



Khutbah on the Turkey-Syria Earthquakes

Following the events of 6 February 2022/ 11 Rajab 1444, Sh. Dr. Ali Ahmed (Senior Adjudicator, ICE) and Sh. Dr. Sajid Umar (Senior Adjudicator, ICE) share a sermon that can be utilised for Friday prayers

FIRST KHUTBAH

الحمد لله الذي خلق السموات والأرض، وجعل الأرض قراراً ومهاداً، وفراشاً وبساطاً، ألقى فيها رواسي أن تميد بكم، وجعل السماء سقفاً محفوظاً. أحمده على نعمه الظاهرة والباطنة، وأشهد أن لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له، له الخلق والأمر وهو على كل شيء قدير. وأشهد أن محمداً عبده ورسوله، أعرف الخلق بربه، وأنقاهم له، صلى الله عليه وعلى آله وأصحابه ومن تبعهم بإحسان، وسلم تسليماً كثيراً. أما بعد

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ ١٠٢

“O you who believe! Fear Allah as He should be feared, and do not die except as Muslims [in submission to Him].” [1]

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ ۖ إِنَّ زَلْزَلَةَ السَّاعَةِ شَيْءٌ عَظِيمٌ ١

“O mankind! Fear your Lord and be dutiful to Him! Verily, the earthquake of the Hour (of Judgement) is a terrible thing.” [2]

O servants of Allah... In the past few months, we have seen and heard of events that require us to reflect and ponder over them. We have seen major floods in Pakistan and Afghanistan, torrential rains in India and Nigeria, and recently: two major earthquakes strike the Levant.

This week has been extremely hard for the Ummah. Indeed, the eyes have teared, the hearts have become saddened, and our cry is one of *lā Hawla wa lā Quwwata Illā Billāh*.

This life, in its entirety, is a test, and sometimes tests befall the globe at magnitudes beyond the ability of any scale of measure.

It is especially at difficult times like these, that we reflect and ponder, and seek guidance from our scholars about Islam's guidance on the *what* and *why* of these catastrophes, and also search for the life lessons that we can derive from them in a meaningful and transformative manner.

The topic of today's khutbah is no doubt the destructive earthquakes that hit parts of Turkey and Syria this week. SubhānAllāh. These earthquakes took place within a time span of nine hours and caused over twelve thousand people to die, with the final death toll expected to be in the tens of thousands. They have caused major damage to infrastructure, loss of wealth and properties, and forced people to seek refuge outside of their homes, in the freezing cold, without food or drink.

Turkey's disaster management agency has said it has received reports of 11,342 collapsed buildings, of which 5,775 had been confirmed, and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has declared a three-month state of emergency in 10 of the country's provinces.

Despite rescue efforts continuing – with Turkey's government having deployed nearly 25,000 search and rescue personnel – emergency workers in both Turkey and Syria say they are completely overwhelmed.

This is an event that has turned security into fear, wealth into poverty, ease into difficulty, and turned life into death – all in the span of fleeting moments!

Without a doubt, it is a lesson for those who pay attention, and a reminder for the heedful, so that perhaps they may return to their Lord and Creator.

Firstly...

Brothers and sisters in Islam, it should be pointed out that irrespective of circumstance and situation, Islam teaches us that whatever Allah does is most-Wise and only to bring about good.

This life, in its entirety, is a test. And Allah Almighty tests those whom He loves, and through these tests, He forgives and raises ranks – making manifest which one of His servants are best in deeds.

Allah Almighty says:

الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا ۚ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفُورُ

“[He] who created death and life to test you [as to] which of you is best in deed – and He is the Exalted in Might, the Forgiving.” [3]

The Prophet (ﷺ) taught this Ummah to always be optimistic, and search for the positives that are hidden within difficulty, and that which at first glance appears holistically evil.

