

Aspects of Patience

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Achieve Noble Character

Aspects of Patience

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Acknowledgements

All praises are for Allah, the Exalted, Lord of the worlds, who has given us the inspiration, opportunity and strength to complete this volume. Blessings and peace be upon the Holy Prophet Muhammad whose path has been chosen by Allah, the Exalted, for the salvation of mankind.

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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.

Introduction

This book will discuss an important aspect of Noble Character namely, Patience.

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.

Aspects of Patience

True patience is when one encounters a situation they dislike and desires for it to change without showing any signs of complaint against Allah, the Exalted. Patience is a very important aspect of faith. In fact, the fourth rightly guided Caliph of Islam, Ali Bin Abu Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, once advised that patience is to faith like the human head is to the rest of the body. This advice is recorded in Imam Suyuti's, Jami Al Sagheer, number 5136. This means that success can only be achieved if one demonstrates patience at all times.

Patience is required in all aspects of life. One requires patience in order to refrain from sins by subduing their evil desires and instead turn to Allah, the Exalted, in sincere obedience. The more one is inspired by the Devil into believing that a sin is insignificant the more patience is required in order to overcome this thought and refrain from it. Patience is required to perform righteous deeds correctly and it is required to face destiny in a way pleasing to Allah, the Exalted.

Humans have been created with desires and free will. Conversely, Angels have been created without free will or desires as they only do what Allah, the Exalted, commands. Chapter 66 At Tahrim, verse 6:

“...over which are [appointed] angels, harsh and severe; they do not disobey Allah in what He commands them but do what they are commanded.”

Whenever a person performs an act there is always an element of desire in it. If the desire is bad then one needs patience to subdue it. If the desire is good again patience is required in order to perform the good deed without being hindered by the inner or outer Devils. These desires span all aspects of life including one's social, personal and professional lives. Everyone desires to be successful in these aspects of life but one needs to exert patience in order to achieve these things via lawful means. This is the test referred to in the Holy Quran. Chapter 67 Al Mulk, verse 2:

“[He] who created death and life to test you [as to] which of you is best in deed...”

If one demonstrates patience in achieving their good desires then the outcome will be blessed for them in both worlds. Whereas, if someone rejects patience and uses unlawful means to fulfill their wishes then the same outcome will become a punishment and curse for them. For example, if a parent demonstrates patience while raising their child such as, ensuring their provision is lawful, then the child will be a blessing for them. But if they desire to take the easy path in life and reject patience then the same child will turn their home into Hell.

People face difficulties for two main reasons. The first is due to their sins. Chapter 8 Al Anfal, verse 51:

"That is for what your hands have put forth [of evil] and because Allah is not ever unjust to [His] servants."

Muslims should realize that the punishment in this world is much lighter than the punishment in the hereafter. And being punished in this world is actually a type of blessing as it is a means for a person to sincerely repent and escape punishment in the hereafter. In addition, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 6565, that whenever a muslim faces any hardship, even the pricking of a thorn, with patience then Allah, the Exalted, in turn forgives their sins.

Allah, the Exalted often uses hardships in order to test a person, which is the other main reason why people face difficulties. A test is needed to change a rough human being into a diamond that is worthy to enter Paradise. This is just like when a piece of coal is placed under immense pressure which results in the production of a priceless diamond. The coal cannot become a diamond without being patient during this process. Therefore, muslims must face hardships with patience in order to be raised in spiritual degrees until they reach Paradise. Every person understands that one cannot achieve something in this world without effort so why do some believe they can achieve the eternal Paradise without any struggle?

Allah, the Exalted, has warned that others will make life difficult for a muslim and challenge them with every step they take towards Allah, the Exalted. These obstacles have only increased with time as the general population of muslims are being blamed over the actions of a few

misguided people. Unfortunately, in most cases, this type of hardship usually comes from one's own relatives and friends. For example, they will label someone crazy if they concentrate more on the permanent hereafter by donating charity instead of hoarding wealth for this temporal world. Whenever one desires and struggles to obey Allah, the Exalted, by fulfilling His commands, refraining from His prohibitions and by facing destiny with patience they must face trials and tribulations as the armies of evil will constantly cause them trouble. Only with patience will they overcome these forces and achieve the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted.

