

LOOTING IN SOUTH AFRICA

A VISIT TO KWAZULU-NATAL

11 Zul Hijah 1442 to 14 Zul Hijah 1442 - 22 July 2021 to 25 July 2021

[Reading Time: +-12 minutes]

[Impressions & Solutions: For a Lifetime]

Mowlana Abdul Hamid Ishaq, a senior and internationally recognized scholar of South Africa (Allah protect and continue to favour him) has just stayed and visited more than 7 hotspots of the KwaZulu-Natal province of South Africa that were ravaged by the recent looting. Below is an impression and a paraphrased summary of Mowlana's insights from his firsthand experience and engagement with members on the ground. Mowlana's heart rendering advices, delivered with utmost love and compassion, were concluded with heartfelt du'aas for the Ummah and replacement of the bitter situation with goodness (khayr) and divine blessings (barakah). The advices were filled with inspiring examples and anecdotes. Together with offering ropes of hope, the Mowlana's specific goal amongst others was to bolster an awakening on all fronts, to restore positivity, calm and focus in our lives. When a person is self-critical and introspective, then reading advices of this nature will have a greater impact on the heart. The Ummah is encouraged to listen to the audios for greater benefit insha-Allah.

- 1) People say, 'We must adopt a holistic approach and see the bigger picture'. That's very true and therefore we must view the looting episode from both a spiritual and material perspective. Compare our profits and losses simultaneously in line with our Deen and Dunya. Insha-Allah, Allah will then let our conclusions and solutions also be a 'holy' one.
- 2) Whoever has suffered a loss in any way, take this as a personal condolence and solace. What has happened has truly saddened us. Indeed we are hurt and sorrowful. Tears roll uncontrollably whenever we saw and think about it. We offer you our support and comfort and till now we continue with du'aa. Remember, when anyone feels the takleef and pain of another, it is both a sign of Iman and a sign of having a human conscience.
- 3) Keep reminding ourselves of our firmly embedded Imani belief, '*There is untold goodness in every single situation (outwardly good or bad) that Allah Ta'ala brings on us*', as is famously said in Urdu, '*Jaw Allah kar-taa hair, saw ach-cha kar-taa hair*'. Therefore, our constant dua especially after every fard salah should be, "Allah, please grant me the best possible outcome from this situation which is most beneficial for my Deen, my Dunya and my Aakhirah!" Think that Allah wants to raise our status in His sight through these difficulties.
- 4) Don't ever lose hope in Allah's mercy. In fact, this is Allah's mercy in all ways and the wisest thing to do now is to submit to Allah's will. Quite commonly, not very long after a difficulty passes Allah Ta'ala opens up the wisdoms and goodness that a tragedy comes with; witnessing the 'light' and the new course which sometimes is even brighter and better than before, a person is left with no option but to humbly appreciate the wise workings of Allah Ta'ala. So we submit to Allah Ta'ala at every occasion. Work and ask for the best and leave the rest to Allah.

