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KHUTBAH GUIDE:

COVID-19 VACCINES & THE ISLAMIC IMPERATIVE TO PROTECT ONE'S HEALTH & THE HEALTH OF OTHERS



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INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 global pandemic has changed the reality of daily life for everyone. Each one of us has been impacted directly by the virus or know of someone who has and all of us have had to make adjustments to its presence in our daily lives. During this time, it has become increasingly common to feel a sense of fear, anxiety and lack of control over our circumstances and we are reminded to turn to Allah SWT for relief as He is in control of all affairs.

At the start of the pandemic, Muslim organizations across the country came together to form the National Muslim Task Force on COVID-19 in an effort to keep the Muslim community informed and aware of public health guidelines pertaining to the spread of the pandemic. Some of the efforts accomplished by the Task Force include the dissemination of public statements and recommendations, advocacy letters and appeals to members of Congress to increase access to personal protective equipment and improved testing. As COVID-19 vaccines are becoming more readily available, members of the Task Force have been unequivocal in their support of vaccination efforts and encourage everyone to schedule appointments to get vaccinated as soon as possible.

Muslims have a rich history of contributing to scientific inquiry and especially in the area of medicine and healing. Ibn Sina is considered to be one of the fathers of modern medicine and once made Islamic culture synonymous with scientific progress. This Khutbah Guide seeks to shed light on Islam's injunctions and principles regarding the permissibility and validity of vaccination efforts. Many imams and other Islamic leaders have issued clear statements asserting that vaccination is consistent with Islamic principles. The weekly Friday Sermon is an important opportunity for congregants to learn about how they can put their faith into practice and therefore provides an ideal venue for delivering an appeal to community members to take their personal health and community's public health seriously. This COVID-19 Khutbah Guide is a compilation of talking points, hadeeth, and Quranic verses to encourage American Muslim congregants to support vaccination efforts. This Guide should be used by Muslim leaders delivering lectures, talks, or khutbahs.

Khutbah 1

Saving Lives is an Act of Worship

Talking Points:

- Developing vaccines to contain pandemics has always been linked to the noble aim of reducing or eliminating harm. That is why historical figures like Edward Jenner, an English physician and scientist who pioneered the concept of vaccines including the creation of the smallpox vaccine, are remembered as public health heroes. There are notable Islamic scientists such as Ibn Sina (Avicenna), a 10-century polymath, who contributed empirical approaches to medicine and healing.
- Scientific research and medical advancements have historically been an integral aspect of Islam and Muslim civilizations. Today, Muslims are an integral part of the healthcare system in the US and abroad with expertise in all areas of medicine ranging from internal medicine to infectious diseases.
- Abu Darda, a companion of the Prophet Peace Be Upon Him (PBUH), reported: The Messenger of Allah, said, “Verily, Allah sent down the disease and the cure, and for every disease he made a cure. Seek treatment, but do not seek treatment by the unlawful” [Sunan Abī Dāwūd 3874].
- By taking the vaccine you are preventing harm to others and can therefore get rewarded by Allah for this noble intention. There's a verse in the Holy Quran [5:32], that “if anyone saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of all mankind.” By becoming vaccinated, you're doing one of the most honorable acts of worship — protecting life.



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Khutbah 1

Saving Lives is an Act of Worship

Talking Points continued:

- In addition, by protecting others from potentially contracting COVID-19, we are protecting ourselves. As the Prophet Muhammad PBUH said, “We are one body, and if part of it aches, the rest should respond with sleeplessness and fever” [Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī 6011, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 2586].
- This past year has not been an easy year for anyone. If we can make one of our fellow brother’s or sister’s lives easier, we should strive to do so. And if we have reason to believe that we were recently exposed to the virus, there is an even greater moral obligation and incumbency to protect others from potential harm.
- Muslims throughout the world should be at the forefront of maximizing efforts to save the lives of their families, neighbors, friends and communities. Public health measures that save lives and prevent disease should be upheld and supported by faith communities and especially the Muslim community.



