

Are the Calamities in the World Punishments for Sins?

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When Turkey was struck by a severe earthquake on 17/08/99, followed by devastating earthquakes in several regions, many people started to say that those disasters were sent upon the people by Allah (swt) due to their disobedience and disbelief. On the other hand, there are those who interpret this purely as a physical phenomenon, where they do not find any relation between people's disobedience and what is happening in the universe in terms of natural events. Insha'aAllah, we will attempt in this short article to explain the correct concept and we ask Allah (swt) for guidance and reward.

From the onset, we should remember that this Universe including its bodies are the creations of Allah and He (swt) subjected them to the laws and regulations, which they do not violate, except if Allah (swt) wishes to break them, in exceptional situations, such as miracles, performed at the hands of Prophets (as). Allah (swt) has embodied in all of the creations, natures and characteristics, upon which they proceed and they do not depart from these.

Allah (swt) knows all that encompasses creations before He (swt) created them and He (swt) knows what encompasses completely and in all its parts. He (swt) is dominant over everything, for all times and in every place, be it small or big. Allah (swt) said, ﴿لَا يَغْرِبُ عَنْهُ مُنْقَالٌ﴾ **“Not absent from Him is an atom's weight within the heavens or within the earth...”** [TMQ Surah Saba':3]. And All is written in the Preserved Tablet (*lawhul Mahfudh*) as Allah (swt) said, ﴿لَا يُغَادِرُ صَغِيرَةً وَلَا كَبِيرَةً إِلَّا أَحْصَاهَا﴾ **“What is this book that leaves nothing small or great except that it has enumerated it?”** [TMQ Surah Kahf:49]. Therefore, nothing exists in the Universe or the nature randomly, i.e. without a purpose. Nothing happens by chance. Instead, everything is organized, arranged, decreed and judged by the All-Wise, All-Knowing.

This explains to us how Allah (swt) responds to the supplication of righteous people who invoke. Allah (swt) knows since eternity that His so and so servant will ask at a certain time with supplication. If He (swt) accepts his supplication, He (swt) will arrange and determine the matters in a way that the one who supplicates has his request fulfilled i.e. responding to the supplication is part of the Divine Decree (Al-Qada). This also applies to the blessings of Allah (swt) to His righteous servants. Allah (swt) knows since eternity that a certain group of His servants deserve His Blessings. So He (swt) arranged and determined the matters since eternity, so that the blessings reach them, without any need to break the laws of universe or violate the properties of things.

Similarly, Allah (swt) tests and punishes whom He wishes. He (swt) knows since eternity that some people deserve punishment in this world and that Allah (swt) will test another group of people, with some afflictions in this world. Allah (swt) is capable in all the matters and decreed them since eternity so that all these are done with properness and due time while His people are within the laws of universe and the properties of things.

The Sunnah of Allah had come to pass over the nations, who denied His Messengers by, punishing them for their denials. However, these punishments were after giving them sufficient evidence and time. Allah (swt) destroyed the people of Nuh (as), with flood only after Nuh (as) had stayed amongst them for nine hundred fifty years. Allah (swt) said, ﴿كَذَّبَتْ

قَبِلَهُمْ قَوْمٌ نُوحٍ فَكَذَّبُوا عَبْدَنَا وَقَالُوا مَجْنُونٌ وَازْدَجَرَ (9) فَدَعَا رَبَّهُ أَنِّي مَغْلُوبٌ فَانتَصِرْ (10) فَفَتَحْنَا أَبْوَابَ السَّمَاءِ بِمَاءٍ مُنْهَمِرٍ ﴿۱﴾ فَجَزْنَا الْأَرْضَ عُيُونًا فَالْتَقَى الْمَاءُ عَلَى أَمْرٍ قَدْ قُدِرَ (12) وَحَمَلْنَاهُ عَلَى ذَاتِ أَلْوَابٍ وُدُسِرٍ ﴿۲﴾

