

# Guidance Through Difficulties

**PodSeries - Vol 317**



**Achieve Noble Character**

# **Guidance Through Difficulties**

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Guidance Through Difficulties

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## **Acknowledgements**

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We pray that Allah, the Exalted, completes His favour on us and accepts each letter of this book in His august court and allows it to testify on our behalf on the Last Day.

All praise to Allah, the Exalted, Lord of the worlds and endless blessings and peace be upon the Holy Prophet Muhammad, on his blessed Household and Companions, may Allah be pleased with them all.

## **Compiler's Notes**

We have tried diligently to do justice in this volume however if there are any short falls found then the compiler is personally and solely responsible for them.

We accept the possibility of faults and shortcomings in an effort to complete such a difficult task. We might have unconsciously stumbled and committed errors for which we ask for indulgence and forgiveness of our readers and the drawing of our attention thereto will be appreciated. We earnestly invite constructive suggestions which can be made to [ShaykhPod.Books@gmail.com](mailto:ShaykhPod.Books@gmail.com).

## Introduction

The following short book discusses some aspects of obtaining Guidance Through Difficulties. This discussion is based on Chapter 64 At Taghabun, Verse 11 of the Holy Quran:

*“No disaster strikes except by permission of Allah. And whoever believes in Allah - He will guide his heart. And Allah is Knowing of all things.”*

Implementing the lessons discussed will aid a Muslim to Achieve Noble Character. According to the Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2003, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has advised that the heaviest thing in the Scales of Judgment Day will be Noble Character. It is one of qualities of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, which Allah, the Exalted, complimented in Chapter 68 Al Qalam, Verse 4 of the Holy Quran:

*“And indeed, you are of a great moral character.”*

Therefore, it is a duty on all Muslims to gain and act on the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in order to Achieve Noble Character.

## Guidance Through Difficulties

### Chapter 64 – At Taghabun, Verse 11

مَا أَصَابَ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ  
يَهْدِ قَلْبَهُ، وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١١﴾

*“No disaster strikes except by permission of Allah. And whoever believes in Allah - He will guide his heart. And Allah is Knowing of all things.”*

***“No disaster strikes except by permission of Allah. And whoever believes in Allah - He will guide his heart...”***

Belief in Allah, the Exalted, in this respect means to understand that whatever Allah, the Exalted, has decreed and chosen for a person is best for them, even if this is not obvious to them.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, indicated the infinite and absolute power and authority of Allah, the Exalted, in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2516. This Hadith advises that the entire creation cannot benefit a person if Allah, the Exalted, did not desire them to do so. Similarly, the entire creation together could not harm someone if Allah, the Exalted, did not desire them to. This means only what Allah, the Exalted, decides happens within the universe. It is important to note, that this advice does not indicate one should abandon using means, such as medicine, but it means that one can use the means as they have been created by none other than Allah, the Exalted, but they must understand that Allah, the Exalted, is the only One who decides the outcome of all things. For example, there are many sick people who take medicine and recover from their illness. But there are others who take medicine and do not recover. This indicates that another factor decides the end result namely, the will of Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 9 At Tawbah, verse 51:

*“Say, “Never will we be struck except by what Allah has decreed for us...”*

The one who understands this knows that anything that affected them could not have been avoided. And those things which missed them could never have been obtained.

It is important to note, that whatever the end result even if it is against a person's desire they should remain patient and truly believe Allah, the Exalted, has chosen the best for them even if they do not observe the wisdom behind the outcome. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 216:

*“...But 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.”*

When one truly understands this truth they stop relying on the creation knowing they cannot innately harm or benefit them. Instead, they turn to Allah, the Exalted, seeking His support and protection through sincere obedience by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. This leads a muslim to trusting in Allah, the Exalted. It also encourages one to only fear Allah, the Exalted, as they know the creation cannot harm them without the will of Allah, the Exalted.

Recognising that all things which occur within one's life and the universe originate from Allah, the Exalted, is a part of understanding the Oneness of Allah, the Exalted. This is a topic which has no end and goes beyond only

superficially believing that there is none worthy of worship except Allah, the Exalted. When this is fixed in one's heart then they only hope in Allah, the Exalted, knowing He is the only One who can help them. They will only submit and obey Allah, the Exalted, in all aspects of their life. In reality, a person only obeys another in order to receive protection from harm or gain some benefit. Only Allah, the Exalted, can grant this therefore only He deserves to be obeyed and worshipped. If anyone chooses the obedience of another over the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, this shows they believe that this other can bring them some sort of benefit or protect them from harm. This is a sign of the weakness of their faith. The source of all things which occur is Allah, the Exalted, so muslims should only obey Him. Chapter 35 Fatir, verse 2:

*“Whatever Allah grants to people of mercy - none can withhold it; and whatever He withholds - none can release it thereafter...”*

