

## Class 4

## ‘Patience at Times of Tests &amp; Trials’

## TESTS &amp; TRIALS FROM ALLAH

Al-Hamdulillaah (all praise is due to Allaah), the Most High, the One who said (translation of the meaning): *And certainly, We shall test you with something of fear, hunger, loss of wealth, lives and fruits, but give glad tidings to the patient ones. Who, when afflicted with calamity, say: “Truly! To Allaah we belong and truly, to Him we shall return.” They are those on whom are the Salawat (i.e. who are blessed and will be forgiven) from their Lord, and (they are those who) receive His Mercy, and it is they who are the guided-ones.* Surah al-Baqarah (2:155-157)

## The tests are of two types:

- i. A type which the creation has no control over, such as sickness and other kinds of God-sent afflictions; such matters facilitate one’s patience as he is able to witness in them the decree of Allah and fate and that people have no ability to alter them. Thereby, a slave of Allah bears patiently whether he is compelled or given a choice.
- ii. A type which reaches him at the hands of the people with respect to his wealth, honour or self.

This type is very difficult to bear with patience because the soul feels the pain, it dislikes being overpowered and so it seeks revenge. No one is able to bear this type of affliction with patience except the Prophets and the truthful. When our Prophet ﷺ was harmed, he would say: *“May Allah have mercy on Musa! He was afflicted with greater harms than this but bore it with patience!”* (Bukhari & Muslim)

The end result of this type of patience is victory, honour, happiness, safety and power in the cause of

## Calamities inflicted on man:

- 1- Fear: covering the general fear and the specific fear.
- 2- Hunger: state when one’s stomach is empty of food while being eager to have it.
  - Having little food
  - Having little means of acquiring it

– Afflicted with an illness which prevents the person from eating due to loss of appetite, a blockage in the throat, ulcers in the stomach or a disease preventing absorption of nutrients.

- 3- Loss of wealth: This covers money, belongings, cattle etc.
- 4- Loss of Lives (of loved ones)
- 5- Loss of fruits (loss in business), either less produce/business or destruction of the produce/product.

It is clear that this life is filled with calamities, tests, and trials and that every believer will be subjected to many of these. Sometimes these trials are within himself, sometimes with his wealth and sometimes with his loved ones. These preordained trials and calamities, from the One who is All-Wise, will touch the believer in various ways and manners; if the believer does not have the correct view regarding the matter of testing, then he may err seriously, especially since some of the calamities are painful and profound.

Many people are negligent about the wisdoms behind trials and testing; they may not understand that Allaah (سبحانه و تعالی) does not test us as a punishment, but rather as a mercy. The believer should look at the matter of ibtilaa' (testing and trials) through the textual proofs in the Qur'aan and authentic Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ so that he can stand on a firm ground regarding these matters.

Yes, life is a test and a trial; we are tested everyday in this life. Our wealth is a test; the spouse is a test; the children are tests; poverty and wealth are tests, and likewise health and illnesses are tests. We are tested in everything we possess and in that which we encounter in this life until we meet Allaah, the Most High.

Allaah (سبحانه و تعالی) said (in the translation of the meaning):

- *Everyone is going to taste death, and We shall make a trial of you with evil and with good, and to Us you will be returned.* (Surah al-Anbiyaa 21:35)
- *Do people think that they will be left alone because they say: "We believe," and will not be tested. And We indeed tested those who were before them. And Allaah will certainly make (it) known (the truth of) those who are true, and will certainly make (it) known (the falsehood of) those who are liars, (although Allaah knows all that before putting them to test).* – Surah al-'Ankabut (29:2-3)

Even the one who is healthy is tested, and also, the one who is ill is tested. The one who is healthy may not know this until he is touched by a trial, and the one who is ill may not feel that he is in a testing situation until he is cured. No one is safe from trials because of their prestige or status; such things do not safeguard us from the tests as proven by the hasan (good) hadith in which the Prophet ﷺ said: *"The people who receive the severest trial are the*

