

**THE HARMONIZING PERSPECTIVE OF
THEORETICALLY THEOLOGICAL (*AQIDAH*)-
BASED AND REALISTICALLY FIQHI-BASED IN
DEALING WITH PANDEMICS AND PLAGUES**

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Abstract

This research discusses the issue of pandemics in relation to the perceptions and views of Muslim theologians on the issues of evil and agony. Besides, it discusses the cause-effect relationship between infection and pandemics. It investigates how affliction affects humans as short and long-term chastisement as argued by the Mu'tazila, Asha'irah and Sufis on one hand and other Muslim philosophers on the other. The study discusses how such pandemics are addressed by Muslim scholars' jurisprudential interpretations in line with worship, financial and urban countermeasures. It also discusses some essential medical and spiritual approaches to be used as preventative countermeasures against pandemics. The study concludes that it is "faith" that motivates humans to be patient and that instills in them essential values and principles for happiness and self-satisfaction.

Keywords: theoretically theological (*'aqidah*)-based; realistically fiqhi-based; pandemics and plagues; destiny; Islamic value system.

Khulasah

Kajian ini membincangkan isu pandemik serta hubungannya dengan isu keburukan dan penderitaan

menurut pandangan ahli teologi Islam. Selain itu ia turut membincangkan hubungan sebab-akibat jangkitan dan wabak serta meneliti bagaimana penderitaan memberi kesan jangka pendek dan panjang kepada manusia seperti yang diujahkan oleh Mu'tazilah, Asha'irah dan Sufi di satu pihak dan ahli falsafah Muslim di pihak yang lain. Kajian turut membincangkan bagaimana wabak tersebut ditangani melalui tafsiran hukum ulama dan hubungan serta kesannya terhadap ibadah, kewangan dan perbandaran. Beberapa pendekatan perubatan dan kerohanian yang digunakan sebagai langkah pencegahan pandemik turut diutarakan. Kajian merumuskan bahawa 'keimanan' mendorong manusia untuk bersabar dan menyemai diri mereka dengan nilai dan prinsip penting untuk kebahagiaan.

Kata kunci: teori berasaskan teologi (akidah); realiti berasaskan fiqh; pandemik dan wabak; takdir; sistem nilai Islam.

Introduction

Human beings have been battling pandemics and plagues for ages. Throughout history, there have been many records and archives have documented a long series of plagues. The world has been badly affected by such pandemics, for instance, the plague of Justinian, the Black Plague, the Spanish Influenza, and Covid-19. The Muslim world has severely suffered from different types of plagues such as the plague of 'Amwas and other different pandemics spread throughout the Umayyad Era. The Abbasid and Mamluk eras witnessed another serious series of plagues such as the Black Plague which affected the whole world in 1348AD.¹

¹ Some historians claim that the quick collapse of the Umayyad states was due to a series of pandemics like the Gorab Plague (127AH), and the Qutaiba Plague (131AH), which took thousands of lives. This led the Abbasids to a quick victory (132AH). See Al-'Adawi Ahmad, *Plague in the Umayyad Period*, vol. 14 (Doha: Arab Centre

This study discusses different theological views concerning the issues related to woes tremendously affecting people such as evil and agony. The study discusses the relationship of such issues with the Divine Will. Besides, it discusses the cause-effect relationship between affliction, destiny, and the hereafter. The problem of the study also lies in the different ways Islamic jurists have addressed plagues. Besides, it investigates how congruently logical 'Muslim intellect' is in dealing with plagues since there are two different groups of scholars claiming that there are two ways of handling plague-related issues. These two approaches are theoretically theological-based and realistically fiqhi-based.

Therefore, the research aims to reveal how the Muslim mind dealt with societal health new issues, how it contributed to world experience in combating plagues and pandemics, and how this is related to the creedal vision and the Islamic value system. The research followed the analytical and critical approaches to reach its conclusions.

Pandemics and Divine Chastisement: Limits of Wisdom and Admonition

Throughout the history of humankind, human beings have been searching for real reasons behind the existence of evil in the world. Various philosophies have addressed such an issue. Some Greek philosophers addressed the issue of human suffering and pain.² Epicurus, for instance, doubted God's goodness and rejected the existence of divine providence. Epicurus could not comprehend the wisdom behind evil, so he believed that good is related to worldly pleasures, while there is no wisdom behind evil

for Research, 2018); Michael W. Dols, "Plague in Early Islamic History," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 94(3) (1974), 371-383.

² Muḥammad Sayyid al-Jalayand, *The Issue of Good and Evil in Islamic Thought* (Cairo: Al-Bab al-Halabi, 1981), 13.

since 'evil is evil'.³ According to the Islamic faith, pandemics, plagues, and disasters occur due to Allah's Almighty, since He is the main Creator with comprehensive knowledge of all the worlds. In respect with the evil that humans suffer from (especially death), Muslim scholars each have had their justification and interpretations as follows:

Mu'tazilah

They are among the first people having discussed 'evil' in their early response to dualism that they attribute to the god of darkness.⁴ They discuss evil in their writings of the principles of justice, which is the second of their five principles. They distinguish between evil actions performed by man's will and non-human evil that Allah has control over.⁵ They confess that Allah has ultimate power and that He is the only Lord and Sustainer providing His creatures with all necessary means of life.⁶

Mu'tazilites believe that Allah tests man for his own sake.⁷ Hence, they believe that there is good resulting from pandemics and affliction. That is "while an evil act could be seen as evil in its visible physical form, it could be possible to be good and beneficial in its core".⁸ Abu Hashim Abbad and Qadi 'Abd al-Jabbar believe that "we shall be compensated and rewarded in the Hereafter for

³ Frank Thilly, *History of Philosophy* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1931), 97-99.

⁴ John Wright Buckham, "Dualism or Duality?" *Harvard Theological Review* 6(2) (1913), 156-171.

⁵ Abu al-Hassan al-Ashari, *Maqalat al-Islamiyyin*, ed. Muhy al-Din 'Abd al-Hamid (Cairo: Maktabah al-Nahdah, 1950), vol.1, 287.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 216.