It is important to note, that obeying a person which encourages the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, in reality is obeying Allah, the Exalted. For example, obeying the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Chapter 4 An Nisa, verse 80:

*“He who obeys the Messenger has obeyed Allah...”*

***“No disaster strikes except by permission of Allah. And whoever believes in Allah - He will guide his heart...”***

Belief in Allah, the Exalted, in this respect means to understand that whatever Allah, the Exalted, has decreed and chosen for a person is best for them, even if this is not obvious to them. This will encourage them to remain sincerely obedient to Allah, the Exalted, during all situations, which in turn leads to success in both worlds. This has been indicated in the last part of the main verse under discussion.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 7500, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that every situation is blessed for a believer. The only condition is that they need to respond to each situation they encounter while obeying Allah, the Exalted, specifically, patience in difficulties and gratitude in times of ease.

There are two aspects of life. One aspect are the situations people find themselves in whether they are times of ease or difficulties. The control of what situation a person faces is out of their hands. Allah, the Exalted, has decided this and there is no escaping them. Therefore, stressing over the situations one faces does not make sense as they are destined and therefore inevitable. The other aspect is a person's reaction to each situation. This is in each person's control and this is what they are judged on for example, showing patience or impatience in a difficult situation. Therefore, a muslim must concentrate on their behaviour and reaction in each situation instead of stressing over being in a situation as this is unavoidable. If a muslim desires to succeed in both worlds they should

assess each situation and always act in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted. For example, in times of ease they must use the blessings they possess as prescribed by Islam which is true gratitude to Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 14 Ibrahim, verse 7:

*“And [remember] when your Lord proclaimed, 'If you are grateful, I will surely increase you [in favor]...”*

And in times of difficulty they must show patience knowing Allah, the Exalted, chooses what is best for His servants even if they do not understand the wisdom behind the choices. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 216:

*“...But 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.”*

***“No disaster strikes except by permission of Allah. And whoever believes in Allah - He will guide his heart...”***

Belief in Allah, the Exalted, in this respect means to understand that whatever Allah, the Exalted, has decreed and chosen for a person is best for them, even if this is not obvious to them. This will encourage them to remain sincerely obedient to Allah, the Exalted, during all situations, which in turn leads to success in both worlds. This has been indicated in the last part of the main verse under discussion.

Allah, the Exalted, is the One who decrees harm and benefit. Allah, the Exalted, decrees harm to those who remain steadfast on persistent disobedience. But even in this harm there is much good such as wiping away one's sins before reaching Judgment Day. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6561.

A muslim who understands this divine name will strive to receive benefits from Allah, the Exalted, and avoid harm through sincere obedience.

A muslim must act on this divine name by keeping their harm away from others and only provide them with benefits according to their means. This in fact is the characteristic of a true believer according to a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 4998.

***“No disaster strikes except by permission of Allah. And whoever believes in Allah - He will guide his heart...”***

Belief in Allah, the Exalted, in this respect means to understand that whatever Allah, the Exalted, has decreed and chosen for a person is best for them, even if this is not obvious to them. This will encourage them to remain sincerely obedient to Allah, the Exalted, during all situations, which in turn leads to success in both worlds. This has been indicated in the last part of the main verse under discussion.

When some face difficulties instead of firstly observing themselves and their behaviour to assess whether they need to change for the better and remain steadfast on the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, patiently waiting for relief they instead turn to uneducated and inexperienced people who claim to fix worldly things through spiritual means. These people only cause a muslim to adopt an illness which is far worse than their initial problem namely, paranoia. These people convince muslims that their problems have either been caused by supernatural creatures, such as jinns, or by black magic which someone has used against them. Even though jinns do exist it is very rare for them to affect people in their worldly matters. This incorrect advice causes muslims to become severely paranoid and superstitious over petty things and it even causes them to grow suspicious over their friends and relatives. This only leads to enmity and fractured relationships. This attitude will also damage one's faith in Allah, the Exalted, as they will be advised in many cases to do things which are not advised in the Holy Quran or the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

It is important for muslims to strengthen their faith through gaining and acting on Islamic knowledge. This will prevent them turning to such foolish people who cannot even fix their own problems let alone fix the problems of others. Strong faith will prevent paranoia affecting them as they will fully rely on Allah, the Exalted, in all situations. Strong faith allows a muslim to understand that even if the entire creation desired to harm them they will not be able to do so unless Allah, the Exalted, allowed it. Similarly, the entire creation cannot benefit them unless Allah, the Exalted, wills it. And every case and situation only occurs according to a set and unchangeable plan namely, destiny. This has been advised throughout the Holy Quran and the Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, such as the far reaching Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2516.