The people of Noah denied before them, and they denied Our servant and said, "A madman," and he was repelled. So he invoked his Lord, "Indeed, I am overpowered, so help". Then We opened the gates of heaven with rain pouring down. And caused the earth to burst with springs, and the waters met for a matter already predestined. And We carried him on a [construction of] planks and nails [TMQ 54:9-13]. Allah (swt) destroyed Firaun and his army in the Nile River after Musa and Harun (as) had invoked them with clear proofs and miracles for a sufficient time. Allah (swt) said, **﴿فَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰ أَنْ اضْرِب بِعَصَاكَ الْبَحْرَ فَانْفَلَقَ فَكَانَ كُلُّ فِرْقٍ كَالطَّوْدِ الْعَظِيمِ (63) وَأَزْلَفْنَا ثَمَّ الْأَخْرِينَ (64) وَأَنْجَيْنَا مُوسَىٰ وَمَنْ مَعَهُ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿۳﴾**

"Strike with your staff the sea," and it parted, and each portion was like a great towering mountain. And We advanced there to the pursuers." [TMQ As-Shura' 63-65]. And Aa'd, the people of Hud (as) was sent with screaming wind as Allah (swt) said, **﴿فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ رِيحًا صَرْصَرًا فِي أَيَّامٍ نَحِسَاتٍ لِنُذِيقَهُمْ عَذَابَ الْخِزْيِ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَلَعَذَابُ الْآخِرَةِ أَخْزَىٰ وَهُمْ لَا يُنصَرُونَ ﴿۴﴾**

So We sent upon them a screaming wind during days of misfortune to make them taste the punishment of disgrace in the worldly life; but the punishment of the Hereafter is more disgraceful, and they will not be helped." [TMQ Fussilat: 16]. And Samud, the People of Salih (as), were punished as Allah (swt) says, **﴿فَعَقَرُوا النَّاقَةَ وَعَتَوْا عَنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّهِمْ وَقَالُوا يَا صَالِحُ ائْتِنَا بِمَا تَكُفِّرُنَا بِالْجُنَاحِ وَالْجَبَلِ عَنَّا وَأَنْتَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿۵﴾**

So they hamstrung the she-camel and were insolent toward the command of their Lord and said, "O Salih, bring us what you promise us, if you should be of the messengers." So the earthquake seized them, and they became within their home [corpses] fallen prone." [TMQ Surah A'raaf: 77-78].

﴿إِنَّ مَوْعِدَهُمُ الصُّبْحُ ۚ أَلَيْسَ الصُّبْحُ بِقَرِيبٍ ﴿۶﴾﴾

And People of Lut (as) were punished as Allah (swt) said, **﴿إِنَّ مَوْعِدَهُمُ الصُّبْحُ ۚ أَلَيْسَ الصُّبْحُ بِقَرِيبٍ ﴿۶﴾﴾**

(81) فَلَمَّا جَاءَ أَمْرُنَا جَعَلْنَا عَالِيَهَا سَافِلَهَا وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهَا حِجَارَةً مِّن سِجِّيلٍ مَّنصُودٍ (82) مُسَوِّمَةً عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ وَمَا هِيَ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿۷﴾

"Indeed, their appointment is [for] the morning. Is not the morning near?". So when Our command came, We made the highest part [of the city] its lowest and rained upon them stones of layered hard clay, [which were] marked from your Lord. And Allah 's punishment is not from the wrongdoers [very] far." [Surah Hud: 81-83]. And the People of Shoaib (As) refused and challenged him to bring the punishment. Allah (swt) said, **﴿قَالُوا إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مِنَ الْمُسَحَّرِينَ (185) وَمَا أَنْتَ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُنَا وَإِن نُّظُنُّكَ لَمِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ (186) فَاسْقِطْ عَلَيْنَا كِسْفًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ إِن كُنْتَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ (187) قَالَ رَبِّي أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ (188) فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَخَذَهُم عَذَابُ يَوْمِ الظُّلَّةِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿۸﴾**

"They said, "You are only of those affected by magic. You are but a man like ourselves, and indeed, we think you are among the liars. So cause to fall upon us fragments of the sky, if you should be of the truthful." He said, "My Lord is most knowing of what you do." And they denied him, so the punishment of the day of the black cloud seized them. Indeed, it was the punishment of a terrible day." [TMQ Surah As-Shu'ara: 185-189].

