**An Open Letter To GOD From A Poor Muslim**

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*The following letter is not a real letter from anyone, but a scenario written by the author to spread awareness and cause reflection*.

Dear God

I am a humble Muslim; I pray and try to comply with the tenants of Islam. My family is poor, but we practice our religion and always thank you for your blessings. Right now, I am doing my best I can to support my family exploring all the available resources. I am under extreme stress and fear and God I am seeking your help to give me patience and courage to face this calamity and cope with this disaster which is affecting me, and millions of people like me.

My grandmother passed away 2 days ago; she had the Coronavirus infection which she got in the nursing home. She died alone gazing at the walls in the hospital ICU. No family members could go in, hold her hands and recite the Kalama. We could not give her a proper burial. God, why did you make us feel so miserable?

I was working at the airport on minimum wage and I was laid off without any benefits. I cannot pay my rent and take care of my 2 young children. My whole family had to move into my mother’s 2-bedroom apartment. She has multiple medical problems and lives on a meager disability income. I have not been able to even apply for unemployment benefits due to big lines and a crashed website.

We live in a poor neighborhood; our next-door neighbor was a single mother with 3 children; an hourly worker at a restaurant and was laid off. She was surviving on tips and now she has nothing. She is not eligible for unemployment and even the food pantries helping poor people are now empty.

The neighbor down the street has five children, lives in a small house, was laid off and cannot pay his mortgage. He is very scared of being evicted and going to a shelter. His layoff is affecting his entire family.

One of my cousins who married last year was working along with his wife, making 50 grand a year at a 24hr fitness center and they both were laid off as the fitness center was closed. They lost their income and health insurance. They cannot pay their rent and their savings will not last beyond 3 months. His wife is pregnant, and they are worried to death. They are religious people; he always took 2 hours off for Friday prayers and stayed at work for longer periods in the evening.

In the neighborhood, a man opened a small restaurant by getting a loan. We all attended on his opening day to recite Quran. He had to close the restaurant when customers stopped coming to eat. He tried to keep open a takeout service, but People stopped coming due to the government lockdown and most of the customers that come do not have money to buy the food. So, he declared bankruptcy and his life is completely ruined. He is depressed and is even thinking of ending his life. Oh God, help him to face and overcome this calamity.

One of my distant relative’s daughter just graduated from medical school after getting tens of thousands of dollars in loans for her education. She is assigned to the ER in a busy hospital with minimum Personal Protection Equipment. My cousin has not slept for 3 days continuously worrying about her.

I am home praying and making Dua all the time. But I am hearing nothing but gloomy news about people dying, news about people who are losing their jobs and closing small businesses and news about people who have nothing to survive on.

I hear everyday sermons from Muslim scholars. They all talk about **“IT IS A BLESSING from God FOR BELIEVERS AND PUNISHMENT FOR NON-BELIEVERS**”.

Oh God, I am seeing it differently. Believers or non-believers, if they are rich, they are doing OK, but if they are poor, they are ruined. So, God is this a punishment of being poor? The Ulemas gave us several Duas to recite every day and ensured us that with sincere Duas the misery will go away. All of us have strong faith in you God, praying and making Duas, but every morning we wake up with nothing but misery, and I do not see any light at the end of this tunnel. I am using my credit card to buy food for my children. I have never paid interest and so every month I paid the full balance. Now I do not know how to survive without paying interest. I hope that in the next couple of months, I will have a job so that I can pay off my loan.

Imams say that we do not know why these things happen, there must be some wisdom of God behind it. Maybe, God, you are punishing people who do sinful things like running Casinos, clubs, showing billionaires that their businesses will incur losses, hoping this will control their arrogance. But it is not happening. A person who has $4 Billion may lose 75% of his wealth, and he still has a billion, but most of us wake up with nothing. Do you think the rich will be less arrogant? It will not happen to God. Once this thing is over, their businesses will recover fast. They will receive billions of Dollars for recovery of their businesses and an individual like me who is suffering is getting just $1200, not even enough to pay for a half month’s rent and food.

O God You are the creator of all human beings and loved them all. You stated “**The best among you are those who are most righteous (justice-oriented)” 49:13**O’ Allah you will protect all human beings from this tribulation**.**

Oh God, you said that for every illness there is a cure. You are correct God. People found cures or vaccines for many illnesses like Tuberculosis, Malaria, Polio, Cholera, and Smallpox. Muslim scholars and Ulemas all over the world are busy 24 hours every day praying for cures and protection. Allah, You told that our prayer should be: “Rabbi zidni ‘Ilmaa” (O Lord, increase me in ‘Ilm (knowledge) -20-114. The purpose of gaining knowledge is to understand and unravel the mysteries of your creation. It also includes an investigation of causes and cure of human ailments. I have never heard any Muslin scholar asking Muslims to find the cure and then pray to God for its success. For the last several centuries God, Muslims become totally dependent on you to find a cure without making any effort; it seems like only non-Muslims are making every effort to find the cure for all our illnesses. Our Prophet (phuh) taught us to tie the camel first and then make Dua for its protection; if you only make dua without tying it, God will not protect it. Oh God, give our scholars guidance to convey the correct message.

I apologize, God, if I said anything wrong. Please forgive me for my shortcomings and my poor understanding.

**I have strong faith in you God, and I am now praying “Oh God, GIVE ME ENOUGH INTELLIGENCE TO UNDERSTAND YOUR WISDOM and Show me the right path**.

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