To conclude, a muslim when encountering a problem should firstly assess their own behaviour and rectify it if necessary and then remain obedient to Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience and avoid further problems in the form of paranoia by avoiding people who claim to fix worldly problems in spiritual ways.

***“No disaster strikes except by permission of Allah. And whoever believes in Allah - He will guide his heart...”***

Belief in Allah, the Exalted, in this respect means to understand that whatever Allah, the Exalted, has decreed and chosen for a person is best for them, even if this is not obvious to them. This will encourage them to remain sincerely obedient to Allah, the Exalted, during all situations, which in turn leads to success in both worlds. This has been indicated in the last part of the main verse under discussion.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1302, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that real patience is shown at the onset of a difficulty.

It is important to understand that true patience is shown throughout a calamity meaning, from the very onset of the difficulty onwards. Accepting the reality of a difficulty, such as the death of a loved one, eventually, with the passing of time occurs with everyone. This is acceptance not true patience.

Muslims should therefore ensure they encounter difficulties while patient believing that everything which Allah, the Exalted, chooses is for the best even if they fail to observe the wisdoms behind the choices. Instead, they should reflect on the many times when they believed something was good

yet, it ended up being bad and vice versa. Understanding the extreme short sightedness and limited knowledge of humans and the infinite knowledge and wisdom of Allah, the Exalted, can aid a muslim to show patience from the onset of a difficulty. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 216:

*“...But 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.”*

In addition, it is important for muslims to continue showing patience till the end of their life. This is because a person can easily lose the reward of patience even if they were patient from the onset by demonstrating impatience further down the line. This is an extremely deadly trap of the Devil. He patiently waits for decades just to ruin the reward of a muslim. The Holy Quran makes it clear that a muslim will gain reward for what they bring to Judgment Day, meaning, take with them when they die it does not declare they will gain reward after simply doing a deed, such as showing patience at the onset of a difficulty. Chapter 6 Al An'am, verse 160:

*“Whoever comes [on the Day of Judgment] with a good deed...”*

***“No disaster strikes except by permission of Allah. And whoever believes in Allah - He will guide his heart...”***

Belief in Allah, the Exalted, in this respect means to understand that whatever Allah, the Exalted, has decreed and chosen for a person is best for them, even if this is not obvious to them. This will encourage them to remain sincerely obedient to Allah, the Exalted, during all situations, which in turn leads to success in both worlds. This has been indicated in the last part of the main verse under discussion.

In a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4168, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised muslims not to question destiny as this opens the door to the Devil. He encourages muslims to challenge the choice of Allah, the Exalted, as they do not observe the wisdom behind it because of their short sightedness. This in turn leads to impatience and the loss of reward. One should reflect on their past experiences where they believed something was good when it in fact was bad and vice versa in order to inspire them to remain patient as they will be shown these benefits sooner or later. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 216:

*“...But 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.”*

***“No disaster strikes except by permission of Allah. And whoever believes in Allah - He will guide his heart...”***

Belief in Allah, the Exalted, in this respect means to understand that whatever Allah, the Exalted, has decreed and chosen for a person is best for them, even if this is not obvious to them. This will encourage them to remain sincerely obedient to Allah, the Exalted, during all situations, which in turn leads to success in both worlds. This has been indicated in the last part of the main verse under discussion.

Often when muslims receive blessings especially, beyond their need, it distracts them from the hereafter and instead focuses their minds on this material world. So in this respect, the wisdom behind a difficulty is to refocus a muslim's attention on what is truly important which is preparing for the hereafter. This is like a person who is so preoccupied with their phone that they cross a road without seeing an oncoming vehicle. Another person violently pulls them away from the oncoming car which causes them distress yet, saves their life. Even though being pulled violently causes distress and even pain but it is only done in order to refocus their attention on the life threatening danger namely, the oncoming car. Similarly, a muslim faces emotional and physical difficulties in order to refocus their attention on more important things such as the hereafter. If a muslim was left to only face times of ease without difficulties there is no doubt that they would become lost in enjoying the excess of this material world. This neglect in the long run would be disastrous for them. So they face a small difficulty in order to protect them from greater difficulties namely, the difficulties of the hereafter. Therefore, muslims should remember this truth every time they face a difficulty so that they leave the difficulty refocused on more important things and act correctly over this blessing instead of

demonstrating impatience and heedlessness to this vital benefit. This is in fact one of the biggest favours of Allah, the Exalted.

***“No disaster strikes except by permission of Allah. And whoever believes in Allah - He will guide his heart...”***

Belief in Allah, the Exalted, in this respect means to understand that whatever Allah, the Exalted, has decreed and chosen for a person is best for them, even if this is not obvious to them. This will encourage them to remain sincerely obedient to Allah, the Exalted, during all situations, which in turn leads to success in both worlds. This has been indicated in the last part of the main verse under discussion.