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Khutbah 2

Do No Harm

Talking Points:

- One of the highest objectives of Islamic law is to preserve and protect human life. We consider every human life to be a precious creation of Allah SWT. Many mosques and communities host or partner with free clinics to provide some type of healthcare services for those who are uninsured or underinsured and mosques can take a similar role in encouraging vaccination efforts for their congregants.
- Muslims have contributed to preventive medicine throughout history, and Muslims are among the first people to believe in the idea of vaccination. The idea of preventing harm comes from Prophet Muhammad PBUH, who said, if there's any contagious disease in a city, you should not enter that city or leave it. If you contract that sickness, you should not go on to spread it. This is one of the theological foundations for vaccination.
- Ibn Umar reported: The Messenger of Allah PBUH said, “Verily, your smile in the face of your brother is charity. Lifting harming things from the road is recorded for you as charity. Pouring your leftovers in the vessel of your brother is charity. Enjoining good and forbidding evil is your charity. Guiding a lost person is charity” [Al-Mu’jam al-Awsat 8342].



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Khutbah 2

Do No Harm

Talking Points Continued

- The Prophet PBUH, said “No one will have true faith until he or she has the same love for others as they have for themselves” [Related by Bukhari and Muslim]. A manifestation of care and concern for others is protecting them from disease and sickness and vaccinating oneself not only protects oneself but others as well.
- Abu Sa’id al-Khudri reported: The Messenger of Allah, PBUH, said, “Do not cause harm or return harm. Whoever harms others, Allah will harm him. Whoever is harsh with others, Allah will be harsh with him” [Al-Sunan al-Kubrá 11070].

Permissibility of the Vaccine:

- The vaccine is safe and this should be emphasized first and foremost to our families and communities. Leaders from faith communities and different ethnic communities have made sure to ask difficult questions regarding the vaccine and its potential side effects and there is no doubt about the benefit of this vaccine to ourselves and to others.



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Khutbah 2

Do No Harm

Permissibility of the Vaccine Continued:

- **Two major Islamic scholars' councils including the Fiqh Council of North America and the Assembly of Muslim Jurists of America have studied the vaccine at great length and have concluded that they are halal or lawful. It is important that this point be taken seriously since there is rampant misinformation that is being spread through social media about the safety, efficacy and permissibility of the vaccine. The verification of sources is an important part of Islam and spreading misinformation should not be taken lightly especially when the information can contribute towards harm to others. We need to hold ourselves and each other accountable if misinformation is being shared amongst our families, friends and communities.**



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Khutbah 3:

Putting our Trust in Allah

Talking Points:

- As Muslims we are called to put our trust (Tawakkul) in our Lord, and not to fall into despair or hopelessness. Islamic teachings remind us that tests and tribulations are part of life. The Prophet Muhammad PBUH advised us to “Tie the camel and trust in Allah” (Tirmidhi). One of the lessons we learn from this Prophetic statement is that we need to use all resources available to us and make reasonable efforts to achieve what is in our interests, while at the same time relying entirely on Allah for the outcome.
- We are also reminded in the Holy Quran that we will be tested in this life and sickness is certainly a test and COVID-19 has undoubtedly tested each and every one of us; “And certainly, We shall test you with something of fear, hunger, loss of properties and lives and fruits. Give glad tidings to those who shall remain patient during these tribulations [2:155].”
- Since the beginning of the pandemic, efforts have been made across the globe to develop a treatment to save lives. Within a short period of time, COVID-19 vaccines have become readily available to segments of the population who are most vulnerable. This is a significant achievement and should be treated with optimism and a blessing from Allah SWT.
- By taking the vaccine, we are expressing gratitude towards Allah for creating a readily available treatment which not only prevents the virus from spreading but also enables us to return to our former state of social engagement and communal activities.



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References

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Click the link to watch Imam Arqum Rashid give a Khutbah on the importance of vaccination: <http://bit.ly/vaccinekhutbah>

If you used the Khutbah Guide, please fill out this participation form so we can acknowledge you in our final report:

<http://bit.ly/KhutbahForm>



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