And when Muhammed (saw) was sent, the Sunnah of Allah was changed to destroy the Kuffar, who denied His Messenger (saw). This change is apparent in the following divine texts:

﴿وَإِذْ قَالُوا اللَّهُمَّ إِن كَانَ هَذَا هُوَ الْحَقُّ مِنْ عِنْدِكَ فَأَمْطِرْ عَلَيْنَا حِجَارَةً مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ أَوْ ائْتِنَا بِعَذَابٍ ﴿۹﴾﴾

1- Allah (swt) said, **﴿وَإِذْ قَالُوا اللَّهُمَّ إِن كَانَ هَذَا هُوَ الْحَقُّ مِنْ عِنْدِكَ فَأَمْطِرْ عَلَيْنَا حِجَارَةً مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ أَوْ ائْتِنَا بِعَذَابٍ ﴿۹﴾﴾**

﴿وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَأَنْتَ فِيهِمْ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ مُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَهُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ ﴿۱۰﴾﴾

"And [remember] when they said, "O Allah, if this should be the truth from You, then rain down upon us stones from the sky or bring us a painful punishment." But Allah would not punish them while

you, [O Muhammad], are among them, and Allah would not punish them while they seek forgiveness.” [TMQ Surah Anfal: 32-33]

Those who invoked challenge were Al-Nadhar bin Al-Harith and Abu Jahl, the mouthpiece of the polytheists of Mecca. The response to them was not destruction, but the provision of security for both of them. The first security was the existence of the Prophet (saw) amongst them and the second security was forgiveness. Though the first security went away with the death of the Prophet (saw), the second security did not go away entirely.

2- Allah (swt) said, ﴿وَيَسْتَعْجِلُونَكَ بِالْعَذَابِ وَلَوْلَا أَجَلٌ مُّسَمًّى لَّجَاءَهُمُ الْعَذَابُ وَلَيَأْتِيَنَّهُمْ بَغْتَةً وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ﴾ (53) **And they urge you to hasten the punishment. And if not for [the decree of] a specified term, punishment would have reached them. But it will surely come to them suddenly while they perceive not. They urge you to hasten the punishment. And indeed, Hell will be encompassing of the disbelievers. On the Day the punishment will cover them from above them and from below their feet and it is said, "Taste [the result of] what you used to do."** [TMQ Surah Ankabut- 53-55]

Imam Qurtubi said in Al-Jamiu Ahkamul Quran 13/356: “Ibn Abbas (rali) said: “This means: “I (i.e. Allah) promise you (i.e. prophet) that I will not punish your nation and I will delay them until the Day of Judgement”. His explanation is the verse ﴿بَلِ السَّاعَةِ مَوْعِدُهُمْ وَالسَّاعَةُ﴾ **...But the Hour is their appointment [for due punishment]** [TMQ Surah Al-Qamar: 46].

3- Allah (swt) said, ﴿وَمَا يَنْظُرُ هَؤُلَاءِ إِلَّا صَيْحَةً وَاحِدَةً مَّا لَهَا مِنْ فَوَاقٍ﴾ (15) **And these [disbelievers] await not but one blast [of the Horn]; for it there will be no delay. And they say, "Our Lord, hasten for us our share [of the punishment] before the Day of Account"** [TMQ Surah Saad: 15-16]

Imam Qurtubi says in the Interpretation of the Verse: The word (ينظر) (i.e. look) means (ينتظر) i.e. await, the word (هؤلاء) (these) refers to the disbelievers of Makkah, the sentence (إلا صيحة واحدة) means the blast on the Day of Resurrection, the word (قطننا) (our share), Imam Mujahid and Qatada says that it means ‘our punishment’.

4- Allah (swt) said, ﴿كَتَبَ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ الرَّحْمَةَ لِيَجْمَعَنَّكُمْ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ﴾ **He has decreed upon Himself mercy. He will surely assemble you for the Day of Resurrection, about which there is no doubt** [TMQ Surah An’aam:12]. Qurtubi says in its Tafsir as: ﴿كَتَبَ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ﴾ **He has decreed upon Himself mercy**” i.e. He (swt) promised to be good and generous and therefore He (swt) gives respite.