⁷ 'Abd al-Jabbar al-Hamdani, *Sharh al-Usul al-Khamsah*, ed. 'Abd al-Karim 'Uthman (Cairo: Matba'ah Wahbah, 1996), 138.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 132.

the pandemics and agony we have suffered from.⁹ Mu'tazilites believe that it is just Allah who knows about the time of man's death so as to man does not commit sins and evil."¹⁰ They believe that death caused by pandemics and calamities is attributed to Allah's act. However, they believe in 'Ali al-Jubba'i's opinion that there is wisdom behind such pandemics and calamities as the afflicted individuals are to be compensated either in this worldly life or in the Hereafter or in both.

Al-Ash'ariyah

In explaining the reasons and wisdom of pandemics, calamities, and chastisement, al-Ash'ari believes that Allah's acts should neither be questionable nor subjected to reasoning. Their belief results from their justification that Allah is the main Creator of this universe; so, he is responsible for all beings, woes, and pandemics. Besides, they believe that every cause has an effect, and every action has a reaction. In other words, every (un)desired act is "permissible" by Allah. In other words, "every permissible act is one of Allah's acts that take place completely of Allah's free will; otherwise, there would be no affliction related to the worldly life and the Hereafter."¹¹ Accordingly, Allah is the Doer of disasters and woes.¹² They, in their various works believe that evil plays a role in the perfection of the world, that is, if evil did not exist at all, the world would not be complete. In other words, the existence of evil grants humans an opportunity to realize what actions are considered evil and good.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 489. See, 'Abd al-Hakim al-Khalifi, *Mushkilah al-Shi'r 'ind Qudama' al-Mu'tazilah* (Qatar: Kuliyyah al-Shari'ah wa al-Qanun, Jami'ah Qatar, 1997), vol. 15, 242.

¹⁰ Ahmad Mahmud Subhi, *Moral Philosophy in Islamic Thought* (Cairo: Dar al-Ma'arif, 1983), 190.

¹¹ Al-Sanusi, *al-'Aqidah al-Wusta wa Sharhiha*, ed. al-Sayyid Yusuf Ahmad (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1992), 23.

¹² Al-Jalayan, *The Issue of Good and Evil*, 161.

Al-Ghazali emphasizes that "and for His sake, God Almighty emphasizes that 'My mercy precedes My anger.'" Therefore, His outrage lies in His will to do evil, which takes place by His will. His mercy is His will for good, and He wants evil not for evil, but the good resulting from 'evil'. Allah has precisely created everything which has an end. And everything Allah does never go against His mercy"¹³. The wisdom behind woes is for humans to repent and be grateful to Allah. Muslim's faith in fact increases when a Muslim experiences hardships and agony. That is woes strengthen Muslims' faith that they get closer to Allah and ask for His support and mercy.¹⁴ In fact, a good believer is often afflicted by tough tests in order to get his sins forgiven and rewarded by Allah Almighty.¹⁵

Sufism

Most of the Sufis belong to the doctrine of full acceptance of Allah's actions on man's destiny. This view adopts the belief that Allah is the only Doer whose actions are all good. Sufis also believe that humans are mandated to not follow worldly desires; yet they are given the freedom of choice. This is emphasized by the Shaykh of Sufism, al-Junayd, who states that "for man to be monotheist, he must be sure that it is Allah Who is responsible for every single action taking place on earth and that sincere

¹³ Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, *al-Maqṣad al-Asna fī Sharh Maʿani Asmaʾ Allah al-Husna* (Cyprus: Manshurāt al-Jaffan wa al-Jabi, 1407H), 65.

¹⁴ Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, *Ihyaʾ ʿUlum al-Din* (Beirut: Dar al-Maʿrifah, n.d.), vol. 4, 290.

¹⁵ Mohamed Abubakr A. Al-Musleh, "The Five Purposes of Creation and the Authentic Essence of Tarbiya (Education): A Study in Light of the Holy Qur'an," *Journal of College of Sharia and Islamic Studies*, 38(2) 2021. <https://doi.org/10.29117/jcsis.2021.0273>.

monotheism lies in man's acceptance of destiny."¹⁶ Ibn 'Ata'illah who formulated the Islamic theory of predestination (*al-qadr*) believes that it is only Allah who controls and takes care of everything.¹⁷ In line with this theory, some of the Sufis believe only that Muslims should accept destiny, and so there is no need for them to seek medication when affected by plagues and pandemics.

Relationship between Pandemics with the Divine Chastisement

According to theologians, pandemic is Allah's divine act. Allah bestows His blessings for sincerely devoted believers to deviate and be more tempted with worldly pleasures. The main question that this study attempts to answer is whether woes and plagues are a quick chastisement upon those who have indulged in sins and blasphemy? If the answer is yes, how could such woes be resulting from pandemics and plagues is explained against believers? In line with the Islamic thought, there are several interpretations for the woes hitting humankind as follows:

Woes Sent as Chastisement for Humans' Perpetration of Sins and Polytheism

Scholars argue that the main reason why woes descend upon infidels is to put an end for their faithlessness and sins. Hence, evil doers should learn from such calamities and consider them as a warning to repent and get closer to Allah by following His teaching. Allah says in the Qur'an "So We sent upon them the flood and locusts and lice and frogs and blood as distinct signs, but they were arrogant and were a criminal people" (7:133). Al-Razi says that the

¹⁶ 'Abd al-Karim al-Qushayri, *al-Risalah al-Qushayriyyah* (Cairo: Dar al-Ma'arif, n.d.), 2: 464.

¹⁷ Ibn 'Ata'illah, *al-Tanwir fi Isqat al-Tadbir* (Cairo: Al-Azhariyyah, 2007), 36.

five types mentioned in the verse are the flood, locusts, lice, frogs, blood, and thus plague is not mentioned.¹⁸

Another verse for the evildoers to remember Allah is what was sent upon some Israelis as mentioned in the Qur'an, "So We sent down upon those who wronged a punishment from the sky because they were defiantly disobeying." (Surah al-Baqarah 2:59). Al-Tabari mentioned that abomination is torment, and plague is a kind of abomination. He continues arguing that "suddenly twenty-four thousands of the Israelis died in one hour."¹⁹ It is also reported that the plague descended upon the sons of Israel. This goes in line with the story of Bal'am bin Ba'ura that enemies used women to seduce the sons of Israel, and they fell apart, so the horror of the plague descended upon them and many of them perished. Thus, they were an example to the rest.²⁰ It is stated that pandemics are a kind of immediate punishment that the evildoers are infected with to make them follow the right path. Al-Qurtubi states that "plague may infect those evildoers as chastisement and those good doers as martyrdom and mercy."²¹

Evils Sent for Remembrance and Return Back to Allah

Some scholars claim that woes affect people when becoming wrongdoers. Hence, the main purpose of calamities is to remind people to be righteous and God-fearing. In this respect, some interpreters mention what Allah says in the Qur'an that "Have you not considered those who left their homes in many thousands, fearing death? Allah said to them, 'Die'." (Surah al-Baqarah

¹⁸ Fakhr al-Din al-Razi, *al-Tafsir al-Kabir* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub Al-Ilmiyyah, 1990), vol.14, 347

¹⁹ Al-Ṭabari, *Tafsir al-Ṭabari*, ed. 'Abd Allah bin 'Abd al-Muhsin al-Turki. (Saudi Arabia: Dar Hijr, 2001), vol. 1, 729.

