

Recent disastrous events – heedlessness of lessons - & mistakes in prayer

DISCLAIMER: This reminder was originally delivered in Arabic on Friday, 29th January 2010. Any meanings lost in translation are not to be attributed to the speaker as reminders are translated by volunteers. The mosque has no official translator and volunteers often have no formal qualifications to translate on the day. Please forgive any errors as they are from our human weakness and any right guidance is from God.

Oh Muslims, God (Glory Be To Him) is the one who runs the nature and controls the universe and the Muslim should accept God's will in order to achieve His satisfaction. Disasters hit both good and bad people, whoever resents his/her destiny gets God's discontent and whoever accepts achieves God's satisfaction: "Not a leaf falls but that He knows it. And no grain is there within the darknesses of the earth and no moist or dry [thing] but that it is [written] in a clear record." [Al-Anaam 6:59]. Believers consider such events as times for reflection as God says: "Indeed in that is a warning for whoever would fear [God]." [Al-Naaziaat 79:26]. Take lessons from such events to open your ears and awaken your hearts "And We send not the signs except as a warning." [Al-Israa 17:59]. So the Muslim should get affected by the latest earthquake in Haiti "Then why, when Our punishment came to them, did they not humble themselves? But their hearts became hardened" [Al-Anaam 6:43].

These earthquakes have a deep and meaningful lesson for those who reflect. It is a message for those who are deceived by their knowledge and think that they are capable of doing anything in this world. It is a message that they are weak compared to the power and the might of God and that they –with their knowledge- are incapable to push away the harm that God wrote upon them. Indeed, the human being –despite his knowledge, wealth and power- is so weak in front of God's power to the point that he can not bring a benefit to himself or push away harm! God says "and mankind was created weak." [Al-Nisaa 4:28] and in another verse "And you will not cause failure [to God] upon the earth or in the heaven. And you have not other than God any protector or any helper" [Al-Ankaboot 29:22].

These events also show the human the true reality, worth and fate of this world. It is vulnerable to extinction, destined to end and not but an enjoyment of delusion. It is a transient world and an enjoyment that does not last as God described by the verse "And what is the worldly life except the enjoyment of delusion" [Al-Hadeed 57:20] and "Say, The enjoyment of this world is little" [Al-Nisaa 4:77].

Oh Muslims, The earthquake in this life is a tragedy that can have devastating effects and is a catastrophic reality but at the same time it should rouse us to remember the Hereafter. This worldly life has anesthetised us with its enjoyments and kept us busy with its amusement and diversion to the extent that we think we will never leave it or death will never come or even that we are safe from that which hit other people around us. It seems that the Hereafter became like stories which are read and forgotten! God says "Then did you think that We created you uselessly and that to Us you would not be returned?" [Al-Muminoun 23:115]. By God, these earthquakes are not but warnings from God so we realise that this life is temporary and death is coming despite our wishes otherwise and that we are to leave this world at any moment, God says "And no soul perceives what it will earn tomorrow, and no soul perceives in what land it will die. Indeed, God is Knowing and Acquainted" [Luqman 31:34].

The earthquake in this life is a shaken ground and fallen buildings in which whoever destined to die dies and whoever destined to live lives but the earthquake of the Hereafter is completely different. It is an earthquake during which every nursing mother will be distracted from that [child] she was nursing, every pregnant woman will abort her pregnancy and people will appear intoxicated as a result of their fear and panic, God says "O mankind, fear your Lord. Indeed, the convulsion of the [final] Hour is a terrible thing. On the Day you see it every nursing mother will be distracted from that [child] she was nursing, and every pregnant woman will abort her pregnancy, and you will see the people [appearing] intoxicated while they are not intoxicated; but the punishment of God is severe" [Al-Hajj

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22:1-2]. People panic from the horror of the scene and the severity of the catastrophe that an earthquake causes in this life. However, this takes place in a limited piece of land whereas, when the earthquake of the Hereafter takes place - the earth will be replaced by another earth and the heavens as well, mountains will be blown away with a blast, seas will erupt and the sky will be split open! God says “[It will be] on the Day the earth will be replaced by another earth, and the heavens [as well]” [Ibrahim 14:48] and in another verse “And they ask you about the mountains, so say, “My Lord will blow them away with a blast. And He will leave the earth a level plain; You will not see therein a depression or an elevation” [Taha 20:105-107].

Second khutba

Prayer has great importance in the religion of Islam and a huge status with God. It is like a measure; whoever fulfils it completely will get a full reward from God and whoever does not, will be considered as the one who gives less than due [*Mutaffif*]. Abu Hurairah narrated that once the prophet (pbuh) entered the mosque; a man came in, offered the prayer and greeted the prophet. The prophet (pbuh) returned his greeting and said to him: "Go back and pray again for you have not prayed." The man repeated his prayer three times and every time the prophet (pbuh) said to him: "Go back and pray again for you have not prayed." The man then said: 'By Him Who has sent you with the truth! I do not know a better way of praying. Kindly teach me how to pray.' So the prophet (pbuh) taught him how to perform the prayer. The prophet (pbuh) did that because he noticed some mistakes the man did while praying which affected his prayer. Unfortunately, many Muslims nowadays do not perform the prayer in the full and complete way that pleases God and following the methodology that the prophet (pbuh) taught us in his saying "Pray as you have seen me praying" so they end up doing mistakes that either invalidate the prayer altogether or detract from their reward. Among these mistakes is what was mentioned in the hadith narrated by Abu Hurairah: 'My beloved messenger of God (pbuh) forbade me from three things. He forbade me from pecking like a rooster, squatting in the manner of a dog, and looking around like a fox'. Anyone doing one of these three things is mistaken. Pecking like a rooster is a metaphor for rushing the prayer with no tranquillity and pecking while prostrating like the rooster peck the ground. 'Squatting in the manner of a dog' is the way the dog sits, placing the posterior between the feet, firmly placing the top part of the feet upon the ground and resting the forearms in the manner of a dog. This position is forbidden and considered as a great mistake.

Some people also wait for the Imam to go up from the position of *Ruku* (bowing down) or *Sujud* (prostration) before joining him. If they enter the mosque while the Imam is bowing down or prostrating then they should not wait in the row to join the prayer after the Imam goes up in order as this is a big mistake and it is contrary to the tradition of the prophet (pbuh). The right thing is to join the Imam regardless of his position, Abu Qutadah narrated that the prophet (pbuh) said: "whenever you come for the prayer, you should come with calmness, pray whatever you get (with the people) and complete the rest which you have missed".

Among the common mistakes which some people do is not prostrating on the seven bodily parts reported by Ibn Abbas: 'The prophet was ordered to prostrate on seven bodily parts and not to fold back the hair or clothing: the forehead, the hands, the knees and the feet' [Bukhari]. Some people would raise their feet or put one foot over the other while prostrating which does not fulfil the condition of prostrating on the seven parts. Some might

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touch the ground with their noses but not the forehead and some might do the opposite and all of that is wrong. Some scholars have a fatwa that the prayer of the one who does not prostrate on the seven bodily parts –when capable- is invalid. So be aware of those mistakes and take care of your prayer as it is the main pillar of the religion.