The evil a person faces in this world consists of many things, such as the Devil, misguided people and one's own inner Devil. The inner desires will always encourage one towards the love for worldly things mentioned in chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 14:

“Beautified for people is the love of that which they desire - of women and sons, heaped-up sums of gold and silver, fine branded horses, and cattle and tilled land. That is the enjoyment of worldly life, but Allah has with Him the best return [i.e., Paradise].”

These desires can only be overcome with patience so that one focuses their mind and prioritizes the hereafter by sincerely obeying Allah, the Exalted, instead of worshipping their own desires and the material world.

If one does not overcome these desires they can cause them to spiral out of control until their eating, sleeping, walking and talking all become for the material world. This is why the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace

and blessings be upon him, advised in a Hadith found in Imam Bayhaqi's, Az Zuhd, number 374, that struggling against one's own desires is a greater Holy War than physically fighting with the enemies of Islam.

People are subjected to tests as Allah, the Exalted, desires to separate those that deserve His mercy from the evil personalities who deserve His wrath. Chapter 29 Al Ankabut, verses 2-3:

“Do the people think that they will be left to say, “We believe” and they will not be tried? But We have certainly tried those before them, and Allah will surely make evident those who are truthful, and He will surely make evident the liars.”

Even though Allah, the Exalted, is fully aware of each person He desires to show the world this reality. Those that show patience and obey the commands of Allah, the Exalted, through all these tests and trials prove to the world that they are true muslims. Some easily lose patience because they believe that their faith and obedience guarantees that they will not be tested. In reality, this belief could not be further from the truth. The truth is that their faith guarantees they will be tested and these trials will only increase with the strength of one's faith. This has been made crystal clear by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4023. The difficulties increase as one moves closer to the path which leads to Paradise and this eternal abode of peace cannot be achieved without struggle. Muslims must accept this and therefore adopt patience if they desire to reside in Paradise. The crucial point one must remember is that

Allah, the Exalted, never tests people beyond their strength. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 286:

“Allah does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity...”

Patience is not only required to overcome the laziness that the Devil places in the heart of a muslim. But once this is achieved patience is required to ensure that their intention is solely for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted. If someone is blessed with this then once again patience is required to fulfill the requirements for performing the righteous deed correctly. Once the deed is completed patience is again required to prevent one from destroying their good deed for example, through pride. Those that do not exert patience in their good deeds are criticized by the Holy Quran. The criticism in the following verse is specifically for the prayer but can be applied to all righteous deeds. Chapter 107 Al Ma'un, verse 5:

“[But] who are heedless of their prayer.”

The following verse of the Holy Quran declares that Allah, the Exalted, is always with the patient muslims. Chapter 8 Al Anfal, verse 46:

“...Indeed, Allah is with the patient.”

This is a huge statement that is always undervalued. The one who is with Allah, the Exalted, will always obtain success in this world and in the hereafter. So one should always try to adopt this characteristic as shown flawlessly and successfully by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

The importance of patience is again addressed in the following verse of the Holy Quran. Chapter 21 Al Anbiya, verse 18:

“Rather, We dash the truth upon falsehood, and it destroys it, and thereupon it departs...”

This verse mentions the long battle between good and evil. This verse inspires great confidence in muslims and those who are on the just path. No matter how powerful evil becomes a day eventually comes when it clashes and is defeated by good. This reminds the righteous to remain patient and trust in the promise of Allah, the Exalted.

Patience is such a beloved characteristic by Allah, the Exalted, that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2347, that if he desired Allah, the Exalted, would have turned the valley of Mecca into gold for him. But the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, instead desired to have food one day so he could show gratitude and fast the next day so he could show patience.

Muslims must understand that they are guaranteed to be tested. The Holy Quran explains how Allah, the Exalted, uses each person to test others. Chapter 25 Al Furqan, verse 20:

“...And We have made some of you [people] as trial for others - will you have patience?...”

For example, the wealthy lifestyle of some people is a test for the poor. In order to achieve success in this test they would need to demonstrate patience and trust that Allah, the Exalted, has chosen the best for 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.”

One should overcome this desire by following the advice of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, which is recorded in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6490. He advised muslims to observe those that have a lower worldly status than them. This inspires gratitude and protects one from ingratitude. Patience is the key to following this excellent advice.

In addition, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 7500, that no matter what situation a believer is in it is blessed by Allah, the Exalted. If a person is facing good fortune and shows gratitude then Allah, the Exalted, will bless them further. Gratitude consists of using the blessings one possesses in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. If a person is facing hardship and demonstrates patience then Allah, the Exalted, blesses them.