²⁰ Al-Qurtubi, *al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an*, (Cairo: Dar al-Kutub al-Misriyyah, 1964), vol. 7, 319.

²¹ Al-Qurtubi, *al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an*, vol. 3, 234.

2:243). Al-Razi and others say that this verse talks about the condition of some sons of Prophet Israel who were afflicted with plague. Many of them fled to a peaceful place where Allah took their souls out and then brought them to life again²².

In the biblical texts, specifically in the book of Samuel, it is narrated that "would you prefer that seven years of famine come upon you in your land? Or will you flee three months before your enemies, and they follow you? Or will there be three days of epidemic in your land? David chose the pandemic. Therefore, the Lord sent a pandemic to the sons of Israel from morning until the appointed time. As a result, seventy thousand men died in Dun and Bi'r Al-Saba."²³

Plagues as a Mercy for Believers

According to plague-related Hadiths, Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah argue that plague could be a divine mercy that expiates good believers' sins and that grants them the status of martyrdom as a result of their endurance and strong faith. Many Hadiths emphasize the aforementioned, one of which is that "plague is a punishment which Allah sends upon whomsoever He wills, but Allah has made it as a mercy to the believers. Anyone who remains in a town which is plagued with pestilence maintaining patience expecting the reward from Allah and knowing that nothing will befall him other than what Allah has foreordained for him, he would receive a reward of *Shahid* (martyr)."²⁴

²² Al-Ṭabari, *Tafsir al-Ṭabari*, vol. 4, 414; Fakhr al-Din al-Razi, *al-Tafsir al-Kabir*, vol. 6, 495.

²³ *The Old Testament*, The Second Book of Samuel, al-Ishah, 13-24. Ibn Hajar mentions this story in *Fath al-Bari*, *Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari*. (Beirut: Dar al-Ma'rifah, 1397), vol. 10, 183.

²⁴ Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, *al-Musnad*, eds. Shu'ayb al-Arna'ut & 'Adil Murshid (Beirut: Dar al-Risalah, 2001), 25212.

Similarly, Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) says that "Every Muslim who dies of plague is credited with martyrdom."²⁵ In this regard, all plague-related Hadiths stress that woes could benefit Muslims since the worldly life is just a passing gate to eternal life. That Muslims believe in the Hereafter makes them feel content and satisfied at times of calamities. To Muslims, plague is believed to be a punishment against those evildoers and a mercy for those devoted believers, since it brings them closer to Allah, which therefore ensures their success in this world and the hereafter.²⁶

Plagues and Epidemics and the Divine Act

Muslim jurists and physicians have had a heated controversy concerning the issues related to the countermeasures used to fight infection. For both groups to support their own opinions physicians have adopted Islamic philosophy while jurists have adopted discourse-based approach of the al-Asha'irah and al-Maturidiyyah. The controversy among philosophers was very severe since they argue that infection could result from either divine, human, or climatic-related factors. Philosophers' opinions can be summarized as follows:

Approach of al-Masha'i Philosophers

These philosophers believe that each action has a reaction. Al-Ghazali believes that orthodoxy of al-Masha'i philosophers has something in common with the Mu'tazilah's orthodoxy²⁷ who believe in the existence of

²⁵ Al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, tahqiq, Muhammad Zahir al-Nasir. (Beirut: Dar Tuq al-Najah, 1442), Kitab al-Jihad wa al-Sir, Chapter of "Seven Types of 'Martyrdom' other than 'Death' in the Battlefield "jihad", Hadith number 2830; Ibn Hajar, *Fath al-Bari, Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari* (Beirut: Dar al-Ma'arif, 1397), vol. 10, 193.

²⁶ Zohaib Ahmad & Arzoo Ahad, "COVID-19: A Study of Islamic and Scientific Perspectives," *Theology and Science* 19(1) (2021), 36.

²⁷ Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, *Tahafut al-Falasifah*, ed. Sulayman Dunya (Cairo: Dar al-Ma'arif, 1965), 233.

infection. For this reason, most Muslim physicians, such as Ibn Sina and al-Razi believe that diseases are contagious. In fact, these philosophers follow Galen's orthodoxy to address infection and diseases.²⁸ Muslim jurists have strongly disagreed with the philosophers since experimental medicine was of little effect, and since it was very hard to collect data regarding those having passed away due to plague.

Those experiencing the Black Plague in 1348 believed that diseases and plagues are contagious, for instance, a third of Europe, North Africa and the Levant's population died due to the Black Plague. Ibn Khatimah al-Andalusi extensively wrote about the Black Plague in his book *Tahsil Gharad al-Qasid fi Tafsil al-Marad al-Wafid*. He argues that the Black Plague, widely spread and killed large numbers of people, resulted from people's direct contact and from people buying the infected individuals' uncleaned clothes.²⁹

Through induction, reason and observation, al-Gharnati wrote about the aforementioned issue in his treatise *Muqna'ah al-Sa'il 'an al-Marad al-Ha'il*.³⁰ Many doctors have also attributed pandemics to air pollution. This theory goes back to the Galen. Ibn Sina followed Galen in that air pollution is the reason of the spread of pandemics and plagues in many countries.³¹ Hence, many scholars believe that it is necessary for people to breathe fresh clean air and to have healthy diet. Ibn al-Nafis

²⁸ Ibn Sina *al-Qanun fi al-Tibb*, tahqiq, Muhammad Amin al-Danawi (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah, 1999), vol. 2, 649; al-Razi, *al-Hawi fi al-Tibb* (Beirut: Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-'Arabi, 2002), vol. 7, 416.