- 5) No one should ever look down upon another. Don't be judgemental and don't doubt individuals. We must complement one another. Be self critical. Be helpful. Become an asset to society and the Ummah at large.
- 6) The reality is, whatever still remains with us is much more valuable than what has gone; our iman, our family, our health and so on. Compare our disaster, relatively, to the floods that has just affected India, Europe and other parts of the world; the loss of life, loss of humane living, damage to water and electricity infrastructure, onset of cholera, etc. If we think of other more disaster-stricken areas, it will be easier to offer gratitude (shukar) to Allah for what we still have.
- 7) What was looted was not ours to benefit from. Rather, Allah through His kindness gave us ownership and according to the Hadith all which was taken unlawfully is written as a reward of sadaqah for the owner. The Quran says that most of our sins are pardoned and overlooked by Allah Ta'ala without any retribution. And whatever calamities may afflict us is mainly because of sin, and not only that, it also wipes away the sin.
- 8) Whatever good you did, be convinced that insha-Allah your barakah (divine blessings) that was in your means of living can never be looted. Only the outward was looted, property, goods, etc. The barakah remains. Barakah is only looted by ourselves and by our own evil actions (a'maal). If we did mistakes, then make dua that through this Allah forgives us and through this all our evil deeds are gone. Otherwise, Allah protect us, our evil deeds can come back in another form. We are too weak to face any calamity from Allah. We ask Allah for aafiyat (comfort and ease with goodness).
- 9) What we lost and whatever remains, all of this eventually we will leave behind. In reality, ours is, only what we have already used or sent ahead for the Next Life. We experienced a lockdown. This however was a Miniature Shutdown before the Ultimate Shutdown of Qiyaamah where even the clothes on our body will not be with us. Also, generally we tend to understand 'rizq' – loosely translated as sustenance in English and 'rozi' in Urdu - to only mean material and worldly provisions. In reality, 'rizq' includes nourishments and bounties related to both a worldly and spiritual level. So whether 'a little' or 'a lot' was lost, Alhamdulillah Allah has been splashing His spiritual 'rizq' on us; during the unrest, each person realises how much more he or she engaged with the Quran, zikr, salah, direct communion with Allah through duaa, social welfare work and reiterating ones submission, reliance and trust in Allah, and so on. So in a way, Allah has substituted some 'material gain' with 'spiritual gain' and temporary benefit for an everlasting one. May Allah grant all our rizq to us with goodness and blessings, Aameen!
- 10) Everyone should sincerely reflect and consider that 'perhaps it was because of my own sin that Allah is upset'. Those who were saved materially from this looting must not have a 'holier than thou' feeling. Allah tests some with sabar and some with shukar and Allah Ta'ala rewards each according to their levels of submission, reaction and attitude to Allah and to Allah's creation. A person should think that perhaps 'my sin has affected others', just like when the tongue causes trouble but then the face receives the punch and faces the repercussions. Also, *Mu'aakhaat* should be introduced more widely now; where we offer more personal and mutual support to one another (within the laws of Sharee'ah) be it financial, emotional, etc.
- 11) May Allah always protect us. Had Allah wanted to destroy us, we could have been massacred in a bloodbath. However, Allah saved us because He in reality wants us for Himself! Allah spared us in all this and He got us to a point where He opened our eyes. Perhaps Dunya was in the way and Allah doesn't want obstacles in our path to Him. Allah has immense *ghayrat*, that is, possessiveness and love for us. With the little dunya that has gone, now it is easier for us to see Him. Now is the time to re-align our hearts. Our bodies are on a journey in one direction; to the grave. Now ensure that we also change the directions of our hearts and focus it to Allah. If we don't go to Allah now, then when will we? And who else would there be to blame for the neglect?

- 12) It was a traumatic experience for all, explosions, bombs and rounds of ammunition going off. Allah reward those who contributed in any way towards the protection of health, wealth, iman and society. Whoever passed away in this condition would have earned the reward of a martyr. Allah speaks of the screams, shouts and blasts of Jahannam. This was a small picture of Aakhirat (Hereafter) and Jahannam; Allah save us from it, Aameen. We heard it, so now we ensure to work ourselves and our actions away from the longer and Everlasting trauma of Aakhirat.
- 13) Our Dunya was looted and we learnt firsthand how bad looting is. The value of our Iman is much more compared to anything else in this world. Iman and Islam are our greatest assets and therefore we must look after it even more. Shaytaan is trying from 'day 1' to loot our Iman. Whatever may be the motive of the current looting but, Shaytaan for sure, as declared in the Quran is our open merciless enemy (looter).
- 14) Let's admit, many of us were in a rat race in our dunya affairs. Let's admit that at least. Some people are like mechanical robots when in the office; during a meeting the person is simultaneously having a conversation, partaking of a meal, answering calls, resolving problems on another call... so much of multi tasking.. and everyday... Is this life? Is this the life we happy to lead? Is this the life Allah wishes for us? Perhaps, Allah saw us suffering and He compassionately took us out to have a break and a breather. For some, Allah may have quashed the over ambitious and ultra-unrealistic aspirations and worldly goals we have within. Be self critical. Introspect and analyze. Now, let's go back and work smarter for Deen and Dunya. Remember, if the ideal Deen can't co-exist with your Dunya lifestyle, it means Dunya is the problem not Deen. Adjust Dunya to be compatible with Deen. Allah wants our life to be easier now; more simple, more convenient. Adapt to an easier way of earning. Ultimately, prioritize your Deen!
- 15) The solace that we take, the sabar and shukar that we make, etc. is because of the Iman that we have, alhamdulillah. Otherwise others may suffer depression, they cannot reconcile these events. Our Iman is allowing us to place events in perspective. Certain stores, even the non-Muslim staff when asked how the shop was saved, they said 'Allah saved it.' Deen is pristine, full of goodness (khayr) and it affects anyone who associates with it. Some stores or communities were left distinctly untouched/unharmed. Allah is the All-Wise and the wisdom of this occurrence is in His knowledge alone. We submit to Allah's decree always. Allah be pleased with us always.
- 16) On the Day of Qiyaamah (Resurrection), what will 'save the day' is our Iman and aamaal! A world full of gold will also not ransom us. The Ambiyaa (Divine Messengers of Allah) Alayhimus salaam, the people of Deen and the righteous will come to our rescue. They will intercede for us. Imagine if we can become those people; people of Deen who are righteous and Allah conscious... we too will be able to solve our own problems and of others on that Day with the permission of Allah.
- 17) We are not saying don't protect your Dunya and don't value your Dunya. Think about the radical and spontaneous mobilizing, it was all because we valued our dunya. Now think, which is more valuable? Is Deen or Dunya more lasting? Alhamdulillah, the amaanat of Dunya which Allah gave us we protected. And if we had passed away, we would have passed into the Next Life as a martyr (shaheed). Isn't the Deen of Allah also an amaanat on us all that we need to value and protect? So why can't we offer the same responses for Deen or at least 50% of it? Our response towards the looting shows that we can do the same for the protection of Deen. Masjids and its related a'amaal are also Amaanats to protect and value.
- 18) Remember, first we were disarmed spiritually. Our spiritual TOOL of protection, the Masjid, was compromised. Masjids were closed. Salah with jumat was stopped. Walking to the Masjid was stopped and so too were the bayans and zikr, etc. We were so to say looted spiritually, and we took no stance. Allah protect us, Allah protect us, but it must not be that because we turned around on the spiritual TOOL so Allah