5- Allah (swt) said, ﴿وَمَا مَنَعَنَا أَنْ نُرْسِلَ بِالْآيَاتِ إِلَّا أَنْ كَذَّبَ بِهَا الْأُولُونَ وَآتَيْنَا ثَمُودَ النَّاقَةَ مُبْصِرَةً فَظَلَمُوا بِهَا وَمَا نُرْسِلُ بِالْآيَاتِ إِلَّا تَخْوِيفًا﴾ **And nothing has prevented Us from sending signs except that the former peoples denied them. And We gave Thamud the she-camel as a visible sign, but they wronged her. And We send not the signs except as a warning.** [TMQ Surah Isra: 59]

Imam Qurtubi says in its Tafsir: “Nothing has prevented Us from sending signs, which they suggested, except that they denied them. So they were destroyed as those before them. And Allah (swt) delayed the punishment to the disbelievers of Quraish as He knew that some of them will believe and believers will be born from them (in the next generation)...they asked Allah to turn the Mount Safa into gold and move the mountain away from them. So Jibreel came down and said: **(Oh**

4- Allah (swt) said, **﴿وَرَبُّكَ الْغَفُورُ ذُو الرَّحْمَةِ لَوْ يُؤَاخِذُهُمْ بِمَا كَسَبُوا لَعَجَلْ لَهُمُ الْعَذَابَ بَلْ لَهُمْ مَوْعِدٌ لَنْ يَجِدُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ مَوْئِلًا﴾** **“And never think that Allah is unaware of what the wrongdoers do. He only delays them for a Day when eyes will stare [in horror].”** [TMQ Surah Ibrahim: 42]

5- The Prophet (saw) said, **«اليومَ عملٌ ولا حساب، وغداً حسابٌ ولا عمل»** **“Today is the day of deeds and no accounting, and tomorrow (i.e. Aakhira) is the day of accounting and no deeds”** [Bukhari].

These five divine texts clearly give the meaning that Allah (swt) did not make this world as a place of accounting, rather He (swt) made it as a place of deeds and accounting will be tomorrow i.e. the Day of Resurrection. Accounting is done on the Day of Resurrection, which is also named as Day of Accounting (i.e. the Day of Judgment). Allah (swt) said, **﴿وَأِنَّمَا تُؤْفَقُونَ﴾** **“you will only be given your [full] compensation on the Day of Resurrection”** [TMQ Surah Al-ilmran: 185]

As for the calamities afflicted upon the people in this world, they are sent according to the laws of the universe and properties of things, which Allah (swt) embodied them with. They afflict both believer and disbeliever, both pious and sinner.

And the calamities in this world are not necessarily a punishment from Allah (swt) for disobedience and it is not necessarily divine retribution upon the afflicted servant. This is the Saying of Allah (swt) addressing the believers: **﴿وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ﴾** **وَالنَّفْسِ وَالْثَّمَرَاتِ وَبَشِيرِ الصَّابِرِينَ (155) الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ (156) أُولَئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِنَ رَبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ﴾** **“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, Who, when disaster strikes them, say, "Indeed we belong to Allah, and indeed to Him we will return." Those are the ones upon whom are blessings from their Lord and mercy. And it is those who are the [rightly] guided”** [TMQ Surah Al-Baqara: 155-157]. And this is the saying of the Prophet (saw): **«أشدُّ الناسِ بلاءً الأنبياءُ ثمَّ الأمثلُ فالأمثلُ فَيَبْتَلِي الرَّجُلَ عَلَى حَسَبِ دِينِهِ فَإِن كَانَ دِينُهُ صُلْبًا اشْتَدَّ بَلَاؤُهُ وَإِن كَانَ فِي دِينِهِ رِقَةٌ ابْتَلِيَ عَلَى حَسَبِ دِينِهِ فَمَا يَبْرَحُ الْبَلَاءُ بِالْعَبْدِ حَتَّى يَبْرُكَهُ يَمْشِي عَلَى الْأَرْضِ مَا عَلَيْهِ خَطِيئَةٌ»** **“The most severely tried people are prophets, and then those nearest to them, and then those nearest to them. A man is tried according to his religion; The servant shall continue to be tried until he is left walking upon the earth without any sins.”** [Bukhari]

Hence, if a believer is afflicted while he is patient and looking for the rewards from Allah (swt), then the affliction is a blessing and not wrath. It will degrade his bad deeds and increase his good deeds on the Day of Resurrection.