²⁹ Ibn Khatimah, *Tahsil Gharad al-Qasid fi Tafsil al-Marad al-Wafid* (Arabic manuscript, no.1785 from the Library of El Escorial in Spain).

³⁰ Al-Gharnati, Muhammad ibn 'Abd Allah. *Muqna'ah al-Sa'il 'an al-Marad al-Ha'il*. tahqiq, Hayah Qarat. Morocco: Dar al-Aman, 2015.

³¹ Ibn Sina, *al-Qanun fi al-Tibb*, vol. 3, 165.

believes that there are two reasons for the spread of pandemics: 1) earth-related factor resulting from the stagnant water and the decomposition of carcasses and corpses, and 2) air-related factor resulting from climate change. Due to such air pollution the abundance of rain is tremendously affected. Thus, it is hard to make accurate prediction of when it is going to rain. These opinions are adopted by some scholars having worked hard to explain the issue of infection and pandemics. These scholars could distinguish between the interpretations of astrology and omens that many philosophies believed in at the time.

To summarize, Muslim jurists and scholars having adopted discourse-based approach have had their own pieces of evidence to respond to 'physicians'. They believe that natural and climatic factors are the main reason for the spread of plagues. They also believe in the divine power and will. Besides, they strongly defend their orientation claiming that plague can even spread in places with fresh air and water. Among these scholars is al-'Asqalani, Ibn Hajar al-Haythami and al-Suyuti.³²

In line with the theological approach of Muslim jurists' explanation of infection, this study argues that Muslim scholars have two different opinions as follows:³³

Those who believe there is no infection: This group argues that plague infection is of Allah's creation. One of the greatest supporters of this view is al-Tahawi who clearly explains the relationship between all infection-related Hadiths. In other words, al-Tahawi believes that we should not believe in the idea that a disease is contagious.

Al-Hafiz Ibn Hajar refers in his book to the Prophet's Hadith that "there is no infection, no *hama*, no star

³² Al-Suyuti, *Ma Rawah al-Wa'un fi Akhbar al-Ta'un*, tahqiq, Muhammad 'Ali al-Bar (Damascus: Dar al-Qalam, 1996), 147.

³³ Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, *Badh al-Ma'un fi Fadl al-Ta'un*, tahqiq, Ahmad al-Katib (Riyadh: Dar al-'Asimah, 1984), vol. 4, 28.

promising rain, and no serpent in a hungry belly." In this regard, Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) says that "there is no 'Adwa (no disease is conveyed from the sick to the healthy without Allah's permission), nor *Safar*, nor *Hama*." A Bedouin stood up and said, "Then what about my camels? They are like deer on the sand, but when a mangy camel comes and mixes with them, they all get infected with mangy." The Prophet (PBUH) said, "Then who conveyed the (mange) disease to the first one?"³⁴

Those who believe that infection does not happen on its own, but by Allah's will: One of those who support this opinion is al-Subki who recommends that healthy individuals should not mingle with the infected ones.³⁵ He refers to Prophet's Hadith narrated by Abu Hurayrah, that "a man with sick camels should not let them graze or drink alongside healthy ones."³⁶ Similarly, al-Khatabi states that "from a medical point of view, fresh clean air is very essential for man's health; while polluted air is the most harmful for body and the most obvious cause to dangerous diseases that affect humans tremendously. In fact, it is Allah's will that plays a pivotal role in protecting man's health".³⁷ Al-Razi referring back to the warning-related verse (Surah al-Nisa' 4:101), comments that "in line with the aforementioned verse, it is important for us to be careful of enemies." That is, it is necessary for humans to avoid all risky diseases by seeking necessary treatment.³⁸

³⁴ Al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, Book of Medicine, Chapter Bab La Sifir.

³⁵ Ibn Hajar al-Haytami, *Al-Fatawa al-Fiqhiyyah al-Kubra* (Beirut: Dar al-Kitab al-'Ilmiyyah, 2002), vol. 4, 28.

³⁶ Al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, Book of Medicine, Chapter La 'Adwah, Hadith number 5774.

³⁷ Al-Khatabi, *Ma'alim al-Sunan Sharh Sunan Abi Dawud* (Egypt: Al-Matba'ah al-'Ilmiyyah, 1932), vol. 1, 299.

³⁸ *Ibid.*.

The Effects of Theological-based Approach on Jurisprudential Countermeasures of Pandemics

Treatment of plague: Taking precious countermeasures versus acceptance of destiny

Many Muslim scholars have differently interpreted the Prophet's Hadith that people should neither go in nor get out of the area infected by plague.³⁹ Muslim scholars have adopted different opinions as follows:

- i. The necessity to stay in and not to go out of the plague-infected area:

Shafi'i supports this opinion, arguing that it is prohibited for anyone to get in or get out of the plague-infected area. Ibn Khuzaymah claims that it is one of the heinous sins for an individual to either get in or get out of a plague-infected area.⁴⁰ This is according to Ibn Khuzaymah, considered as if one is fleeing from enemies during the battlefield. He refers to Prophet's Hadith that "if you get wind of the outbreak of plague in a land, do not enter it; and if it breaks out in a land in which you are, do not leave it."⁴¹ Al-Khatibi comments on the Hadith, saying that "do not enter it" implies that a Muslim should follow Allah's commandments, while "do not leave it" implies that a Muslim should surrender to what Allah has destined and wanted.⁴²

- ii. Permission to go out of a plague-infected area:

Some scholars of the Maliki school of thought support this opinion. Ibn Rushd, for instance emphasizes that "it is necessary for people to not leave a plague-inflicted area

³⁹Al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, Book of Medicine, Chapter Bab La Sifir.

⁴⁰Ibn Hajar al-Haytami, *Al-Fatawa al-Fiqhiyyah al-Kubra*, vol. 4, 26.

⁴¹Al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, Book of Medicine, Chapter, What is Said about Plague, Hadith number 5728.