*Prophets, then those most like them and then those most like them.”* (at-Tirmidhi and ibn Maajah)

## RESPONSE OF THE BELIEVER TO TESTS AND TRIALS

al-Fudayl ibn ‘Iyaad (rahimahullaah) said: *“As long as people are in a state of good welfare, then once they are tested, they will return to their reality. The believer will go to his faith, and the hypocrite will go to his hypocrisy.”*

Calamities are good for the believer in the sense that reward is stored up for him the Hereafter thereby; how can it be otherwise when he is raised in status thereby and his bad deeds are expiated? The Prophet ﷺ said: *“When Allaah wills good for His slave, He hastens the punishment for him in this world, and when Allaah wills ill for His slave, he withholds the punishment for his sins from him until he comes with all his sins on the Day of Resurrection.”* Narrated by al-Tirmidhi (2396).

Al-Hasan al-Basri (may Allaah have mercy on him) said: *“Do not resent the calamities that come and the disasters that occur, for perhaps in something that you dislike will be your salvation, and perhaps in something that you prefer will be your doom.”*

Al-Fadl ibn Sahl said: *“There is a blessing in calamity that the wise man should not ignore, for it erases sins, gives one the opportunity to attain the reward for patience, dispels negligence, reminds one of blessings at the time of health, calls one to repent and encourages one to give charity.*

Through calamity the believer seeks reward, and there is no way to attain it but patience, and there is no way to be patient except with resolute faith and strong will.

So if calamity befalls a Muslim, he must say *Inna Lillaahi wa inna ilayhi raaji’oon* (Verily to Allah we belong and unto Him is our return), and say the du’aa’s that have been narrated from the Prophet ﷺ.

Shaykh al-Islam [Ibn Taymiyah] (may Allaah have mercy on him) said: *A calamity that makes you turn to Allaah is better for you than a blessing which makes you forget the remembrance of Allaah.”*

Sufyaan said: *What a person dislikes may be better for him than what he likes, because what he dislikes causes him to call upon Allaah, whereas what he likes may make him heedless.*

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Examples of Beautiful Patience & their Rewards

### UMM SALAMAH WHEN ABU SALAMAH DIED

Muslim (918) narrated that Umm Salamah (may Allaah be pleased with her) said: I heard the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ say: *“There is no Muslim who is stricken with a calamity and says what Allaah has enjoined - (the below dua) – but Allaah will compensate him with something better.”*

انا لله وانا اليه راجعون؛ اللهم آجرني في مصيبي، واخلف لي خيرا منها

*Inna lillahi wa Inna Ilaihi Raji'un. Allahumma ajurni fi musibati wakhluf li khayran minha.*

*"Indeed, we belong to Allah, and indeed to Him we will return. O Allah! Reward me for my calamity, and replace it for me that which is better."*

She said: When Abu Salamah died, I said: Who among the Muslims is better than Abu Salamah, the first household to migrate to join the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ? Then I said it, and Allaah compensated me with the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ

### THE PROPHET ﷺ ON HIS SON (IBRAHEEM) PASSING AWAY

Anas bin Malik reported that: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ entered the room and we accompanied him... And Ibrahim breathed his last. The eyes of Allah's Messenger ﷺ were filled with tears. Abdur Rehman Ibne Auf said: 'you are weeping, O Messenger of Allah ﷺ'. He ﷺ replied: *"Ibne Auf, This is mercy"*. Then he ﷺ said:

*"Our eyes shed tears and our hearts are filled with grief, but we do not say anything except that by which Allah is pleased. O, Ibrahim we are sorrowful due to your separation."* (Agreed upon).