allowed conditions to turn on us, [TOOL became LOOT]. We must never be ones who loot our own Deen. Now is the time for introspection and doing more. Up our guard. Are we reading our fard salah and earnestly trying to perform all the sunnah and nafl salah linked with it. Work to improve our concentration in salah also. Everything has a maintenance and service plan. Its due time to service our salah.

- 19) We say 'they bit the hand that fed'. Are we doing the same with Allah Ta'ala, Ta'ala Shaa-nuhu. Are we grateful to Allah Ta'ala and respecting and responding to His call, to His Deen and to His laws at the appropriate occasions? Remember, whoever is in need we must always be there to help; the bad acts of others shouldn't sway us from the good acts that Allah has been favouring us to do all along.
- 20) Also, we realise where our loyalty should lie. Our allegiance should primarily be with Allah and we must work on this. Look, those who were instrumental in closing our Masjids and we were complicit about it. We didn't realise; but this should now make us realise. Such measures were instituted and we followed those tooth and nail; sanitise, mask, limits to shoppers, social distancing, etc. Yet when the very same stores were attacked, we notice the complicit response. So to say, they were worried about the flu but purposefully ignored the cancer. Always be aware.
- 21) In Turkey, at the recent attempted coup, azaan was relayed on all Masjids on loudspeakers on the highest volume. Our minds and attention must go to Allah first. Masjids must open. Our azaans must resume aloud. Takbeer must be read aloud! The enemies of the truth and Islam panic with this.
- 22) When doing guarding, watching and vigals, keep guard on our iman and culture. Refrain totally from obscene language, vulgarity, etc. Keep to our Islamic style. Also, be on guard as to how we communicate in front of our children and staff. Evidence and intelligence is sometimes sifted from them unknowingly.
- 23) We have a schedule for our guarding and patrols, etc. Ensure we do the same for duas (supplications). Specifically allot time for dua. Dua works miracles and Allah is near with Divine acceptance when we make dua. Be particular with dua after the farz salah as these are readily accepted then. Also, just as we are particular to stand on guard, we should be more particular to draw Allah's Protection at our guard. Recite the '3 Quls', that is, Surah Ikhlaas, Surah Falaq and Surah Naas, three times each in the morning and the evening. These are Surahs of Protection. So while we guard our communities, Allah will then appoint angels to guard over us.
- 24) Unlawful insurance policies act only to curb damage; damage control. It doesn't prevent damage. Place our assurance in Allah and we will receive His assured protection insha-Allah. According to our means, discharge abundant sadaqah for Allah's pleasure and also as a forward 'payment' or shield for Allah's protection
- 25) Allah sent this trial on the Ummah, and Alhamdulillah through this the Masjids re-opened. So this is a real mercy to the Ummah. When we stood up for Allah, Allah made justice, peace and specifically Islam and the Muslims shine in this crisis. We all know our own weaknesses; we admit and acknowledge it. However, when we stood up for Allah, sacrificed our warm beds and comforts, we opened the Masjids unconditionally, involved ourselves in a'maal, in zikar and dua, 24 hour ibaadat schedules in the Masjid, served our own communities and the broader ones, then Allah also honoured us. Allah passed all the credit on us. Allah made Islam and the Muslims name shine in this country. This is Allah's love for us and His mercy. We should therefore aspire to be fully committed to Allah Ta'ala till our last breaths. How much more then won't Allah shower His favours and mercies on us, and Insha-Allah, Allah will protect us from any crisis that may be looming over us!

End.