⁴²Al-Khatibi, *Ma'alim al-Sunan Sharh Sunan Abi Dawud*, vol. 1, 299.

and to just give up to 'destiny', and that they can still flee to survive.

iii. Permission to go out or to get treatment:

Some jurists support this opinion since it is important to make use of all available means to get medication, which is, according to Shari'ah, very essential. They agree that it is permissible to go out for a purpose other than fleeing. This is also supported by al-Subki and al-Nawawi.⁴³

iv. Getting out of a plague-inflicted area could be either permissible or forbidden:

Hanafi fiqh scholars support this opinion, arguing that "there is nothing wrong for one to go out of a plague-inflicted area if he/she is sure that Allah is in control of everything." They claim however that it is detested for one to enter a plague-infected area if he/she is sure that they are to be infected. In this case, he/she should not neither get in nor get out to 'protect their belief." That is this Hadith forbids one to go or leave a plague-infected area.⁴⁴ Other Hanafi scholars' comment nothing on the aforementioned opinion, saying only that "it is permissible for one with strong faith to get in and go out of a plague-infected area."⁴⁵

v. Those scholars having permitted people to feel from a plague-infected area:

They refer to 'Umar who regretted returning from the Levant. They also considered the actions of Abu Musa al-Ash'ari, al-Mughirah bin Shu'bah, Masruq, al-Aswad bin

⁴³ Al-Nawawi, *Sharh al-Nawawi 'ala Sahih Muslim* (Beirut: Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-'Arabi, 1392), vol. 14, 204; al-Ramli, *Nihayah al-Muhtaj ila Sharh al-Minhaj* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1984), vol. 6, 36.

⁴⁴ Al-Haskafi, *al-Dar al-Mukhtar Sharh Tanwir al-Absar* (Beirut: Dar al-Kitab al-'Ilmiyyah, 2002), 760.

⁴⁵ Al-Tahawi, *Sharh Ma'ani al-Athar*, tahqiq, Muhammad Zahari al-Najar (Beirut: 'Alim al-Kutub, 1994), vol. 4, 310; al-Sarkhasi, *al-Mabsut* (Beirut: Dar al-Ma'rifah, 1992), vol. 10, 166.

Hilal, and 'Amr bin al-'As, who said "flee from plague to valleys, reefs, and mountaintops."⁴⁶

It is reported that 'Umar Ibn al-Khattab said, when fleeing from the plague of 'Amwas: "O Abu 'Ubaydah! Had it been someone else to say this." He said: "Yes, we are running from what Allah wills to what He wills." Then, 'Abd al-Rahman bin 'Awf came and said, I heard the Messenger of Allah saying, "If you are exposed to wind when there is a plague outbreak, you should not enter, but if the plague outbreaks in your domicile, you should get out. Thereupon, 'Umar praised Allah and went back."⁴⁷

Scholars' Opinions of Whether Treatment Against Plague is Effective and Essential

Scholars have had two different opinions of whether Muslims should believe in destiny and thus not seek medical treatment against diseases in general and plague in particular or they seek medical treatment. In this regard, scholars' opinions can be discussed as follows:

- i. Avoiding treatment is permissible since it indicates one's acceptance of destiny:

It is permissible for Muslim believers not to seek treatment against diseases in general and plagues in particular. Scholars supporting this opinion believe that those not seeking treatment against plague, accepting their destiny, and dying are considered martyrs'. These scholars refer to Prophet's Hadith:

"'Ata' bin Abi Rabah said Ibn 'Abbas asked whether he would like him to show him a woman who would go to paradise. When he replied that he certainly would, he said: This

⁴⁶ Al-Nawawi, *Sharh al-Nawawi 'ala Sahih Muslim*, vol. 14, 204.

⁴⁷ Al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, Book of Medicine, Kitab al-Tibb, Bab ma Idkr fi al-Ta'un, Hadith number 5729.

black woman came to the Prophet and said, "Messenger of God, I am subject to fits and become uncovered, so make supplication to God for me." He replied, "If you wish you may endure it and be rewarded with paradise, but if your wish I shall make supplication to God to cure you." She said, "I shall endure it." Then she added, "But since I become uncovered, make supplication to God that that may not happen." He then made supplication for her.⁴⁸

They also refer to some Hadiths indicating that diseases are expiation for sins. They, for instance, refer to prophet's Hadith that "No Muslim is afflicted by a disease or some other inconvenience, but that Allah will remove his sins as a tree sheds its leaves".⁴⁹ This Hadith provides a piece of evidence that giving up treatment against diseases is permissible for those with endurance. Ibn Hajar says that 'the aforementioned Hadith shows the virtue of the one suffering from epilepsy'.

Besides, a Muslim to endure hardship is far much better than one not able to endure. This shows that a Muslim is allowed to not get treated against diseases. Instead, he/she can get closer to Allah since prayers and supplications could be of a greater effect than medical drugs. Nevertheless, medical treatment may be effective only if the patient is sincere to Allah and the healer is well-cultivated, pious, and God-fearing.⁵⁰ Meanwhile al-

⁴⁸ Al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, Book of Medicine, Chapter, What is Said about Plague, Hadith number 5652.

⁴⁹ Muslim, *Sahih Muslim*, Kitab al-Bir wa al-Silah. Chapter: Reward of a Muslim for the Disease He is Infected with or Sorrow He is Experiencing, Hadith number 2571.

⁵⁰ Ibn Hajar, *Fath al-Bari*, vol. 10, 15; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *al-Tamhid li ma fi al-Muwatta' min al-Ma'ani wa al-Asanid*, tahqiq, Muṣṭafa al-'Alawi & Muhammad 'Abd al-Kabir al-Bakr (Al-Ribat: Wizarat al-Awqaf, 1387), vol. 5, 279.

Ghazali believes that it is permissible for a Muslim to seek treatment on the condition that he/she has strong trust in Allah.⁵¹

Furthermore, Ibn Taymiyyah supports Ibn Hajar's opinion, arguing that *al-salaf al-salih* did not permit one to seek treatment against diseases. Ibn Taymiyyah argues that "many of the ill, living in deserts and villages, are cured without medication. It is Allah Who heals them. They can be treated due to the strength of their body immunity, constant work-related activities, sincere prayers, supplication, *ruqyah*, and strong reliance on Allah. As for food, it is necessary for body, for instance, humans and animals would not survive without food."⁵²

Since plague was not possible to medically treat and since Muslims believed that plague was an affliction, mercy and martyrdom, many Muslims decided to give up taking prescribed medicine.⁵³

- ii. Those supporting the opinion of whether medication is permissible or obligatory:

This group of scholars believes that every disease has a cure and so can be treated. They refer to the prophet's Hadith that "there is no disease that Allah has created, except that He also has created its treatment".⁵⁴ This group of scholars agrees with al-Ghazali's that treatment is divided into: (a.) compulsory: to save one from death; (b.) permissible: such as *ruqyah* and medical treatment which

⁵¹ Al-Ghazali, *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, vol. 4, 286.

