caution about Johnson & Johnson vaccine. It contains ethyl alcohol (2.04 mg/0.5 ml of vaccine), derived from corn and vegetables, and not from grapes. Per the company, the vaccine is not *halal* certified, however, it does not contain gelatin or mercury.

Oxford-AstraZeneca (UK), has also produced a covid-19 vaccine. This vaccine, as claimed by the company was produced in the Human Embryonic Kidney 293 cell line (HEK293). Hence, the reason, possibly this vaccine from the *Shariah* point of view may not be *halal*. **والله أعلم بالصواب**

However, *Wifaqul Ulama*, UK has issued *fatamas*, declaring that Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna and Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccines are all *halal* (<https://www.wifaqululama.co.uk/>). As for the Russian Sputnik V COVID-19 vaccine, we do not have the details about the ingredients, except that it is a viral two-vector vaccine based on two human adenoviruses – a common cold virus – containing the gene that encodes the full-length spike protein (S) of SARS-CoV-2 to stimulate an immune response.

For the Chinese CoronaVac Covid-19 Vaccine, we don't have ingredient information, except that it is an inactivated vaccine. An inactivated vaccine (or killed vaccine) is a vaccine consisting of virus particles, bacteria, or other pathogens that have been grown in culture and then killed to destroy disease producing capacity (Petrovsky & Aguilar, 2004). That means, it contains dead corona virus. So, we are suspicious that possible, from *Shariah* point of view, it may not be *Halal*. **والله أعلم بالصواب**

The Indian Covaxin Covid-19 Vaccine. The ingredients for this vaccine are as follows: l-histidine, l-Histidine hydrochloride monohydrate, magnesium chloride hexahydrate, polysorbate 80, Ethanol, sucrose, sodium chloride, disodium edetate dihydrate (EDTA), water for injection (<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/>). We don't know the source of these ingredients. Nonetheless, like the Chinese vaccine, this vaccine also contains dead corona virus! Hence, we are doubtful whether this vaccine also, like the Chinese one, is *halal* or not. **والله أعلم بالصواب**

Conclusion

The pandemic of COVID-19, has opened a huge vistas of thought provoking ideas and knowledge, not just in the fields of science and medicine, but also of course in the field of Islamic studies. Hence, as Islam is the eternal religion to be followed in the world, it should have solutions to all the problems, the humanity will face till the day of judgement. Take the case of pandemics and epidemics. Rightfully, Islam has clear cut solutions to such problems till the eternal day. Now, it is the responsibility of the *Ummah*, to educate the ignorant masses among the *ummah*, and of course the whole world about this important and well known fact. Albeit, Islam never deny the usage of *Asbaab* (material help), as it is part of the permanent *Sunnah* of our beloved Prophet SAW to take help from the *Asbaab*, the *Ummah* has to always bear in mind the rich resources of *Qur'an* and *Alhadith Sharif* to solve any of their problems. Hence, we as *Ummah*, have to develop this well deserve habit, but unfortunately, most often, ignored; to see first of all, what *Shariah* teaches us about a particular issue, and how it advises us to solve a problem. The earlier the *Ummah* learn this important lesson, the better.

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