

Dealing With Tragic Events

إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ لِلَّهِ نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا ، مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ ، وَمَنْ يَضِلَّ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

Indeed, all praise belongs to Allah. We praise him, and we ask him for guidance and forgiveness. We seek protection in Allah from the malice of our own souls, and the evil of our actions. Whosoever Allah guides, no one can lead astray, and whosoever He makes astray, no one can lead back to the right path. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the One, having no partner. And I bear witness that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger.

Allah swt reminds us in the Quran:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ

O you who believe! Have regard for Allah as He should be regarded, and die not except in a state of Islam. (3:102)

-
- This last period has been heavy on our minds and hearts – most recently here at home with the recent shootings at MSU and the unjust murder of Tyre Nichols, to the earthquake in Turkiye and Syria, and the ongoing attacks on al-Quds, as well as other parts of the world.
 - The Prophet (pbuh) reminds us of the hadith: *“The parable of the believers in their affection, mercy, and compassion for each other is that of a body. When any limb aches, the whole body reacts with sleeplessness and fever.”*
 - And so, the believers are impacted by these events. But recognize that each person processes them differently depending on their unique life experiences.
 - But what’s beautiful about our faith, is that Allah (swt) has also given us a way to make meaning of it as well, by giving us the Quran and the example of the Prophet (pbuh)
 - When the Prophet Muhammed’s son died, his eyes were wet with tears, he (pbuh) reminded us: *“The eyes send their tears and the heart is saddened, but we do not say anything except that which pleases our Lord.”*

- It's okay to be sad and cry – it's a sign of mercy, being human, and having a soft heart.
- We also see in the example of Prophet Yaqub (as) who cried profusely for years over the loss and separation from his son Yusuf (as). But what was the attitude, despite the tears?
 وَلَا تَيَّأَسُوا مِنْ رَوْحِ اللَّهِ إِنَّهُ لَا يَيْأَسُ مِنْ رَوْحِ اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْكَافِرُونَ
 “And do not lose hope in the mercy of Allah, for no one loses hope in Allah’s mercy except those with no faith.” (Surah Yusuf 12:87)
- What do we know from the story of Yaqub (as)? While he was sad, he kept on going. He continued to have hope and belief in Allah.
- The believer has a positive mindset. The Prophet (pbuh) reminds us, “Indeed, Allah does not decree anything for the believer except what is good for him, then he (the believer) shows patience and thus there is good for him.”
- And as hard as it may seem now, there **IS** good that will inshaAllah come out of these experiences. We are reminded “Perhaps you hate a thing and it is good for you; and perhaps you love a thing and it is bad for you. And Allah Knows, while you know not.” (Qur’an 2:216) - so we strive to be at peace with this knowledge.
- These incidents and experiences may result in us having different feelings. We should recognize them and process them appropriately.

Pay attention & reflect

- Often times when we are constantly watching the news, scrolling social media, we don’t know how much our bodies are absorbing what’s happening around us.
- But your body is where most us will notice first. Stress and anxiety show up here.
- Use your salah to slow yourself down, connect with Allah, be in communication with Him.
- Reflect on His Majesty, His kingdom, and pour your heart, fear, and concern to Him.

Connect

- Connect with Allah, take time to reflect, complain to the One who is truly in charge of our affairs. Remind yourself that He is *Al-Muhaymin*, Our guardian/Overseer, *Al Waliyy*, The Protecting Friend, and He has Ultimate control
- Connect with those you love - Unexpected loss of life is a way that Allah (swt) reminds us what and who matters most. Are we making use of these reminders? Are we telling our brothers and sisters that we love them?
- Connect with Allah's creations (through nature). Listen to things that are soothing. This could be Quran, noises from nature, etc.

Take control over what you have control over

- *Indeed Allah does not change a people's condition until they change what is in their selves* (Ar-Ra'ad 13:11)
- Have you given money to the efforts in Turkiye and Syria?
- Can you raise awareness of the issues, organize against the gun lobby, push elected officials for reform, etc.
- Can we start to address the anti-Black racism that exists within our spaces and communities?
- We are **not** meant to feel bad and go back to our lives. These are reminders from Allah swt to jolt us into action.
- We will continue to be tested as individuals and a community in different ways

| وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ ۗ
 | وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ
 | الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ
 | أُولَئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ ۖ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ

We shall certainly test you by afflicting you with fear, hunger, loss of properties and lives and fruits. Give glad tidings, then, to those who remain patient; those who when any affliction



impacts them, they say: “Indeed, we belong to Allah, and it is to Him that we are destined to return.” Upon them will be the blessings and mercy of their Lord, and it is they who are rightly guided. (Al Baqarah 2:155-157)