⁵² Ibn Taymiyyah, *Majmu' al-Fatawa* (Medina: Mujamma' al-Malik Fahd, 1995), vol. 1, 389; Ibn al-Qayyim, *Zad al-Ma'ad fi Hadi Khayr al-'Ibad* (Beirut: Mu'assasah al-Risalah, 1994), vol. 4, 83.

⁵³ Ibn al-Qayyim, *Zad al-Ma'ad fi Hadi Khayr al-'Ibad*, vol. 4, 33; Al-Karami Mar'i, *Ma Yaf'uluh al-Atibba' wa al-Dawun bi Daf'i Shar al-Ta'un* (Lebanon: Dar al-Basha'ir al-Islamiyyah, 2000), 36.

⁵⁴ Al-Bukhar, *Sahih al-Bukhara*. Book of Medicine. Chapter Ma Anzal Allah da' ila Anzalalah Shifa', Hadith number 5678.

is necessary since a Muslim must take precautions against diseases.⁵⁵

Throughout the Islamic Golden Ages, a significant number of pharmacists and doctors were working hard to produce medical drugs to treat patients from different diseases. In these ages, the numbers of doctors were dramatically increasing, and there was a large body of medical-related literature including books translated from other languages into Arabic. Al-Nawawi says:

Because diseases in our time have diversified, and the specializations of the world's doctors have varied, different people may perceive diseases differently. Having conducted extensive research and critical investigation of how medicine has become more effective, doctors should consider the scientific recommendations of what and how treatment is more efficacious to use. Hence, it would be great for Muslim physicians to share knowledge and work collaboratively. This may lead Muslim nation to prosperity and glory.⁵⁶

With the decline of Islamic civilization after the 7th century, many severe issues had emerged. Some of these issues were the successive waves of plagues, pandemics, drought, and the large numbers of deaths deceased by the Black Plague. The Black Plague was one of the fundamental reasons behind Muslims' depression and devastation. During this decline, medical treatment failed to deal with these different diseases and pandemics. This is why a significant number of Sufi scholars' writings addressed 'spiritual-based approaches' for treatment.

⁵⁵ Al-Ghazali, *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, vol. 4, 285.

⁵⁶ Al-Nawawi, *al-Majmu' Sharh al-Muhazzab* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, n.d.), vol. 15, 443; Ibn Hajar al-Haytami, *al-Fatawa al-Fiqhiyyah al-Kubra*, vol. 4, 28.

Thus, many people adopted Sufis' approaches to deal with pandemics and plagues.

- iii. Those believing that medical treatment is abhorrent:

Some scholars and Sufis (but not all the Sufis) believe that medication is abhorrent because it is contrary to one's reliance and trust in Allah.⁵⁷ Some scholars have denied the Sufis' approaches of treatment. One of these scholars is Ibn al-Jawzi who criticized Sufis' approaches of treatment.⁵⁸ Since the Muslim world had been backward in the field of medicine and sciences in general, the movement of reform was established to adopt another more scientific approach to deal with pandemics.

Spiritual-based Treatment and Approaches in Dealing with Pandemic

As a result of the waves of the plagues and pandemics that could not be treated by medicines, Muslim scholars paid attention to spiritual treatment. They believe that human being consists of soul and body and that soul is far more important to care for than the 'dead body'. In this regard, Muslim scholars have adopted different opinions as follows:

- i. Prevention of pandemics by prayers and supplication

Jurists have different opinions of whether supplication could be effective as a means for preventing pandemics. These jurists, according to the theological-based approach, believe that plague is considered "mercy, expiation and martyrdom". In this regard, when the plague of 'Amwas hit the Muslim land, the Companions of the Prophet encouraged people to pray and supplicate. Some scholars of Shafi'i believe that it is permissible for Muslims to pray

⁵⁷ Al-Khatibi, *Ma'alim al-Sunan Sharh Sunan Abi Dawud*, vol. 4, 17.d

⁵⁸ Ibn al-Jawzi, *Talbis al-Iblis* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 2001), 248.

to Allah to protect them from plague. This is in contrast with al-Azra'i and others who argue that Muslims at 'Umar's era did not perform supplication.⁵⁹ Those who have argued that supplication should not be permissible, as a preventive spiritual countermeasure at times of pandemics, refer to Mu'adh bin Jabal who, at times of the widespread plague did not pray and ask Allah for protection. Such scholars believe that Mu'adh bin Jabal was one of the most knowledgeable companions to distinguish between what is permissible and impermissible. Thus, they think that Muslims should act the same as what Mu'adh had done.⁶⁰

Some jurists, on the other hand argue that it is permissible for Muslims to pray and supplicate to Allah so that He prevents the spread of plague. They argue that supplication is a must when plague is of a destructive force killing a large number of Muslims including scholars and high-ranking officials without whom the glory of Islam declines. Other Muslim jurists, on the other hand, argue that Muslims should not pray to seek Allah's protection from plague. Such jurists claim that those dying by plague are "martyrs". They refer, as narrated to the prophet's Hadith that "O my Lord make my nation die by plague."⁶¹

Likewise, al-Hanbalis believe that Muslims should not pray and ask Allah to protect them from plague. This is because plague is a mercy for believers who, if dying by it, are considered martyrs. Some scholars of Hanbali school, however, believe that since plague is a calamity, it

⁵⁹ Al-Nawawi, *Sharh al-Nawawi 'ala Sahih Muslim*, vol. 1, 508.

⁶⁰ Ibn Hajar al-Haytami, *al-Fatawa al-Fiqhiyyah al-Kubra*, vol. 4, 28.