One needs to always remember that no matter how many hardships they face it will always be insignificant compared to those problems faced by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. As advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4023, no other creation has been tested more than the Holy Prophets, peace be upon them. In another Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2472, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, clearly declared that no one had faced more difficulties in the path of Allah, the Exalted, than him. Those on the just path have and always will face hardship. One should adopt the characteristics of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon, and demonstrate patience and always turn to Allah, the Exalted, for aid through sincere obedience to Him.

Muslims must understand that trials only occur because Allah, the Exalted, wills them to. They will occur regardless of the attitude of the person. So if one is forced to experience a particular hardship they have two choices. They can either complain and still experience the hardship but as a result of their negative attitude face potential punishment. Or they can face the same experience with a positive attitude and turn to Allah, the Exalted, with patience and sincere obedience and in turn be rewarded in both worlds. Either way a person has to go through the

experience so why not gain reward for it instead of the anger of Allah, the Exalted. Chapter 6 Al An'am, verse 17:

“And if Allah should touch you with adversity, there is no remover of it except Him. And if He touches you with good - then He is over all things competent.”

Patience is not only required on an individual level such as facing poor health but is also required as a response to an outside source such as another person. One cannot control the actions of others therefore; patience is required to overcome the desire of vengeance. To forgive others can only be achieved with patience. Hence why those who swallow their anger through patience are complimented in the Holy Quran. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 134:

“...and who restrain anger and who pardon the people - and Allah loves the doers of good.”

This is closely related to a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6114, which advises that a strong person is not the one who can overpower another but a strong person is in fact the one who shows patience and controls their anger.

The higher level of this type of patience is mentioned in the Holy Quran. Chapter 28 Al Qasas, verse 54:

“Those will be given their reward twice for what they patiently endured and [because] they avert evil through good...”

Those who reach this level not only refrain from replying evil with evil but instead reply evil with good. This level of piety is not possible without patience.

Even though Islamic law allows one to defend themselves in an equal a reasonable way a higher level of piety is to forgive and remain patient for the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted. This is the reason the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, advised in a Hadith found in Sunan Abu Dawud, number 4800, that if one refrains from arguing even if they are right then they are guaranteed a house in the outskirts of Paradise. This is not possible to do without patience.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once advised in a Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6099, that one of the attributes of Allah, the Exalted, is that He is the Most Patient. Even though, many people reject Him and the blessings He has given them Allah, the Exalted, remains patient instead of taking revenge. In fact, Allah, the Exalted, gives opportunity after opportunity so that the misguided can come to their senses and turn to Him through sincere repentance and obedience.

Another type of patience is required against an outside force but in this case the victim does not possess the power to respond. For example, if one is stricken with poor health, loss of wealth, etc. Patience is required to prevent one from complaining and instead accept the decree of Allah, the Exalted. If Allah, the Exalted, rewards the smallest of deeds such as removing an obstacle in a road, which is mentioned in a Hadith found in Sahih Muslim, number 153, then the amount of reward for patience is truly unimaginable. Chapter 39 Az Zumar, verse 10:

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

Whenever the patient face a loss they recite the words mentioned in the Holy Quran and reinforce the belief that everything was given by Allah, the Exalted. It is His right to recall a blessing as He is the innate owner of all things. Chapter 2 Al Baqarah, verse 156:

"Who, when disaster strikes them, say, "Indeed we belong to Allah, and indeed to Him we will return.""

Even though the keys of the treasures of the Earth were offered to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, according to the Hadith found in Sahih Bukhari, number 6590, yet he still faced countless obstacles which was always met with unparalleled patience. It

is the reason the Holy Quran informs mankind that the best example to follow is the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Chapter 33 Al Ahzab, verse 21:

“There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allah often.”

Whenever one reviews the Holy Quran and the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, they will understand that all their problems cannot even compare to a single hardship faced by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. This will inspire one to remain patient during difficulties.

There are many verses and Hadiths explaining the benefits of patience. For example, in the following verse the Holy Quran declares that Allah, the Exalted, loves the patient. Chapter 3 Alee Imran, verse 146:

“...And Allah loves the steadfast.”

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, once advised in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2390, that the muslim who loves another for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, will be rewarded with podiums of light in front of the entire creation on

Judgment Day. If this is the reward for those who love others for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, can one imagine the reward for those who Allah, the Exalted, loves directly? This is the reward bestowed on those who exercise patience in all aspects of their life.

