

'In Times of Grief' by Ustadh Majed Mahmoud

- What does 'Sabr' (patience) mean to you?
 - Most people understand it to be a passive process
 - Hence why some people may react angrily when you tell them to be patient when they are going through a difficult moment in life
 - However, the correct Islamic perspective is that *sabr* is an active process
 - It means that
 - The **heart** is not hopeless
 - The **tongue** does not complain
 - The **body** is not abusive to itself or to others
- It is NOT okay to:
 - Lose patience/given up
 - Complain or have bad thoughts about Allah SWT, the all-Knower

*Allah says "Say, "O My servants who have believed, fear your Lord. For those who do good in this world is good, and the earth of Allah is spacious. **Indeed, the patient will be given their reward without account.**" (Surah Zumar, verse 10)*

- The concept of patience is complex and multi-factorial. This includes:
 - Being patient in times of adversity
 - Being patient with doing good deeds
 - Being patient in leaving bad deeds
 - Being patient in actively avoiding sin
- There are three things guaranteed in life
 - Death
 - Taxes
 - Hardship
- Take Dhul Qarnayn for example
 - He was a wealthy man who wrote his mother a letter, asking her to invite her neighbourhood to dinner.

- The only condition was the sisters who had encountered hardship should not eat.
- It turned out all the sisters had various hardships so none of them ate.
- Important lessons
 - Do not wait to see the wisdom behind hardship to find patience
 - Patience is good for believers whether we understand the wisdom behind the hardship or not
 - Dua is a powerful tool for a believer
 - Ask Allah to grant you an ability to be patient
- There is a difference between ‘complaining *about* Allah’ and ‘complaining *to* Allah’
 - The former will take you away from Allah whereas the latter will draw you closer to Allah
 - Read up the incident about the prophet SAW’s Taif journey – very emotional
 - Analyse the dua of the prophet SAW on his return journey from Taif
 - Let us be those who first talk to Allah about our complaints, rather than people

Some advice from our esteemed Ustadh

- You may be going through hardship because of a sin you previously committed
 - Hence this may be a means of purification for you.
- Don’t get bogged down figuring out why is it happening to you
 - Rather what matters more is how you react to the challenge
- To move on from past sins:
 - Past – Regret
 - There should be remorse to remind you of your humble past
 - Present - Stop immediately
 - Strive your utmost best. Indeed, this is a lot harder than it sounds.
 - Future - Promise
 - It is wrong to make an oath that you end up breaking
 - But, make a sincere promise to yourself that you will NOT go back to it, no matter what!

- If the sin involves taking away someone else's rights, you MUST return those rights immediately
 - It is one thing to violate your own soul and another to take someone's rights.
 - Stay away from Haram (forbidden) relationships
 - Replace them with Halal relationships that are better
 - Personal resilience is important, but seek professional help if you need to
 - This is so important!
 - Remind yourself that you are not the only going through these difficulties.
 - It would be extremely helpful if you find somebody who is skilled in counselling but also a person who has rich Islamic knowledge.
 - Vent things if it helps, BUT
 - Do not complain to someone who is unable to help you
 - Find someone who understands you, or can signpost you in the right direction
 - Do not be abusive to others; people can become abusive when they are going through a difficult time
- Whenever a calamity befalls you, follow these 3 steps
 1. Say '*Ina illahi wa ina ilayhi rajioon*' (to Allah we belong, and to Allah we shall return)
 2. Dua: "*Oh Allah, reward me for the calamity that I am going through*"
 3. Dua: "*Oh Allah, grant me a better replacement*"
- Above all, never lose hope in Allah's mercy.

Say, "O My servants who have transgressed against themselves [by sinning], do not despair of the mercy of Allah . Indeed, Allah forgives all sins. Indeed, it is He who is the Forgiving, the Merciful." (Surah Zumar, Verse 53)

May Allah SWT grant us the ability to act upon what has been understood. Ameen
 Notes taken by a member of Bristol Islamic Society from FOSIS Annual Conference
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