## THE AMAZING PATIENCE OF PROPHET AYOUB A.S.

Allah's Praises of Ayoub A.S. Allah the Almighty praised His worshipper Ayoub in His Glorious Quran: *"Truly! We found him patient. How excellent a slave! Verily, he was ever oft returning in repentance to Us!"* (Ch 38:44)

The Prophet Ayub (peace be upon him) was a prosperous man with firm faith in Allah. He possessed vast farms, enormous wealth, many cattle and valuable property but these things did not make him arrogant. His wealth provided him with a medium by means of which he sought Allah's grace.

Allah (Glory be to Him) tested him with poverty and diseases until he reached a bad state of sickness, poverty and isolation. Prophet Ayyub (peace be upon him) provided great example of unbelievable situations in infinite patience and immense satisfaction of Allah's destination.

When the test went for long his wife said to him: *"How long are you going to bear this torture from our Lord? Are we to remain without wealth, children or friends forever? Why don't you call upon Allah to remove this suffering?"*

Ayoub A.S. sighed, and in a soft voice replied *"Iblis must have whispered to you and made you dissatisfied. Tell me how long did I enjoy good health and riches?"* She replied: *"eighty years."*

Then Ayoub replied: *"How long am I suffering like this?"* She said: *"seven years."* Ayoub then told her: *"In that case I am ashamed to call on my Lord to remove the hardship, for I have not suffered longer than the years of good health and plenty. It seems your faith has weakened and you are dissatisfied with the fate of Allah."*

Ayoub A.S. was repentant, remembering Allah with thankfulness, patience, and steadfastness. This was the cause of his rescue and the secret of Allah's praising him.

## UMM KHALLAD WHEN HER HUSBAND, SON & BROTHER DIED

Umm Khallad R.A., witnessed the battle of Uhud with her husband, son and brother. When all the three were martyred, the noble female Companion carried them on her camel and headed back (with them) toward Madinah.

'A'ishah R.A. met her at a point on the way and she said to Umm Khallad: "You have a camel, what is there behind you?" Umm Khallad said: *"As for the Prophet, he is safe. Every affliction beside his is inconsequential and Allah chose some of the believers as martyrs."*

'A'ishah said: "Who are these?" She replied: "My brother, my son, & my husband Amr bin Al-Jamuh."

"Where are you going with them?" 'A'ishah asked. "I am going to Madinah to burry them there." Then she drove her camel to make it follow her but she could not. But whenever she drove it toward the spot of their killing, it moved swiftly.

The Prophet ﷺ waited until they were buried then he said: "*Amr bin Al-Jamuh, your- son khallad and your brother, 'Abdullah will be together in Paradise.*" Umm Khallad said: Allah's Messenger, pray that I am joined with them." and he prayed for her.

### URWAH BIN ZUBAIR ON LOSING HIS LEG AND A SON

Urwah Ibn Zubair, a well-known from the Taabaeen had a problem with his foot. So the doctors decided that they had to cut it off, cut the foot off. When the doctors cut it off he didn't say anything except these words: 'O Allaah, for you are Full praise. For if you have taken some, you have left some. And if you have tested, and put through difficulty you have also put in good condition. If you have tested and tried and put through difficulty you have also put good health, good circumstances and good conditions.

'The next day his son was riding a horse or mule and fell off of it and died. So they came to Urwah with the information of the death of his son, he didn't say anything except : 'O Allaah, for you is full praise. For if you have taken some, you have left some. And if you have tested and tried you have also placed us in good situations and good condition.' So when he was asked about this he said: 'I had 4 limbs (meaning 2 arms and 2 legs) and Allaah took some and left some. 'I had 4 limbs 2 arms and 2 legs Allaah took one and left me three. I had 7 sons, Allaah (tabrak wa tala) took one and left six. And he gave me good condition, or good situation my whole life up until this time. Then he tested me. Should I not praise Allaah for that? Should I not praise Allaah for that?'

### LESSONS FROM THE STORIES

- Allah will test a man with the things that are dearest to him. His wealth, health and children. We must remember that Allah has given us all of that and to him it belongs. He can take it away whenever he wants.
- Do not despair and lose hope in Allah. Indeed everything he takes away from us will bring us closer to Jannah if we accept his decree, are patient & thankful.
- Our sincerity and worship of Allah should not be dependent upon His blessings on us.