Parents often take away things or prevent their children from obtaining certain things such as unhealthy food in order to protect them. This behaviour often causes the child to become sad or angry as they are completely unaware of the wisdom behind the actions of their parent. This parental behaviour is something which is widely accepted in society and is rightfully believed to be a characteristic of a good and responsible parent. Similarly, in life people often lose or are prevented from obtaining certain worldly things by Allah, the Exalted. A muslim must understand that the same way parents keep harmful things away from their children even though their children do not understand the reason behind their choice similarly Allah, the Exalted, acts in this manner according to His infinite wisdom and knowledge in order to protect His servants even if people do not understand the wisdom behind His choices. Therefore, every time a muslim finds themselves in this situation they should reflect on this simple example, which no one would reject irrespective of their faith, so that they are inspired to remain patient and show gratitude for the divine protection Allah, the Exalted, has granted them. They should not act like an immature child by becoming angry and impatient as adults are meant to behave better than children. In fact, children are excused from behaving in such a

manner as they lack knowledge and experience whereas adults should not lack this and will therefore be held accountable for their behaviour in both worlds.

***“No disaster strikes except by permission of Allah. And whoever believes in Allah - He will guide his heart...”***

Belief in Allah, the Exalted, in this respect means to understand that whatever Allah, the Exalted, has decreed and chosen for a person is best for them, even if this is not obvious to them. This will encourage them to remain sincerely obedient to Allah, the Exalted, during all situations, which in turn leads to success in both worlds. This has been indicated in the last part of the main verse under discussion.

It is important for muslims to understand a simple thing which can aid them with patiently facing destiny and the difficulties it brings. A person happily takes a bitter medicine which their doctor prescribes fully trusting in their knowledge, experience and choice all the while believing that their doctor knows what is best for them. This is true even though they are only human and prone to errors. Yet, many muslims fail to place this same level of trust in Allah, the Exalted, even though His knowledge is infinite and His choices always the wisest. Muslims should try to accept destiny and the troubles it brings just like they take the bitter medicine without complaining knowing it is best for them. They should understand that the troubles and difficulties they face are best for them even if they do not understand or observe the wisdoms in them just like they do not understand the science behind the bitter medicine they happily take. Even though in most cases, they will never understand the science behind the bitter medicine they take a time will certainly come, whether in this world or in the hereafter, when the wisdom behind the bitter difficulties they faced will be revealed to them. So a muslim should anticipate this time patiently knowing all will be revealed shortly. Pondering deeply over this can increase one's patience when dealing with difficulties. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 216:

*“...But 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.”*

***“No disaster strikes except by permission of Allah. And whoever believes in Allah - He will guide his heart...”***

Belief in Allah, the Exalted, in this respect means to understand that whatever Allah, the Exalted, has decreed and chosen for a person is best for them, even if this is not obvious to them. This will encourage them to remain sincerely obedient to Allah, the Exalted, during all situations, which in turn leads to success in both worlds. This has been indicated in the last part of the main verse under discussion.

In a Hadith found in Imam Bukhari's, Adab Al Mufrad, number 492, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that a muslim does not face any type of physical difficulty, irrespective of its size, such as a prick of a thorn, or any emotional difficulty, such as stress, except Allah, the Exalted, erases their sins because of it.

This refers to minor sins as major sins require sincere repentance. This outcome occurs when a muslim remains patient from the onset of the difficulty until the end of their life. This is important to understand as many people believe they can complain initially and then show patience after. This is not true patience instead it is only acceptance which occurs with the passing of time. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sunan An Nasai, number 1870. In addition, patience needs to be shown throughout one's life as a person can destroy their reward by showing impatience down the line.

A muslim should remember that it is far better to have their minor sins erased through these difficulties than to reach the Day of Judgment while still possessing them. A muslim should constantly repent and strive to perform righteous deeds in order to erase their minor sins. And if they encounter any physical or emotional difficulties they should remain patient hoping for their minor sins to be erased and to obtain an uncountable reward. Chapter 39 Az Zumar, verse 10:

*"...Indeed, the patient will be given their reward without account [i.e., limit]."*

***“No disaster strikes except by permission of Allah. And whoever believes in Allah - He will guide his heart...”***

Belief in Allah, the Exalted, in this respect means to understand that whatever Allah, the Exalted, has decreed and chosen for a person is best for them, even if this is not obvious to them. This will encourage them to remain sincerely obedient to Allah, the Exalted, during all situations, which in turn leads to success in both worlds. This has been indicated in the last part of the main verse under discussion.

