

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

خطبة الجمعة

Friday Sermon

*Trials in Our Life: Patience and
the Promise of Allah*

DELIVERED AT

Masjid Adam



ŞİFAH

SCHOOL OF ISLAMIC
FOUNDATIONS &
ADVOCACY FOR HUMANITY

Trials in Our Life: Patience and the Promise of Allah

The First Khutbah

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ، وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا، مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ، وَمَنْ يَضِلَّ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ. أَمَّا بَعْدُ: فَإِنَّ أصدقَ الْحَدِيثِ كِتَابُ اللَّهِ، وَخَيْرُ الْهَدْيِ هَدْيُ مُحَمَّدٍ ﷺ، وَشَرُّ الْأُمُورِ مُحْدَثَاتُهَا، وَكُلُّ مُحْدَثَةٍ بِدْعَةٌ، وَكُلُّ بِدْعَةٍ ضَلَالَةٌ، وَكُلُّ ضَلَالَةٍ فِي النَّارِ.

All praise belongs to Allah. We praise Him, we seek His help, and we seek His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allah from the evil within ourselves and from our sinful deeds. Whomever Allah guides, none can lead astray, and whomever He leaves astray, none can guide. I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah alone, having no partner, and I bear witness that Muḥammad is His servant and His Messenger. To proceed: the truest speech is the Book of Allah, the best guidance is the guidance of Muḥammad ﷺ, the worst of affairs are the newly invented matters, every innovation is misguidance, and every misguidance is in the Fire.

نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ، أَمَّا بَعْدُ: فَأَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ، بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ.

رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي * وَيَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي * وَاحْلُلْ عُقْدَةً مِنْ لِسَانِي * يَفْقَهُوا قَوْلِي *

We praise Him, and we send blessings upon His noble Messenger. To proceed: I seek refuge with Allah from Satan, the accursed; in the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. My Lord, expand for me my breast, and ease for me my task, and untie the knot from my tongue, that they may understand my speech.

Sūrah Ṭā Hā (20:25 to 28)

Dear brothers and sisters, **assalāmu ‘alaykum wa raḥmatullāhi wa barakātuh.**

No One Is Left Untested

There is not a single soul in this masjid who has not tasted hardship, and there is not one among us who will leave this world without tasting more. The illness that arrives without warning, the loss of someone we love, the money that runs out, the door that closes, the marriage that strains, the child who breaks our heart, the fear that grips us in the dark hours of the night. These are not interruptions to the life of a believer; they are the very fabric of it. And the first thing we must understand, brothers and sisters, is that none of this is a sign that Allah has forgotten us or abandoned us. It is, in truth, the opposite. For Allah told us plainly that He will not leave any of us to merely claim faith with our tongues without putting that claim to the test.

أَحْسِبَ النَّاسُ أَنْ يُتْرَكُوا أَنْ يَقُولُوا آمَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ * وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ
فَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ الْكَاذِبِينَ *

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

Sūrah al-‘Ankabūt (29:2 to 3)

Reflect upon the wisdom of this verse, brothers and sisters. Faith is a claim, and a claim must be tested before it is proven. Anyone can say I believe while the skies are clear and the table is full and the body is healthy. But true faith is revealed only under pressure, the way gold is revealed only in the fire. The trial does not come to break the believer; it comes to prove him, to separate the one whose faith is real from the one whose faith was only words. Every nation before us walked this road, every prophet, every righteous soul, and we are not exempt from the law that Allah set down for all of them. So when the trial comes to you, do not ask only why is this happening to me. Ask also what is this revealing in me, and what does my Lord want me to become through it.

For there is a question the trial silently asks of every one of us, and our answer to it shapes our entire fate. The same hardship can harden one heart into bitterness and resentment against Allah, while it softens another into humility and nearness to Him; it can drive one person to abandon his prayer in anger and drive another to the prayer mat in tears. The trial itself is neutral; it is our response that determines whether it becomes a punishment that distances us or a mercy that draws us near. This is the deepest meaning of the test: not merely whether we will suffer, for everyone suffers, but who we will become in the suffering, and toward whom we will turn when the ground gives way beneath us.

The Test Is Promised, and So Is the Glad Tiding

Allah did not leave the matter vague. He told us, in advance and in detail, the very forms our trials would take, so that when they arrive we would recognise them as exactly what He foretold, and not as accidents outside His knowledge or His plan.

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ وَبَشِّرِ
الصَّابِرِينَ * الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ *

And We will surely test you with something of fear and hunger, and a loss of wealth, lives, and fruits. But give glad tidings to the patient: those who, when a calamity strikes them, say: Indeed, to Allah we belong and to Him we shall return.