As for the disbeliever who is afflicted, his affliction will neither erase his bad deeds nor increase his good deeds on the Day of Resurrection, as he has no good deeds on the Day of Resurrection. Allah (swt) said, **﴿وَقَدِمْنَا إِلَىٰ مَا عَمِلُوا مِنْ عَمَلٍ فَجَعَلْنَاهُ هَبَاءً مَنْثُورًا﴾** **“And We will regard what they have done of deeds and make them as dust dispersed.”** [TMQ Surah Furqan:23]. And Allah (swt): **﴿يَوْمَ يُعْرَضُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا عَلَى النَّارِ أَدْهَبْتُمْ طِبْيَاتِكُمْ فِي حَيَاتِكُمُ الدُّنْيَا وَاسْتَمْتَعْتُمْ بِهَا﴾** **“And the Day those who disbelieved are exposed to the Fire [it will be said], "You exhausted your pleasures during your worldly life and enjoyed them, so this Day you will be awarded the punishment of [extreme] humiliation because you were arrogant upon the earth without right and because you were defiantly disobedient.”** [TMQ 46:20]

The word Punishment (عذاب) comes in the Sharia texts with the meaning of Punishments, which Allah (swt) orders upon disobedient people, as in the Saying of Allah (swt), **﴿وَلْيَشْهَدْ﴾**

﴿وَيَذُرْهَا عَنْهَا الْعَذَابَ أَنْ تَشْهَدَ أَرْبَعَ شَهَادَاتٍ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّهُ﴾ [TMQ 24:2] and as in the Saying of Allah (swt), ﴿عَذَابُهُمَا طَائِفَةٌ مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾ **“And let a group of the believers witness their punishment.”** ﴿لَمِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ﴾ **“But it will prevent punishment (العذاب) from her if she gives four testimonies [swearing] by Allah that indeed, he is of the liars.”** [TMQ Surah Nur:8]

The words (عذاب *aathab* punishment), (عقاب *iqaab* punishment), (هالك *halaak* annihilation), (تدمير *tadmeer* destruction), (استبدال *istibdaal* replacement) come in the Sharia texts, with the meaning of what people get afflicted with, in terms of harm or calamities, based on the laws of universe, based on causes and effects.

It is as in the Saying of Allah (swt), ﴿لَوْلَا كِتَابٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ سَبَقَ لَمَسَّكُمْ فِيمَا أَخَذْتُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ﴾ **“If not for a decree from Allah that preceded, you would have been touched for what you took by a great punishment (عذاب).”** [TMQ Surah Anfal:68] i.e. abandoning to kill during the battle and hastening to capture in order to take ransom from the captives, may have led you to lose the battle and you would have become killed and captives.

It is as in the Saying of Allah (swt), ﴿قَاتِلُوهُمْ يُعَذِّبُهُمُ اللَّهُ بِأَيْدِيكُمْ وَيُخْزِهِمْ وَيَنْصَرِّكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَيَسْفِئِ صُدُورَ قَوْمٍ مُّؤْمِنِينَ﴾ **“Fight them; Allah will punish (يعذبهم) them by your hands and will disgrace them and give you victory over them and satisfy the breasts of a believing people”** [TMQ Surah Tawba:14].

It is as in the Saying of Allah (swt), ﴿وَإِذَا أَرَدْنَا أَنْ نُهْلِكَ قَرْيَةً قَرِيبَةً أَمَرْنَا مُتْرَفِيهَا فَفَسَقُوا فِيهَا فَحَقَّ عَلَيْهَا الْقَوْلُ﴾ **“And when We intend to destroy a city, We command its affluent but they defiantly disobey therein; so the word comes into effect upon it, and We destroy it with [complete] destruction. (تدميرًا)”** [TMQ Surah Isra:16]. And this is when civil wars erupts due to increased corruption or by the covetousness of external enemy when he sees the land is steeped in luxury and joy while neglecting the causes of strength and jihad.

It is as in the Saying of Allah (swt), ﴿وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا يَسْتَبَدِلْ قَوْمًا غَيْرَكُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَكُونُوا أُمَّتَكُمُ﴾ **“And if you turn away, He will replace (يستبدل) you with another people; then they will not be the likes of you.”** [TMQ Surah Muhammed: 38]. Turning away of Muslims from the Sharia of Allah will cause them to be weakened, which will allow their enemies to annihilate them, until another nation comes to hold firmly to the Deen of Allah (swt).