A Hadith found in Musnad Ahmad, number 2803, advises that being patient over the things one dislikes leads to a great reward. Chapter 39 Az Zumar, verse 10:

*“...Indeed, the patient will be given their reward without account [i.e., limit].”*

Patience is a key element required in order to fulfil the three aspects of faith: fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, refraining from His prohibitions and facing destiny. But a higher and more rewarding level than patience is contentment. This is when a muslim deeply believes that Allah, the Exalted, only chooses the best for His servants and they therefore prefer His choice over their own. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 216:

*“...But 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.”*

A patient muslim understands that anything which effected them, such as a difficulty, could not have been avoided even if the entire creation aided them. Similarly, whatever missed them could not have affected them. The one who truly accepts this fact will not exult and grow proud over anything they obtain knowing Allah, the Exalted, allocated that thing to them. Nor will they grieve over anything which they fail to obtain knowing Allah, the Exalted, did not allocate that thing to them and nothing in existence can alter this fact. Chapter 57 Al Hadid, verses 22-23:

*“No disaster strikes upon the earth or among yourselves except that it is in a register<sup>1</sup> before We bring it into being - indeed that, for Allah, is easy. In order that you not despair over what has eluded you and not exult [in pride] over what He has given you...”*

In addition, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, has advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 79, that when something occurs a muslim should firmly believe it was decreed and nothing could have changed the outcome. And a muslim should not have regrets believing they could have prevented the outcome if they somehow behaved differently as this attitude only causes the Devil to encourage them towards impatience and complaining about destiny. A patient muslim truly understands that whatever Allah, the Exalted, has chosen is best for

them even if they do not observe the wisdom behind it. The one who is patient does desire a change in their situation and even supplicates for it but they do not complain about what has occurred. Being persistently patient can lead a muslim to a greater level namely, contentment.

The one who is content does not desire things to change as they know the choice of Allah, the Exalted, is better than their choice. This muslim firmly believes and acts on the Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 7500. It advises that every situation is best for the believer. If they encounter a problem they should show patience which leads to blessings. And if they experience times of ease they should show gratitude which also leads to blessings.

It is important to know that Allah, the Exalted, tests those He loves. If they show patience they will be rewarded but if they are angered it only proves their lack of love for Allah, the Exalted. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2396.

A muslim should be patient or content with the choice and decree of Allah, the Exalted, in both times of ease and hardship. This will reduce one's distress and provide them with much blessings in both worlds. Whereas, impatience will only destroy the reward they could have received. Either way a muslim will go through the situation decreed by Allah, the Exalted, but it is their choice whether they desire reward or not.

A muslim will never reach full contentment until their behaviour is equal in times of difficulty and ease. How can a true servant go to the Master namely, Allah, the Exalted, for a judgment and then become unhappy if the choice does not match their desire. There is a real possibility that if a person gets what they desire it will destroy them. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 216:

*“...But 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.”*

A muslim should not worship Allah, the Exalted, on the edge. Meaning, when the divine decree matches their wishes they praise Allah, the Exalted. And when it does not they become annoyed acting as if they know better than Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 22 Al Hajj, verse 11:

*“And of the people is he who worships Allah on an edge. If he is touched by good, he is reassured by it; but if he is struck by trial, he turns on his face [to unbelief]. He has lost [this] world and the Hereafter. That is what is the manifest loss.”*

A muslim should behave with the choice of Allah, the Exalted, as if they would behave with a skilled trustworthy doctor. The same way a muslim would not complain taking bitter medicine prescribed by the doctor knowing it is best for them they should accept the difficulties they face in the world

knowing it is best for them. In fact, a sensible person would thank the doctor for the bitter medicine and similarly an intelligent muslim would thank Allah, the Exalted, for any situation they encounter.

In addition, a muslim should review the many verses of the Holy Quran and the Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, which discuss the reward given to the patient and content muslim. Deep reflection on this will inspire a muslim to remain steadfast when facing difficulties. For example, Chapter 39 Az Zumar, verse 10:

*"...Indeed, the patient will be given their reward without account [i.e., limit]."*

Another example is mentioned in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2402. It advises that when those who patiently faced trials and difficulties in the world receive their reward on Judgment Day those who did not face such trials will wish they patiently faced difficulties such as their skin being cut off with scissors.

In order to gain patience and even contentment with what Allah, the Exalted, chooses for a person they should seek and act on the knowledge found within the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, so that they reach the high level of excellence of faith. This has been discussed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 99. Excellence in faith is when a muslim performs

deeds, such as the prayer, as if they can witness Allah, the Exalted. The one who reaches this level will not feel the pain of difficulties and trials as they will completely be immersed in the awareness and love of Allah, the Exalted. This is similar to the state of the women who did not feel pain when cutting their own hands when they observed the beauty of the Holy Prophet Yusuf, peace be upon him. Chapter 12 Yusuf, verse 31:

*"...and gave each one of them a knife and said [to Joseph], "Come out before them." And when they saw him, they greatly admired him and cut their hands and said, "Perfect is Allah! This is not a man; this is none but a noble angel.""*

If a muslim cannot reach this high level of faith they should at least try to reach the lower level mentioned in the Hadith quoted earlier. This is the level where one is constantly aware they are being observed by Allah, the Exalted. The same way a person would not complain in front of an authoritative figure they feared, such as an employer, a muslim who is constantly aware of the presence of Allah, the Exalted, will not complain about the choices He makes.

