11499 - Failing to help those who are stricken by disasters on the grounds that this is the will of Allah

the question

Some people see their Muslim brothers who have been stricken by calamities and disasters, and they do not move or feel motivated to help them, nor do they urge others to do that, on the grounds that what has happened is the will of Allah and it is not right for us to help them when Allah is punishing them! Some people, when they are told to do good to the poor and needy, they say, how can we do good to them when Allah has willed this for them? Allah has made them poor and you want to make them rich? Or they say, if Allah wanted to, He could make them rich without our help. What is the Islamic view concerning such comments?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

These and similar comments are undoubtedly false speech, which is indicative of great ignorance or despicable negligence. The will of Allah can never be grounds for committing sin or neglecting obligatory duties.

Moreover, Allah has commanded us to help Muslims who are in dire straits and to help the needy. He denounces those who fail to do this duty, as He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Nay! But you treat not the orphans with kindness and generosity (i.e. you neither treat them well, nor give them their exact right of inheritance)!

And urge not one another on the feeding of Al-Miskeen (the poor)!

And you devour the inheritance — all with greed.

And you love wealth with much love”

[al-Fajr 89:17-20]

Not feeding the poor is one of the causes of a person entering Hell. Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“ ‘What has caused you to enter Hell?’

They will say: “We were not of those who used to offer the Salaah (prayers),

Nor we used to feed Al-Miskeen (the poor);

[al-Muddaththir 74:42-44]

Wealth belongs to Allah; if He willed, He could take it away from the person who says these things. Would he, in that case, when he is in desperate need for food, like to have said to him what he is saying to others?

This view is seriously mistaken and is a great misguidance. The one who says this is like those of whom Allah says (interpretation of the meaning);

“And when it is said to them: ‘Spend of that with which Allah has provided you,’ those who disbelieve say to those who believe: ‘Shall we feed those whom, if Allah willed, He (Himself) would have fed? You are only in a plain error’”

[Yaa-Seen 36:47]