Some have adopted the opposite characteristics of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. For example, they are angered quickly and are very rarely satisfied with others. They believe opposing the character of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, shows their great rank in the eyes of society. But in essence it only shows their low rank in the eyes of Allah, the Exalted. Becoming vexed only causes one to lose their self-control and this leads to further sins such as verbal and physical abuse. This is why the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, repeatedly advised a Companion, may Allah be pleased with him, in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2020, not to get angry.

Being patient and becoming easily pleased will always create a loving and warm environment for one's family and the rest of society. Those who fail to control their temper and emotions always cause trouble for themselves and others which lead to countless social problems such as, divorce and domestic violence. This is why patience is so important to adopt as an impatient person can destroy themselves as well as others.

Whenever one faces problems they may incorrectly believe they are cursed as their mind focuses on their problems instead of the bigger picture. Islam teaches one to take a step back and observe the countless blessings they already possess and when compared to their problem the latter truly seems insignificant. People are strange as they

will narrate their few problems to countless others yet fail to recount the countless blessings in their life. Chapter 16 An Nahl, verse 18:

“And if you should count the favours of Allah, you could not enumerate them.”

Life in this material world is extremely short compared to the hereafter so whenever one encounters trials they must adopt patience and face each one with sincere obedience to Allah, the Exalted. This will ensure that their short life in this world leads to eternal bliss in the next. But if they fail to adopt patience and follow their desires then they will only lead an unsatisfied life before their long punishment in the hereafter. Allah, the Exalted, will never grant satisfaction to the one who disobeys Him.

Some often claim that Allah, the Exalted, is only pleased with them when they receive worldly blessings and the moment they are tested in any way they turn away angrily believing Allah, the Exalted, has dishonored them. Chapter 22 Al Hajj, verse 11:

“And of the people is he who worships Allah on an edge.¹ 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.”

They fail to recognize the Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, found in Sunan Ibn Majah, number 4023, which advises that the stronger one's faith is the more they are tested. Unfortunately, these people have linked everything including their faith to the success of their worldly affairs. This is foolishness as they were meant to judge the material world according to their faith thereby ensuring that their faith takes priority in all cases. A muslim's religious success is never based on their worldly success as many powerful and rich people have come and gone but due to their evil attitude Allah, the Exalted, destroyed them.

The reality is that Allah, the Exalted, may give worldly things to the misguided firstly, to compensate them for their few good deeds. Secondly, in order to test whether they show gratitude to Him or not by using the worldly things they possess in ways pleasing to Allah, the Exalted.

In reality, whether Allah, the Exalted, is pleased with someone or not is determined by their reaction to times of ease and difficulty. It is not determined by how many worldly blessings they possess. If a person shows patience during times of difficulty and gratitude in times of ease then they have gained the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted. Whereas the opposite characteristics only plunges one further down in the sea of heedlessness.

In chapter 8 Al Anfal, verse 66, of the Holy Quran Allah, the Exalted, makes a pact with muslims:

“...So if there are from you one hundred [who are] steadfast, they will overcome two hundred. And if there are among you a thousand, they will overcome two thousand by permission of Allah. And Allah is with the steadfast.”

No matter how weak the muslims may be in number or force Allah, the Exalted, will empower them to overcome greater difficulties. But the condition is that the people need to be obedient muslims and patient.

Muslims must not become heedless to patience and abandon reflecting on the countless people that are in worse situations than them. When one remembers the less fortunate it becomes easy to adopt patience during hardships. This has been indicated in a Hadith found in Jami At Tirmidhi, number 2513.

A lack of patience is only a reflection of a lack of faith in Allah, the Exalted. Allah, the Exalted, advised in the Holy Quran that hardships will always be flanked by ease. If muslims truly believe in this verse then it will prevent them from becoming frustrated when facing problems. Chapter 94 Ash Sharh, verse 5:

“For indeed, with hardship [will be] ease [i.e., relief].”

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...”

To conclude, one must reassess their faith in respect to the promises made in the Holy Quran and the Hadiths of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, as doubting them only leads to trouble. Allah, the Exalted, demonstrates patience with people when they sin therefore, muslims should show patience with the divine decree. A major defect is when one demonstrates patience in some areas of their life only. For example, they happily show patience with their friends but refuse to show it with their family. But a successful muslim will demonstrate patience in all aspects of life and with everyone. This is the key to success in both worlds.

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