***“No disaster strikes except by permission of Allah. And whoever believes in Allah - He will guide his heart...”***

Belief in Allah, the Exalted, in this respect means to understand that whatever Allah, the Exalted, has decreed and chosen for a person is best for them, even if this is not obvious to them. This will encourage them to remain sincerely obedient to Allah, the Exalted, during all situations, which in turn leads to success in both worlds. This has been indicated in the last part of the main verse under discussion.

In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 159, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, gave a short but far reaching piece of advice. He advised people to sincerely declare their belief in Allah, the Exalted, and then remain steadfast on it.

Remaining steadfast on one's faith means that they must strive in the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, in all aspects of their life. It consists of fulfilling the commands of Allah, the Exalted, which relate to Him, such as the obligatory fasts and those which relate to people, such as treating others kindly. It includes refraining from all the prohibitions of Islam which are between a person and Allah, the Exalted, and those involving others. A muslim must also face destiny with patience truly believing Allah, the Exalted, chooses what is best for His servants. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 216:

*“...But 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.”*

Steadfastness can include refraining from both types of polytheism. The major type is when one worships something other than Allah, the Exalted. The minor type is when one shows off their good deeds to others. This has been warned in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3989. Therefore, an aspect of steadfastness is to always act for the sake of Allah, the Exalted.

It includes obeying Allah, the Exalted, at all times instead of obeying and pleasing oneself or others. If a Muslim disobeys Allah, the Exalted, by pleasing themselves or others they should know neither their desires nor people will protect them from Allah, the Exalted. On the other hand, the one who is sincerely obedient to Allah, the Exalted, will be protected from all things by Him even if this protection is not apparent to them.

Remaining steadfast on one's faith includes following the path set out by the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and not adopting a path which deviates from this. The one who strives to adopt this path will not need anything else as this is enough to keep them steadfast on their faith.

As people are not perfect they will undoubtedly make mistakes and commit sins. So being steadfast in matters of faith does not mean one has to be perfect but it means they must strive to adhere strictly to the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, as outlined earlier, and to sincerely repent if they commit a sin. This has been indicated in chapter 41 Fussilat, verse 6:

*“...so take a straight course to Him and seek His forgiveness...”*

This is further supported by a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 1987, which advises to fear Allah, the Exalted, and to erase a (minor) sin which has occurred by performing a righteous deed. In another Hadith found in Imam Malik's Muwatta, book 2, Hadith number 37, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised muslims to try their best to remain steadfast on the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, even though they will not be able to do it perfectly. Therefore, a muslim's duty is to fulfil the potential they have been given through their intention and physical actions in the steadfast obedience of Allah, the Exalted. They have not been commanded to achieve perfection as this is not possible.

It is important to note, that one cannot remain steadfast in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, through their physical actions without purifying their heart first. As indicated in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 3984, the limbs of the body will only act in a pure way if the spiritual heart is pure. Purity of heart is only achieved by gaining and acting on the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

Steadfast obedience requires one to control their tongue as it expresses the heart. Without controlling the tongue steadfast obedience to Allah, the Exalted, is not possible. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2407.

Finally, if any deficiency in the steadfast obedience of Allah, the Exalted, occurs one must make sincere repentance to Allah, the Exalted, and seek the forgiveness of people if it involves their rights. Chapter 46 Al Ahqaf, verse 13:

*“Indeed, those who have said, “Our Lord is Allah,” and then remained on a right course - there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve.”*

***“No disaster strikes except by permission of Allah. And whoever believes in Allah - He will guide his heart...”***

Another aspect of this is that a true believer will understand everything which occurs within their life is a sign from Allah, the Exalted, which should encourage them to sincerely obey Him more.

It is important for a muslim to be observant in their daily life and avoid being too self-absorbed in their own worldly matters so that they become heedless over the things which are occurring around them and the things which have already occurred. This is an important quality to possess as it is an excellent way to strengthen one's faith which in turn helps one to remain obedient to Allah, the Exalted, at all times. For example, when a muslim observes a sick person they should not only aid them by whatever means they possess, even if it is only a supplication, but they should reflect on their own health and understand that they too will eventually lose their good health either by an illness, ageing or even death. This should inspire them to be grateful for their good health and show this through their actions by taking advantage of their good health in both worldly and religious matters which are pleasing to Allah, the Exalted.