- These trials and tribulations are reminders and opportunities for us to get closer to Allah and strengthen our communities.
- They are also a reminder for us to think about how we are living our own lives and if they’re in alignment with what Allah wants from us or are we not living our lives according to the message of the Quran.
- Those without faith may get dejected. But for Muslims, we know this dunya is only temporary and a place of test. Our ultimate destination is planning and preparing for the akhira.
- We keep in mind that every event is an opportunity for us to build our faith and resilience
 - Pray sincerely for the community
 - Seek forgiveness from Allah
 - Empower yourself and your community
- For those of us who are parents, we need to model our faith in action. Research shows that children pay more attention to what we do rather than what we say. Are we modeling how to use our faith to navigate the world around us?
- “Holding fast to the rope of Allah” is key during times like these and looking to the Qur’an and the example of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) as a family can help ease some of the anxiety you might be feeling collectively.
- We must know that Allah is in full control over everything. This is a cornerstone of our faith.
- ibn ‘Abbas (ra) reports: *“One day I was riding behind the Prophet, peace, and blessings be upon him, when he said, ‘Young man, I will teach you some words. Be mindful of Allah, and He will take care of you. Be mindful of Him, and you shall find Him at your side. If you ask,*

ask of Allah. If you need help, seek it from Allah. Know that if the whole world were to gather together in order to help you, they would not be able to help you except if Allah had written so. And if the whole world were to gather together in order to harm you, they would not harm you except if Allah had written so. The pens have been lifted, and the pages are dry.” Related by Tirmidhi

- Since Allah is in control of everything, then everything happens according to His plans. Try as we might, it is impossible for us to comprehend everything and the “big picture”. But Allah in His infinite knowledge and mercy has all factors under consideration and is “the best of planners.”
- In addition to the resources, we find in the Quran and Sunnah, use the resources that exist within our community. The Family & Youth Institute has toolkits to help us navigate through these tragedies. Use the resources to help your family through such events and also share them with others. [www.TheFYI.org]
- These events are tests for us as much as they are for anyone else – how do we react, what do we do
- And most of all, Ar-Rabb is giving us tarbiya through life events.
- Yusuf (as) went through major trials in his life. At the end, what does he say?

إِنَّ رَبِّي لَطِيفٌ لِّمَا يَشَاءُ ۚ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ

“Indeed, my Lord understands best the mysteries of all that He plans to do, for indeed He is full of knowledge and wisdom” (Surah Yusuf 12:100)

- Allah swt is the best of planners. Everything happens for a reason, at the right time and the right place. Our faith and understanding must remain strong.
- Let us stop and reflect – how are we turning back to Allah and making dua’a to Him? Is our iman as strong as ever, knowing full well that this world is an illusion and temporary – and our ultimate return is to Allah swt?

Break

<2nd opening>

Summary

- Today we're reflecting on recent tragic events – the shooting at MSU, the killing of Tyre Nichols, to the earthquake in Turkiye and Syria, and the ongoing attacks on al-Quds, as well as other parts of the world.
- Our hearts and minds are heavy.
- But we need to be reminded to never ever get dejected and lose hope in the mercy of Allah swt.

- Yaqub (as) reminded his sons

وَلَا تَيَاسُوا مِنْ رَوْحِ اللَّهِ إِنَّهُ لَا يَيْئَسُ مِنْ رَوْحِ اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْكَافِرُونَ
 “And do not lose hope in the mercy of Allah, for no one loses hope in Allah’s mercy except those with no faith.” (Surah Yusuf 12:87)

- We need to be steadfast and patiently persevere in our efforts.
- Everything happens according to the plan and schedule of Allah swt at its appointed time.
- These events are tests for us as much as they are for anyone else – how do we react, what do we do. Every event is an opportunity for us to build our faith and resilience
 - Pray sincerely for the community
 - Seek forgiveness from Allah
 - Commit to your Muslim identity and don’t be afraid. Find ways to empower yourself and your community
 - Use tools like The FYI’s toolkits to learn how to deal with such events
- THEN, we spring into action. We are **not** meant to feel bad and go back to our lives. These are reminders from Allah swt to jolt us into action.



- Have we called our elected representatives to demand change? Have we raised funds for the victims? Have we tried to dialogue with our friends, neighbors and colleagues? Whether in high school or college or in the corporate world – all ages and genders!
- We patiently persevere – since we are in the long game. We are not short sighted looking for temporary rewards. We want the ultimate reward of the highest levels of paradise.

Let us use this opportunity to renew our intentions, and to refocus, and reorient our efforts towards Our Lord Most High.

*Indeed, Allah and his angels send peace and blessings on the Prophet,
O you who believe, send peace and blessings on him*

Du'a

- O Allah show us truth as truth and guide us to follow it and show us falsehood as falsehood and guide us to avoid it
- O Allah, help us to overcome our shortcomings and to resolve to move forward towards truth and justice
- O Allah, forgive our errors and mistakes, those known to us and those not known to us
- O Allah, guide us to be steadfast in our deen, and help us to rise to the highest levels of taqwa
- O Allah, help those who are oppressed all around the world, and lift the oppression from them, so that they may be the best of your servants
- O Allah, give us the best in this world, and the best in the hereafter, and protect us from hellfire.