He (ﷺ) said:

عَجَبًا لِأَمْرِ الْمُؤْمِنِ إِنَّ أَمْرَهُ كُلَّهُ خَيْرٌ وَلَيْسَ ذَاكَ لِأَحَدٍ إِلَّا لِلْمُؤْمِنِ إِنْ أَصَابَتْهُ سَرَاءٌ شَكَرَ
فَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُ وَإِنْ أَصَابَتْهُ ضَرَاءٌ صَبَرَ فَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُ

“Amazing is the affair of the believer, for there is good for him in every matter. And this is not the case with anyone, except the believer. If something good happens to him, then he thanks Allah, and thus there is good for him, and if some harm befalls him, then he shows patience, and thus there is good for him.” [4]

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) also told us that through such trials and tests, a believer can earn the pleasure of Allah, depending on how s/he reacts to them:

إِنَّ عِظَمَ الْجَزَاءِ مَعَ عِظَمِ الْبَلَاءِ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ إِذَا أَحَبَّ قَوْمًا ابْتَلَاهُمْ فَمَنْ رَضِيَ فَلَهُ الرِّضَا وَمَنْ سَخِطَ
فَلَهُ السَّخَطُ

“Verily, with greater rewards come greater trials. Verily, when Allah loves a people, He will test them. Whoever is pleased will earn Allah’s pleasure, and whoever is displeased will have indignation and (Allah’s) wrath.” [5]

Sometimes, these calamities and trials are a means for a believer to gain nearness to his Lord. It may be a sign that Allah loves him/ her and wants good for them, despite them not understanding or seeing it.

He (ﷺ) said:

مَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ بِهِ خَيْرًا يُصِبْ مِنْهُ

“If Allah intends good for someone, then he afflicts him with trials.”
[6]

One of the religious benefits that can be derived from such a catastrophe is that there are many martyrs as a result of it, and Allah chooses those who are accepted in the ranks of the shuhadā.

Abu Hurayrah (radiy Allāhu ‘anhu) reported that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

الشُّهَدَاءُ خَمْسَةٌ الْمَطْعُونُ وَالْمَبْطُونُ وَالْغَرَقُوصُ وَصَاحِبُ الْهَذَمِ وَالشَّهِيدُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ

“The martyrs are five kinds: one who dies of plague; one who dies of stomach disease; one who drowns; one who dies under debris; and one who dies in the way of Allah Almighty.” [7]

Secondly...

As Muslims, we must take notice of phenomena such as these, and realise what is happening at a macroscale in terms of humanity and the universe at large.

In a ḥadīth found in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, upon the authority of Abu Hurayrah (radiy Allāhu ‘anhu), it is reported that the Truthful and Chosen one – al-Sādiq al-Masdūq (ﷺ) – said:

لَا تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ حَتَّى يُفْبَضَ الْعِلْمُ، وَتَكْثُرَ الزَّلَازِلُ، وَيَتَقَارَبَ الرَّمَانُ، وَتَظْهَرَ الْفِتَنُ، وَيَكْثُرَ
الْهَرْجُ - وَهُوَ الْقَتْلُ الْقَتْلُ - حَتَّى يَكْثُرَ فِيكُمْ الْمَالُ فَيَفِيضُ

“The Hour will not happen until knowledge is lifted, time passes quickly, earthquakes increase in number, fitan (tribulations) appear, and al-Harj increases in number.”

It was said,

“What is al-Harj, O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)?”

He (ﷺ) said,

“al-Qatl, al-Qatl (killing).” [8]

Learning a narration like this informs us of how close the coming of the Hour is!

Thirdly...

The happenings of earthquakes and other forms of destructive and disastrous events are the greatest evidence of the astonishing power of Allah, the Most High, for earthquakes are from among the soldiers of Allah that are subject to His order.

Through them, does He cause fear to enter the hearts of those whom He wills, teaches lessons to those whom He chooses, purifies those whom He raises, and brings those whom He loves closer to Him.

Allah Almighty says,

وَمَا يَعْلَمُ جُنُودَ رَبِّكَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ وَمَا هِيَ إِلَّا ذِكْرَى لِلْبَشَرِ

“And none can know the soldiers of your Lord, except He.” [9]

And He says:

وَلِلَّهِ جُنُودُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۖ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا

“To Allah belong the forces of the Heavens and the Earth.” [10]

Allah, the Most High, with these earthquakes, makes clear to His servants a plain reality: that the kingdom of the Heavens and the Earth is in His Hands, and that He is the Irresistible and Dominant One over His servants.

It is not just a natural phenomenon or the mere movement of tectonic plates! But, rather, it is the Will and Universal Decree of the Perpetually All-Powerful Lord, the One upon Whom everything in existence is dependent upon!

Everything is in His Hands, He has power over all things, and no-one in the Heavens and the Earth can weaken Him, the Most High.

Fourthly...

The appearance of earthquakes is a reminder to us all of a different reality that perhaps we too often forget. And that is the Day of Qiyāmah. The Day when all of the Earth will shake, and not only one part of it!