When they observe the death of a rich person they should not only feel sad for the deceased and their family but realise that one day which is unknown to them they will die also. They should understand that just like the rich person was abandoned by their wealth, fame and family at their grave so will they too be left only with their deeds in their grave. This will encourage them to prepare for their grave and the hereafter.

This attitude can and should be applied to all things one observes. A muslim should learn a lesson from everything around them which has been advised in the Holy Quran. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 191:

*"...and give thought to the creation of the heavens and the earth, [saying], "Our Lord, You did not create this aimlessly; exalted are You [above such a thing]; then protect us from the punishment of the Fire.""*

Those who behave in this manner will strengthen their faith on a daily basis whereas those who are too self-absorbed in their worldly life will remain heedless which may lead them to their destruction.

***“No disaster strikes except by permission of Allah. And whoever believes in Allah - He will guide his heart...”***

Another aspect of this is that a true believer will understand everything which occurs within their life is a sign from Allah, the Exalted, which should encourage them to sincerely obey Him more.

It is important for a muslim to understand a key truth namely, nothing in creation occurs without a wise reason even if people do not observe this wisdom immediately. A muslim should treat everything which occurs, whether they are in times of ease or difficulty, as a message in a bottle. They should not get too caught up in assessing and examining the bottle as it is merely a messenger which delivers the important message. This occurs when muslims either exult over the good things which occur thereby becoming heedless to the message within the good thing. Or they become grieved during difficulties thereby becoming too distracted to understand the message within the difficulty. They should instead concentrate on following the advice of the Holy Quran and approach each situation in a balanced way. Chapter 57 Al Hadid, verse 23:

*“In order that you not despair over what has eluded you and not exult [in pride] over what He has given you...”*

This verse does not prohibit being happy or sad in different situations as this is a part of human nature. But it advises a balanced approach whereby one avoids extreme emotions namely, exultant which is excessive happiness or grief which is excessive sadness. This balanced approach will allow one to focus their mind on the more important message inside the bottle meaning, inside the situation whether it is a situation of ease or difficulty. Through assessing, understanding and acting on the hidden message a muslim can improve their worldly and religious life for the better. Sometimes the message will be a wakeup call to turn back to Allah, the Exalted, before their time runs out. Sometimes it will be a way of raising their rank. Other times a way of erasing their sins and sometimes a reminder not to attach themselves to the temporal material world and the things in it. Without this assessment one will merely journey through events without improving their worldly or religious life.

***“...And whoever believes in Allah - He will guide his heart...”***

True belief involves sincerity. In a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim number 196, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised that Islam is sincerity towards Allah, the Exalted.

Sincerity towards Allah, the Exalted, includes fulfilling all the duties given by Him in the form of commands and prohibitions, solely for His pleasure. As confirmed in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 1, all will be judged by their intention. So if one is not sincere towards Allah, the Exalted, when performing good deeds they will gain no reward in this world or in the next. In fact, according to a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 3154, those who performed insincere deeds will be told on Judgement Day to seek their reward from those who they acted for, which will not be possible. Chapter 98 Al Bayyinah, verse 5.

*"And they were not commanded except to worship Allah, [being] sincere to Him in religion....."*

If one is lax in fulfilling their duties towards Allah, the Exalted, it proves a lack of sincerity. Therefore, they should sincerely repent and struggle to fulfil them all. It is important to bear in mind Allah, the Exalted, never burdens one with duties they cannot perform or handle. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 286.

*"Allah does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity...."*

Being sincere towards Allah, the Exalted, means that one should always choose His pleasure over the pleasure of themselves and others. A Muslim should always give priority to those actions which are for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, over all else. One should love others and dislike their sins for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, and not for the sake of their own desires. When they help others or refuse to take part in sins it should be for the sake of Allah, the Exalted. The one who adopts this mentality has perfected their faith. This is confirmed in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4681.

***“...And whoever believes in Allah - He will guide his heart...”***

True belief involves inward belief which is supported by outward actions.  
Chapter 47 Muhammad, verse 7:

*“O you who have believed, if you support Allah, He will support you and plant firmly your feet.”*

This verse means that if one aids Islam then Allah, the Exalted, will help them in both worlds. It is strange how countless people desire the help of Allah, the Exalted, yet do not fulfil the first part of this verse through the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience. The excuse most people give is that they do not have time to perform righteous deeds. They desire the help of Allah, the Exalted, yet will not make time to do the things which please Him. Does this make sense? Those who do not fulfil the obligatory duties and then expect the aid of Allah, the Exalted, in their moment of need are quite foolish. And those who do fulfil the obligatory duties yet refuse to go beyond them will find that the aid they receive is limited. How one behaves is how they are treated. The more time and energy dedicated to Allah, the Exalted, the more support they will receive. It really is that simple.