⁶¹ Refer to Ahmad's *al-Musnad*, No. 1808. Al-Hakim's *al-Mustadrak*, No. 2462. Al-Dhahabi says it is correct. He says, according to the pieces of evidence, it is correct since Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) asks Allah to grant His nation the highest degree of 'martyrdom' due to *jihad* and plague. See Ibn Hajar, *Fath al-Bari*, vol. 10.

is permissible for Muslims to offer prayers and supplication for Allah to protect them.⁶² As for the contemporary Hanbali scholars, plague is considered a calamity because of which Muslims ought to offer prayers and supplication.⁶³

ii. Prevention of pandemics by performing much *dhikr* (supplications)

This is related to praising Allah, and reciting Surah al-Baqarah, al-Fatihah, al-Mu'awizatayn and the other Qur'anic and prophetic protective-hadith. In the extant literature of plagues, it is reported that the aforementioned surahs have been used as spiritual procedures against plague. Ibn al-Qayyim has discussed what is aforementioned when he says that "demonic spirits can affect harm humans by polluting air. This happens when the demonic spirits are unable to do any other thing. Their efforts come to nothing when Muslims do remember Allah, supplicate, give alms, and recite the Qur'an. By doing such good deeds, angelic spirits are sent down to overcome the evil spirits and put an end to their influence."⁶⁴

iii. Prevention of pandemics by praying upon the Prophet (PBUH)

This way was applied by the Sufis after the medical approaches unable to counter a series of devastating plague. One of the Sufi scholars having supported this opinion was Ibn Abi Hajalah Tilimsani in his book "Preventing the Curse by Praying upon the Prophet of Mercy" after the Great Plague of Egypt in 764. Many jurists and Sufis have written extensively on this matter.

⁶² Al-Mardawi, *al-Insaf fi Ma'rifah al-Rajih min al-Khilaf* (Beirut: Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-'Arabi, n.d), vol. 2, 176.

⁶³ Ibn 'Abidin, *Radd al-Muhtar 'ala Dar al-Mukhtar* (Cairo: Al-Bab al-Halabi, 1966), vol. 2 & 11, 183.

⁶⁴ Ibn al-Qayyim, *Zad al-Ma'ad fi Hadi Khayr al-'Ibad*, vol. 4, 36.

iv. Prevention from pandemics by reading *Sahih al-Bukhari* and *al-Shifa' bi Ta'rif Huquq al-Mustafa* Muslims living in Egypt, Levant, and Morocco read both of the aforementioned books as a preventive method against plagues and pandemics. According to Ibn Kathir, Muslims used to listen to someone reading *Ahadith* from *Sahih al-Bukhari* and *al-Shifa' bi Ta'rif Huquq al-Mustafa*.⁶⁵

The Effect of Some Necessary Countermeasures by Jurists

To protect society from plague, jurists have suggested some countermeasures as follows:

- i. People are advised neither to gather nor to perform Friday prayer

Muslim jurists have different opinion about this countermeasure depending on whether the infection is transmitted by contact. In this regard, there are three opinions as follows:

- a. The infected person with a contagious disease such as plague must not enter mosque. This is the saying of the scholars of Maliki school. These scholars are supported by al-Hanbalis whose argument is based on the Hadiths that allow one to flee from lepers, that prohibit one to eat leek and onions and that request the infected persons to not visit the healthy ones.⁶⁶
- b. The infected person must not attend social gatherings. This opinion is supported by the

⁶⁵ Ibn Kathir, *al-Bidayah wa al-Nihayah* (Beirut: Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-'Arabi, 1988) vol.14, p.26

⁶⁶ Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *al-Tamhid li ma fi al-Muwatta' min al-Ma'ani wa al-Asanid*, vol. 91, 423; al-Mardawi, *al-Insaf fi Ma'rifah al-Rajih min al-Khilaf*, vol. 2, 403.

Hanafi and Shafi'i schools of thought. It is also accepted by the Hanbali.⁶⁷

- c. The infected person should not be prevented from attending social gatherings. This is the approach of al-Zahiriyah and Ibn Dinar from the Maliki school, and Ibn Daqiq from the Shafi'i school.⁶⁸

ii. Gathering

The one who is infected by contagious disease must not attend any social gathering. They should not even gather with others for prayers or supplications. These jurists supporting this opinion believe that infected individuals with a contagious disease should not mingle with the healthy ones. This is the opinion of al-Subki who argues that it is essential for the infected person to get evidence that he has recovered so as to he can gather and mingle with others.⁶⁹ Similarly, Ibn al-Qayyim suggests for Muslims to follow medical doctors' advice that they keep social distance to prevent the spread of contagious pandemics.

Ibn al-Qayyim says that when plague hits an area, Muslims should be calm, avoid social contact and move to another free-plague area. This is what has been emphasized by the most-recognized contemporary medical doctors. Such a medical recommendation is completely consistent with the meaningful prophetic Hadith that "no one should come in or get out of the inflected-plague area."⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Ibn 'Abidin, *Radd al-Muhtar 'ala Dar al-Mukhtar*, vol. 1, 661; al-Nawawi, *al-Majmu' Sharh al-Muhazzab*, vol. 2, 199; al-Mardawi, *al-Insaf fi Ma'rifah al-Rajih min al-Khilaf*, vol. 2, 304.

⁶⁸ Ibn Hazm, *al-Muhalla bi al-Athar* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, n.d.), vol. 3, 106; Ibn Rushd, *al-Bayan wa al-Tahsil*. tahqiq, Muhammad Hijji (Beirut: Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, 1988), vol. 9, 410.

⁶⁹ Ibn Hajar al-Haytami, *al-Fatawa al-Fiqhiyyah al-Kubra*, vol. 4, 28.

⁷⁰ Ibn al-Qayyim, *Zad al-Ma'ad fi Hadi Khayr al-'Ibad*, vol. 4, 39.

Al-Ghazali calls for Muslims not to leave the plague-infected area as this may badly affect Muslims' social ties and solidarity.⁷¹ In this regard, al-Ghazali supports his argument that Muslims should not escape their domicile infected by plague. He supports his argument saying that if it was permissible for Muslims to escape from a plague-infected area, the healthy individuals would leave, and the plague-infected individuals may be left without care and support. Thus, they may perish. This is why prophet Muhammad says that he who escapes from a plague-inflicted area is the same as he who escapes the battlefield against enemies of Muslims.⁷²

iii. *Wasiyyah* (will) of someone infected by plague in case he dies

Wasiyyah is an issue discussed by the jurists to demonstrate how one's wealth should be divided after they have passed away due to the pandemic. Jurists argue that a plague-inflicted person has right over all his money in his '*wasiyyah*' (he can give all his money to someone) or can only decide over a third of it exactly as those dying by different causes.