Sūrah al-Baqarah (2:155 to 156)

Notice the words Allah chose. He said We will surely test you, with the certainty of an oath, so that not one of us imagines he will be passed over. And He listed the very categories of hardship: fear, hunger, the loss of wealth, the loss of loved ones, the loss of the fruits of our labour. Every trial that will ever touch us falls somewhere in this list, named by Allah before we were born. But then, in the middle of describing the hardship, Allah turns to comfort, and He commands His Prophet ﷺ to give glad tidings, bushrā, good news, to the patient. What strange good news is this, to be given in the same breath as the promise of fear and hunger and loss? It is the good news that the trial is not the end of the story, that the patient one is watched and loved and rewarded by his Lord, and that what feels like loss is, for the believer, a doorway to something far greater. And He told us the response that turns a calamity into a means of nearness, the words upon the tongue of every true believer when disaster strikes: indeed, to Allah we belong and to Him we shall return.

And see what Allah promised those who meet their trials with these words and with patience. He did not promise them merely that the hardship would pass; He promised them three gifts that the comfortable and untested never receive.

أُولَئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ *

Those are the ones upon whom are blessings from their Lord and mercy, and it is those who are rightly guided.

Sūrah al-Baqarah (2:157)

Blessings from their Lord, the ṣalawāt of Allah upon them, His praise of them in the highest assembly; and mercy; and guidance. Three gifts laid upon the shoulders of the patient. So the trial that the world sees only as loss is, for the believer who bears it with patience, a transaction in which he trades a passing pain for the lasting blessing, mercy, and guidance of his Lord. There is no such bargain available to those who never suffer.

And the scholars of tafsīr drew out the depth hidden in the words Allah praised, indeed to Allah we belong and to Him we shall return. In the first half, we belong to Allah, the servant acknowledges that he and everything he has are the property of Allah, so that when Allah takes back a loved one or a wealth or a health, He has only reclaimed what was always His, and the borrower has no right to complain when the owner takes back His own. And in the second half, to Him we shall return, the servant remembers that this world is not the final home, that he is a traveler journeying back to Allah, and that everything lost here will be restored many times over there for the one who was patient. To say these words with understanding is to place the whole calamity in its true frame: a temporary loss of what was never truly ours, on a road that leads back to the One who can compensate us beyond all measure.

Why Allah Tests Those He Loves

Here our religion turns the ordinary understanding of suffering on its head. We tend to read hardship as a sign of Allah's displeasure, and ease as a sign of His pleasure. But the Prophet ﷺ taught us the very opposite can be true, that hardship is often the gift Allah gives to those He intends good for.

مَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ بِهِ خَيْرًا يُصِبْ مِنْهُ.

Whoever Allah intends good for, He afflicts him with hardship.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī **Hadith No:** 5645 **Authenticity:** Ṣaḥīḥ

Whoever Allah intends good for, He tests. This is why, when the believer reacts to his trial with patience and contentment with the decree of Allah, the very trial that looks like a punishment becomes a means of being drawn closer to his Lord. And the Prophet ﷺ revealed a principle that explains why the most beloved servants of Allah, the prophets themselves, suffered the most of all.

أَشَدُّ النَّاسِ بَلَاءَ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ، ثُمَّ الْأَمْثَلُ فَلَا أَمْثَلُ، يُبْتَلَى الرَّجُلُ عَلَى حَسَبِ دِينِهِ، فَإِنْ كَانَ فِي دِينِهِ صَلَابَةٌ زِيدَ فِي بَلَائِهِ.

The most severely tested of people are the prophets, then those next to them, then those next to them. A man is tested according to his religion; if there is firmness in his religion, his trial is increased.

Source: Sunan at-Tirmidhī **Hadith No:** 2398 **Authenticity:** Ṣaḥīḥ per al-Albānī

Read this and let it change how you see your own hardship. The trial is measured out according to the strength of a person's faith, so that the greater the servant, the greater his test, and the prophets, the most beloved of all to Allah, were the most severely tried of all the children of Adam. So if you find

your trials heavy, do not assume Allah has cast you off; it may be that He is treating you as He treats those near to Him, raising you to a station you could not have reached through ease. And the Prophet ﷺ tied the size of the reward directly to the size of the trial, and named the testing of a people as a sign of Allah's love for them.

إِنَّ عِظَمَ الْجَزَاءِ مَعَ عِظَمِ الْبَلَاءِ، وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ إِذَا أَحَبَّ قَوْمًا ابْتَلَاهُمْ، فَمَنْ رَضِيَ فَلَهُ الرِّضَا،
وَمَنْ سَخَطَ فَلَهُ السَّخَطُ.