A muslim needs to understand that the majority of the obligatory duties, such as the five daily prayers, only takes a small amount of time in one's day. A muslim cannot expect to barely dedicate an hour a day to offering the obligatory prayers and then neglect Allah, the Exalted, for the rest of the day and still expect His continuous support through all difficulties. A person would dislike a friend who treated them in such a manner. How then can one treat Allah, the Exalted, the Lord of the worlds, like this then?

Some only dedicate extra time to pleasing Allah, the Exalted, when they encounter a worldly problem then demand Him to fix it as if they done Allah, the Exalted, a favour by performing voluntary good deeds. This foolish mentality clearly contradicts servanthood to Allah, the Exalted. It is amazing how this type of person finds time to do all their other leisurely activities, such as spending time with family and friends, watching TV and attending social functions yet finds no time to dedicate to pleasing Allah, the Exalted. They cannot seem to find time to recite and adopt the teachings of the Holy Quran. They do not seem to find time to study and act on the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. These people somehow find wealth to spend on their unnecessary luxuries yet seem to find no wealth to donate in voluntary charity.

It is important to understand that a muslim will be treated according to how they behave. Meaning, if a Muslim dedicates extra time to please Allah, the Exalted, then they will find the support they need to journey through all difficulties safely. But if they fail to fulfil the obligatory duties or only fulfil them without dedicating any other time to pleasing Allah, the Exalted, then they will find a similar response from Allah, the Exalted. Put simply, the

more one gives the more they shall receive. If one does not give much they should not expect much in return.

***“...And whoever believes in Allah - He will guide his heart...”***

In a divine Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6502, Allah, the Exalted, declares that when one strives in fulfilling the obligatory duties and performing voluntary righteous deeds He blesses their five senses so that they use them in obedience to Him. This righteous servant will very rarely commit sins. This increase in guidance has been indicated in Chapter 29 Al Ankabut, verse 69:

*“And those who strive for Us - We will surely guide them to Our ways...”*

This muslim reaches the level of excellence which has been discussed in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 99. This is when a muslim performs actions, such as the prayer, as if they observe Allah, the Exalted. The one who reaches this level will guard their mind and body from sins. This is the one who when they speak they speak for Allah, the Exalted, when they are silent they are silent for Allah, the Exalted. When they act they act for Him and when they are still they are for His sake. This is an aspect of monotheism and understanding the Oneness of Allah, the Exalted.

The next thing mentioned in the main Hadith under discussion is that this muslim's supplication will be fulfilled and they will be granted the refuge and protection of Allah, the Exalted. This is a clear lesson for those who

desire lawful worldly things. They should not seek to obtain them using any means except through the sincere obedience of Allah, the Exalted. No spiritual teacher or anyone else will be able to grant things to a person unless the person strives in the obedience of Allah, the Exalted and they are destined to obtain those things.

To conclude this Hadith makes it clear that the proximity of Allah, the Exalted, is only gained through sincere obedience to Him in the form of fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and being patient with destiny. This is the path of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and the only path of success in both worlds.

***“...And whoever believes in Allah - He will guide his heart...”***

Allah, the Exalted, is the One who guides His servants to what is beneficial for them in both worlds and guides them away from anything which harms them. Chapter 91 Ash Shams, verse 8:

*“And inspired it [with discernment of] its wickedness and its righteousness.”*

The muslim who understands this divine name will seek guidance in worldly and religious matters from none other than Allah, the Exalted, through the teachings of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Whoever seeks guidance from anything else will not find lasting success.

A muslim should act on this divine name by guiding others towards the obedience of Allah, the Exalted, and what is beneficial to them in both worldly and religious matters according to their knowledge. This will ensure they become a true believer meaning, the one who loves for others what they desire for themselves. This has been advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2515.

***“...And Allāh is Knowing of all things.”***

Allah, the Exalted, is All Knowing as nothing escapes His knowledge whether in the Heavens or the Earth whether visible or not. The knowledge of Allah, the Exalted, has no limit, it has no beginning and no end and it is innate meaning, no one gave it to Him. Every creation which possesses knowledge has been granted it by none other than Allah, the Exalted. The knowledge of the creation is limited and has a beginning. Allah, the Exalted, is fully aware of one's outer and inner beings at all time.

The muslim who understands this divine name will refrain from sins both outward and inward rightfully believing Allah, the Exalted, knows all this and will hold them accountable for their actions. In addition, they will not stress about worldly issues understanding that Allah, the Exalted, is fully aware of them and will respond to them at the right time.

A muslim should act on this divine name by striving to gain and act on useful knowledge both worldly and religious which is the path of piety. This is the true inheritor of the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them, which has been indicated in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 223.

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