Al-Nawawi, in line with Ahmad bin Hanbal, argues that plague, which is a terrifying pandemic, is not a disease. He, according to al-Shafi'i, reports that if one dies due to plague, his 'will' is not valid until he passes away.⁷³ In this case, the one passing away has right only over a third of his money. This case is similar to the judicial issue of inheritance at the time of the al-Jarif plague during which it was hard to know who before who had passed away.

⁷¹ Al-Ghazali, *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, vol. 4, 219.

⁷² *Ibid.*, vol. 4, 354.

⁷³ Al-Nawawi, *al-Majmu' Sharh al-Muhazzab*, vol. 15, 445; Ibn Hazm, *al-Muhalla bi al-Athar*, vol. 8, 45.

iv. Divorce of wife throughout the plague breakout

The vast majority of Muslim jurists believe that the divorce of an ill husband is valid to his wife if he recovers from his disease. They, however, have different opinions of whether a plague-infected husband's divorce is valid. Some of Hanafi scholars consider the divorce valid. They base their opinion on the fact that a Muslim fighter's divorce his wife is valid even though he is in the battlefield.⁷⁴

v. Quarantine

A vast majority of scholars emphasize that 'quarantine' is compulsory for those with contagious disease. That is those infected by contagious diseases ought not to pray at mosques so as to not infect others. Such scholars refer to 'Umar ibn al-Khattab who prevented a woman with leprosy to perform tawaf. Ibn 'Abd al-Barr says that it is important to separate those with leprosy so as to they do not infect others. Their quarantine is very pivotal since it is impermissible for them to harm any individual in the community.

Al-Buhuti says that it is not permissible for lepers to mingle with healthy people in general, nor to mix with a specific person without permission. Those in charge should prevent their fellows with leprosy from mingling with others and should station them in quarantine. In case the person in charge or the leper does not take necessary countermeasures to protect the public, they are sinful. And if the one in charge lets his fellow mingle with others, though they know how dangerous it is on the public health, they are both 'obscene.'⁷⁵ Such different opinions of scholars were the cornerstone for the establishment of

⁷⁴ Ibn 'Abidin, *Radd al-Muhtar 'ala Dar al-Mukhtar*, vol. 3, 390.

⁷⁵ Al-Buhuti Mansur, *Kashaf al-Qina' 'an Matn al-Iqna'* (Riyadh: Maktabat al-Nasir, n.d.), vol. 6, 126.

special neighbourhoods for lepers and those with infectious diseases.⁷⁶

vi. Establishing Organized Urbanization (Neighborhood)

Urbanist and some of those engaged in *Hisbah* believe that it is important for a state to establish organized urbanization to prevent the spread of contagious diseases such as plague. Similarly, Ibn Khaldun, who wrote about the consequences of the Black Plague,⁷⁷ emphasized the pressing need of organized urbanization to prevent the spread of contagious diseases. He states that the large number of deaths is due to numerous famines and *fitnahs* (trials) that the state is responsible for. As a result, many pandemics and diseases emerge. The main reason of such pandemics and diseases could result from 'polluted air' and the poor and unplanned construction of residential buildings⁷⁸.

Ibn Khaldun suggests that government should implement some architecture-related policies that architects should consider when constructing buildings. For instance, enough space must be left between buildings so as to fresh air goes through all the buildings. This may prevent the spread of pandemics and plagues. Among those who adopt this view is Ibn Haidur al-Fassi who, in his monograph *The Nature of Epidemic Diseases*,

⁷⁶ Regarding 'quarantine', see: Gian Franco Gensini, Magdi H. Yacoub & Andrea A. Conti, "The Concept of Quarantine in History: From Plague to Sars," *Journal of Infection* (2004) 49, 257–261.

⁷⁷ In this regard, Ibn Khaldun states that in the mid-8th century, 'al-Jarif plague' had spread worldwide and consequently caused devastating repercussions. It took dramatically large numbers of lives, generations, nations, and even urbanization. It had ruined and brought down many countries for it hit them without any 'warning'. It was as if the world and all human beings had been changed and replaced with new 'beings'. Ibn Khaldun, *Tarikh Ibn Khaldun*, ed. Khalil Shihadah (Beirut. Dar al-Fikr, 1988), vol. 1, 42.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

attributes the spread of pandemic to three main interrelated factors: rotten food at times of famine and high prices of the essentials. Such factors force people to have rotten food, which therefore causes different diseases and pandemics.⁷⁹ Inevitably, it is economy-related problems that cause malnutrition and, therefore, many people suffer from different diseases. Hence, it is necessary for government to monitor and take care of markets, foods, and construction of houses and buildings. This may prevent the spread of contagious diseases.

Conclusion

This study has discussed how the jurisprudential countermeasures, which are based on strong theological Islamic background, could be used to prevent pandemics and plagues. From an Islamic perspective, the study argues that pandemics, disasters and plagues, which are metaphysical (unseen) evils, are attributed to Allah's acts. Despite the woes resulting from such pandemics, disasters and plagues, there are still of benefit in that we see the world differently. In other words, there is wisdom behind these woes. Human beings have been tirelessly trying to find effective solutions to pandemics; yet, they have, to a large extent, failed. Hence, Islam introduces some remarkable solutions to help us cope with pandemics. One of the solutions is 'faith' that should bring us joy, peace, happiness and self-satisfaction and that instills in us the belief that there is a great reward, in the hereafter, for those being patient when infected by pandemic. Islamic schools of thought have come up with some exceptional 'recommendations' appropriate and effective to deal with the outbreak of pandemics. These recommendations can be summarized as follows:

⁷⁹ Al-Gharnati, Muhammad ibn 'Abd Allah. *Muqna'ah al-Sa'il 'an al-Marad al-Ha'il*, 25.

- a. It is important for Muslims to strongly believe in predestination. Such beliefs instil in Muslims tranquillity, happiness and self-satisfaction that he is sure that there is 'unseen' wisdom and good tidings behind the 'divine act'.
- b. It is essential for Muslims to seek treatment to get protected from pandemics and plagues. That is Muslims should believe that disease and treatment are both attributed to Allah's act and at the same time they should work hard to develop a medical treatment.
- c. It is essential for Muslims to take benefit from medical experiments. Muslims should not give up searching for a medicine against plague. At the same time Muslim can adopt some methods depending on spiritual treatment and other preventive countermeasures to boost human beings' immunity against pandemics and plagues. In short, besides medical treatment of plague, spiritual treatment should never be neglected.

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