## REWARDS ASSOCIATED WITH TESTS AND TRIALS

### Sins are Removed

The Prophet ﷺ said:

- *“No fatigue, nor disease, nor sorrow, nor sadness, nor hurt, nor distress befalls a Muslim even if it were the prick he receives from a thorn but that Allaah expiates some of his sins for that.”* (al-Bukhaari)
- *“... for no Muslim is afflicted with any harm but that Allaah will remove his sins as the leaves of a tree fall down.”* (al-Bukhaari).

### Raise one to a higher degree in Paradise

The Prophet ﷺ said:

*“Allaah (سبحانه و تعالی) says to His angels when they take the soul of a person’s child, ‘You took the fruit of his heart.’ They (the angels) say, ‘Yes.’ So Allaah says, ‘What did My slave say (upon that)?’*

*They say, ‘He praised you and made istirjaa’ (meaning he said, Innaa lillaahi wa inna ilayhi raaji’oon’ – verily to Allaah we belong and to Him we shall return).*

*So Allaah (سبحانه و تعالی) says, ‘Build for My slave a house in Paradise and name it the house of praise.’”* (Imaam Ahmad).

Furthermore, the Prophet ﷺ said in the authentic hadith: *“No Muslim is hurt by a thorn or something greater than a thorn except that Allaah elevates him in rank or effaces his sins because of that.”* (Muslim)

### It is a sign of Love of Allah

Calamities, trials, and tests are signs of Allaah’s love for the believer. Indeed, they are like a cure; although it may be bitter, we accept them since they are from the One whom we love, and to Allaah belongs the best example. The Prophet ﷺ said: *“The greatest reward comes with the greatest trial. When Allaah loves a people, He tests them. Whoever accepts that wins His pleasure, but whoever is discontent with that earns His wrath.”* [at-Tirmidhi (2396) and ibn Maajah (4031)]

## Saved from the Punishment in the Hereafter

Certainly, the affliction by test and trials is better to the believer than punishment in the Hereafter, and in that, there is an elevation of his rank and expiation for his sins. Therefore, it is better for him. The Prophet ﷺ said: *“When Allaah wills good for His slave, He hastens the punishment for him in this world, and when Allaah wills ill for His slave, he withholds the punishment for his sins from him until he comes with all his sins on the Day of Resurrection.”* (at-Tirmidhi 2396)

## Lessons of the Tests and Trials

1. Beneficial to one's Tawheed The tests and trials are beneficial to the believer's tawheed, imaan (Faith), and tawakkul (reliance upon Allaah). They force mankind to examine the reality that they are in fact a weak creation who has no power or strength, except in their Lord, Allaah. As such, we should resort to Him and depend upon Him, at which point arrogance, false pride, puffing, and negligence will be removed.
2. The tests unravel the reality of this life. They show that this life is a temporal stay for amusement, and the perfect life is the one after that.
3. We are reminded of Allah's favour upon us and how this is only a transitional existence.
4. Puts a Check on our behaviour as remind us that we should not be in such a state of joy that we feel arrogant. Likewise, we should not be in such a state of sadness and grief that one feels despair.
5. Gives one a chance to Repent of his shortcomings and defects so that he can repent from them and hence given a chance for repentance before the greater torment may occur.
6. Learns Patience. We cannot stand on the truth and obedience, except with patience, and we cannot stay away from falsehood, except with patient perseverance.

We ask Allaah (سبحانه و تعالی) to make us from those who when afflicted with a calamity, truly remember and manifest the saying of Allaah, *“Innaa lillaahi wa inna ilayhi raaji'oon,”* asking Him to help us with the calamities, testing, and trials, to persevere patiently, to overcome, to ask Him for reward, to anticipate the reward from Him (سبحانه و تعالی), and to compensate us with that which is better.