Allah Almighty says:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ ۖ إِنَّ زَلْزَلَةَ السَّاعَةِ شَيْءٌ عَظِيمٌ ۝ يَوْمَ تَرَوْنَهَا تَذْهَلُ كُلُّ مُرْضِعَةٍ عَمَّا أَرْضَعَتْ وَتَضَعُ كُلُّ ذَاتِ حَمْلٍ حَمْلَهَا وَتَرَى النَّاسَ سُكَرَىٰ وَمَا هُمْ بِسُكَرَىٰ وَلَٰكِنَّ عَذَابَ اللَّهِ شَدِيدٌ ۚ

“O mankind! Fear your Lord and be dutiful to Him! Verily, the earthquake of the Hour is a terrible thing. The Day you shall see it, every nursing mother will forget her nursling, and every pregnant one shall drop her load, and you shall see mankind as in a drunken state. Yet they will not be drunken, but the Torment of Allah will be severe.” [11]

And He says:

يَوْمَ يَفِرُّ الْمَرْءُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ - وَأُمِّهِ وَأَبِيهِ - وَصَاحِبَتِهِ وَبَنِيهِ - لِكُلِّ فِتْنَةٍ يَوْمَئِذٍ شَأْنٌ يُغْنِيهِ

“That Day shall a man flee from his own brother, and from his mother and his father, and from his wife and his children.” [12]

And He says:

يَوْمَ تَرْجُفُ الرَّاجِفَةُ - تَتْبَعُهَا الرَّادِفَةُ - فُلُوبٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَاجِفَةٌ - أَبْصَارُهَا خَاشِعَةٌ

“On the Day (when the first blowing of the Trumpet is blown), the Earth and the mountains will shake violently. There will follow it the subsequent [one]. Hearts, that Day, will tremble, their eyes humbled.” [13]

May Allah make us a people who take heed, and save us from the Day when the Earth is shaken in its ultimate quaking, and throws out all its contents, and humanity will cry, asking:

“What is wrong with it?!”

بارك الله لي ولكم في القرآن العظيم، ونفعني وإياكم بما فيه من الآيات والذِّكر الحكيم، أقول ما تسمعون واستغفر الله لي ولكم
وليسائر المسلمين من كلِّ ذنبٍ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ

SECOND KHUTBAH

الحمد لله رب العالمين، والصلاة والسلام على رسوله الأمين، وعلى آله وصحبه أجمعين، وعلى التابعين لهم بإحسان إلى يوم:
الدين. أمَّا بعدُ

O Servants of Allah, as Muslims, we are called upon to support and care for those afflicted with difficulty, and accordingly, we encourage our communities to respond to this disaster with supplication, compassion, and generosity. After all, the Ummah is one body, and when one part of the Ummah is struck, the rest of the Ummah has to react accordingly.

al-Nu'mān ibn Bashīr (radiy Allāhu 'anhu) reported that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said,

“The parable of the believers in their affection, mercy, and compassion for each other, is that of a body. When any limb aches, the whole body reacts with sleeplessness and fever.” [14]

And he (ﷺ) said,

أَحَبُّ النَّاسِ إِلَى اللَّهِ أَنْفَعُهُمْ لِلنَّاسِ وَأَحَبُّ الْأَعْمَالِ إِلَى اللَّهِ سُرُورٌ تُدْخِلُهُ عَلَى مُسْلِمٍ أَوْ تَكْشِفُ عَنْهُ كُرْبَةً أَوْ تَقْضِي عَنْهُ دَيْنًا أَوْ تَطْرُدَ عَنْهُ جُوعًا وَلَئِنْ أَمَشِي مَعَ أَخِيهِ فِي حَاجَةٍ أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِنْ أَنْ أَعْتَكِفَ فِي هَذَا الْمَسْجِدِ يَعْنِي مَسْجِدَ الْمَدِينَةِ شَهْرًا وَمَنْ كَفَّ غَضَبَهُ سَتَرَ اللَّهُ عَوْرَتَهُ وَمَنْ كَظَمَ غَيْظَهُ وَلَوْ شَاءَ أَنْ يُمْضِيَهُ أَمْضَاهُ مَلَأَ اللَّهُ عَرْ وَجَلَ قَلْبِهِ أَمْنَا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَمَنْ مَشَى مَعَ أَخِيهِ فِي حَاجَةٍ حَتَّى أَثْبَتَهَا لَهُ أَثْبَتَ اللَّهُ عَرْ وَجَلَ قَدَمِهِ عَلَى الصِّرَاطِ يَوْمَ تَرُلُ فِيهِ الْأَقْدَامُ

“The most beloved people to Allah are those who are most beneficial to people. The most beloved deed to Allah is to make a Muslim happy, or to remove one of his troubles, or to settle his debt, or to repel his hunger.