It is as in the Saying of Allah (swt): ﴿فَمَنِ اتَّبَعَ هُدَايَ فَلَا يَضِلُّ وَلَا يَشْقَىٰ (123) وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَن ذِكْرِي فَإِنَّ﴾ **“then whoever follows My guidance will neither go astray [in the world] nor suffer [in the Hereafter]. And whoever turns away from My remembrance - indeed, he will have a depressed life, and We will gather him on the Day of Resurrection blind.”** [TMQ Surah Taha: 123-124]. It is also like the saying of the Prophet (saw) when he was asked, ﴿أَنْهَلِكُ وَفِينَا الصَّالِحُونَ؟﴾ **“O Messenger of Allah! Shall we be destroyed (أنهلك) while there are righteous people amongst us?”** Prophet (saw) replied, «نعم، إذا كثُر الخبيث» **“Yes, if there is much wickedness”** [Bukhari & Muslim]. It is also as in the saying of the Prophet (saw), ﴿وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ لَتَأْمُرَنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَلَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ أَوْ لَيُوشِكَنَّ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَبْعَثَ عَلَيْكُمْ عِقَابًا مِنْهُ ثُمَّ تَدْعُوهُ فَلَا﴾ **“By Him in Whose Hand my life is, you either enjoin good and forbid evil, or Allah will certainly soon send His punishment (عقابًا) to you. Then you will make supplication and it will not be accepted”** (Tirmidhi & Ahmed).

These consequences are the results according to law of causation and not an accounting upon the sins. Instead, accounting for the sins will occur on the Day of Resurrection. It should be noted in the Saying of Allah (swt), ﴿وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَن ذِكْرِي فَإِنَّ لَهُ مَعِيشَةً﴾ **“وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَن ذِكْرِي فَإِنَّ لَهُ مَعِيشَةً ضَنْكًا وَنَحْشُرُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أَعْمَى (124) قَالَ رَبِّ لِمَ حَشَرْتَنِي أَعْمَى وَقَدْ كُنْتُ بَصِيرًا (125) قَالَ كَذَلِكَ أَتَتْكَ آيَاتُنَا فَنَسِيْتَهَا وَكَذَلِكَ**

﴿الْيَوْمَ تُنْسَى﴾ **“And whoever turns away from My remembrance - indeed, he will have a depressed life, and We will gather him on the Day of Resurrection blind.” He will say, “My Lord, why have you raised me blind while I was [once] seeing?”. [Allah] will say, “Thus did Our signs come to you, and you forgot them; and thus will you this Day be forgotten.”** [TMQ Surah Taha:124-126]. Turning away from the remembrance of Allah (i.e. Sharia of Allah) results in life to be depressed (i.e. miserable) in this world. This misery does not compensate its owner from the punishment on the Day of Resurrection. The worldly punishment that compensates the one who receives it, from the punishment on the Day of Resurrection, are the Sharia punishments (Uqubat) such as Hadd, Ta’zeer as these Uqubat (Sharia punishments) are prevention and compensation.

As for the calamities and diseases that occur due to causes and effects, they are not Sharia punishments (uqubat), compensating for the punishment on the Day of Resurrection. Consequently, one who commits adultery and is then afflicted with the disease of AIDS, for instance, cannot say that it is his punishment which Allah (swt) hastened for him in this world, in order to remove it on the Day of Aakhirah. Instead, the AIDS disease occurs when its causes exist and the punishment for adultery will remain on the Day of Judgment.

As for the matters that happen in the universe in which man has no role, such as earthquakes or hurricanes, floods, volcanoes, rain retention, intense heat, intense cold, and the impacts of their results, they are from the actions of Allah (swt) alone based on the Sunnah which He (swt) embodied them with. These matters will afflict the people without discrimination between either believer or disbeliever, or between righteous and evil people. It is not Sharr (evil) based on the Sharia meaning of Sharr (evil). With respect to believers, it is a test for them and if they remain patient and look for the reward, then it is khair (good) and a blessing. With respect to all the people, be it believers or disbelievers, it is a sign from Allah (swt) that calls them to think and contemplate. It is a warning for them of the consequence of their negligence, their indulgence in transient desires, their forgetfulness of what they are offered with in terms of bliss or abyss.

These events happen neither randomly nor by chance. They happen according to a decree and arrangement which Allah (swt) has chosen for them, with His Wisdom and Knowledge. O Allah, Bestow on us the goodness and blessings that please you in the past and future. ﴿رَبَّنَا لَا تُرِغْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ﴾ **“Our Lord, let not our hearts deviate after You have guided us and grant us from Yourself mercy. Indeed, You are the Bestower.”** [TMQ Surah Al-i Imran: 8]