“That I walk with a brother regarding a need is more beloved to me than that I seclude myself in this mosque in Madinah for a month.

“Whoever swallows his anger, then Allah will conceal his faults. Whoever suppresses his rage, even though he could exact vengeance if he wished, then Allah will fill his heart with tranquillity on the Day of Resurrection. Whoever walks with his brother regarding a need until he secures it for him, then Allah Almighty will make his footing firm across the bridge on the day when feet are shaken.” [15]

This Ummah is a nation that was sent as a light for humanity, and an Ummah that was sent to give and be forthcoming. Our effort towards others is not only a means for them, but also a means for us, both in this life and the next.

In the ḥādīth of Abu Hurayrah (radiy Allāhu ‘anhu), he reported that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ),

“Whoever relieves the hardship of a believer in this world, Allah will relieve his hardship on the Day of Resurrection. Whoever helps ease one in difficulty, Allah will make it easy for him in this world and the Hereafter. Whoever conceals the faults of a Muslim, Allah will conceal his faults in this world and the Hereafter. Allah helps the servant as long as he helps his brother.” [16]

Secondly...

As you dig deep to assist our brothers and sisters in need, please ensure that you do so via reputable and trusted charities that will deliver the aid and help that is needed.

Also, helping those affected does not have to only be financial. It can be through logistics, contacts, and expertise. So, if you are a medical doctor, for example, and can donate your time and training to help those affected, then do so. If you are an influential person, or a person in authority, then use your resources to rally the Muslims within your sphere of influence to make an impactful difference.

Abdullah ibn ‘Umar (radiy Allāhu ‘anhu) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

“There are certain people whom Allah has created to be at the service of others – people whom others flee to for their needs. Such people will be safe on the Day of Judgement.” [17]

Lastly...

Let us not forget to raise our hands in despair, especially during the best of times, like the last third of the night, or the last hour on a Friday, and beg from the Lord of the Worlds for the affected, the Ummah of Muhammad, and yourselves!

Abu Darda (radiy Allāhu ‘anhu) reported that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said,

مَا مِنْ عَبْدٍ مُسْلِمٍ يَدْعُو لِأَخِيهِ بِظَهْرِ الْغَيْبِ إِلَّا قَالَ الْمَلَكُ وَلَكَ بِمِثْلٍ

“No Muslim servant supplicates for his brother behind his back, but that the angel says: ‘And for you the same.’” [18]

May Allah shower His mercy upon the deceased, and may He bless those tested by this event with a beautiful patience, and may Allah grant the affected ease and a quick and full recovery.

عِبَادَ اللَّهِ: صَلُّوا وَسَلِّمُوا عَلَى مَنْ أَمَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَالسَّلَامِ. فَقَالَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: (إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا

وقال صلى الله عليه وسلم): مَنْ صَلَّى عَلَيَّ صَلَاةً صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ بِهَا عَشْرًا

Source: Islam21c

Notes

[1] al-Qur’ān, 3:102

[2] al-Qur’ān, 22:1

[3] al-Qur’ān, 67:2

[4] Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, 2,999

[5] Sunan al-Tirmidhī, 2,396

[6] Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 5,321

[7] Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 2,829; Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, 1,914

[8] Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 1,036

- [9] al-Qur'ān, 74:31
- [10] al-Qur'ān, 48:7
- [11] al-Qur'ān, 22:1-2
- [12] al-Qur'ān, 80:34-37
- [13] al-Qur'ān, 79:6
- [14] Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 6,011; Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, 2,586
- [15] al-Mu'jam al-Awsaṭ, 6/139
- [16] Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 2,699
- [17] al-Haythami ("weak" according to al-Albāni)
- [18] Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, 2,732

Islamic Council of Europe

The Islamic Council of Europe (ICE) is a key provider of arbitration, reconciliation, and mediation services for Muslim communities in the West. The Council provides guidance and solutions based on Islamic principles, and aims to assist Muslims who seek to conduct their affairs in accordance to Islamic guidelines. ICE also offers advice and guidance on interpersonal, social, and financial issues, marriage validation or dissolution, and help with disagreement resolution between disputing parties, either amongst spouses, families, or business partners.