Indeed, the greatness of the reward is with the greatness of the trial, and when Allah loves a people He tests them. So whoever is content has His pleasure, and whoever is enraged has His wrath.

Source: Sunan at-Tirmidhī **Hadith No:** 2396 **Authenticity:** Ḥasan per al-Albānī

Every Pain Is a Purification

There is another mercy hidden inside our trials that should transform our entire experience of pain. Every hardship that touches a believer, down to the smallest, is a washing away of his sins, so that he emerges from the trial lighter before Allah than he entered it. The Prophet ﷺ described this in words of great comfort.

مَا يُصِيبُ الْمُسْلِمَ مِنْ نَصَبٍ وَلَا وَصَبٍ وَلَا هَمٍّ وَلَا حُزْنٍ وَلَا أَذًى وَلَا غَمٍّ، حَتَّى
الشُّوْكَةِ يُشَاكُهَا، إِلَّا كَفَّرَ اللَّهُ بِهَا مِنْ خَطَايَاهُ.

No fatigue, illness, anxiety, grief, harm, or sorrow afflicts a Muslim, even the prick of a thorn, except that Allah wipes away by it some of his sins.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** Bukhārī 5641, Muslim 2573 **Authenticity:** Muttafaquun ‘Alayh

Even a thorn that pricks the finger, even a moment of anxiety, even a passing sorrow, is collected by Allah and exchanged for the forgiveness of sins. Think of what this means for the one who lies awake with worry, who endures the long months of an illness, who carries the weight of a grief that will not lift. None of it is wasted. Every pang is being recorded, not as a loss against him, but as a cleansing for him, so that he may meet Allah purified. This is why the Prophet ﷺ marveled at the believer, whose every circumstance turns to his benefit, a thing granted to no one else.

عَجَبًا لِأَمْرِ الْمُؤْمِنِ، إِنَّ أَمْرَهُ كُلَّهُ خَيْرٌ، وَلَيْسَ ذَلِكَ لِأَحَدٍ إِلَّا لِلْمُؤْمِنِ: إِنْ أَصَابَتْهُ سَرَاءٌ شَكَرَ فَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُ، وَإِنْ أَصَابَتْهُ ضَرَاءٌ صَبَرَ فَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُ.

How wonderful is the affair of the believer, for all of his affair is good, and that is for no one except the believer. If good befalls him, he is grateful, and that is good for him; and if harm befalls him, he is patient, and that is good for him.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** 2999 **Authenticity:** Ṣaḥīḥ

This is the secret that places the believer beyond the reach of despair. For everyone else, life is a mixture of good fortune to be enjoyed and bad fortune to be endured. But for the believer, both are good: ease is met with gratitude and becomes a reward, and hardship is met with patience and becomes a reward, so that there is no circumstance in his life from which he does not emerge the winner. The trial cannot truly defeat the one who knows how to carry it.

The Prophets Walked This Road Before Us

When the weight of a trial presses upon us, it is a comfort beyond measure to remember that the noblest souls who ever lived walked this exact road, and that Allah preserved their stories so that we would never feel alone in our suffering. Consider Ayyūb, upon him be peace, who lost his wealth, his children, and his health, until disease had ravaged his body and the years of suffering had stretched long, and yet he never complained against his Lord. When at last he turned to Allah, he did so with the most beautiful patience, calling upon Him with humility rather than protest.

وَأَيُّوبَ إِذْ نَادَىٰ رَبَّهُ أَنِّي مَسَّنِيَ الضُّرُّ وَأَنْتَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّاحِمِينَ *

And Ayyūb, when he called upon his Lord: Indeed, adversity has touched me, and You are the Most Merciful of the merciful.

Sūrah al-Anbiyā' (21:83)

Notice that even in the depth of his suffering, Ayyūb did not demand or accuse; he simply laid his condition before Allah and affirmed His mercy, and Allah answered him and lifted every hardship from him and restored to him more than he had lost. And consider Ya'qūb, upon him be peace, who lost his beloved son Yūsuf and grieved until he lost his sight, and yet, when struck again with the loss of a second son, he did not despair of Allah but resolved upon beautiful patience, ṣabr jamīl, patience without complaint to the creation. And consider our own Prophet ﷺ, the most beloved of all to Allah and therefore the most tested. He buried nearly all of his children in his own lifetime. He lost his beloved wife Khadijah and his protecting uncle in a single year of sorrow. He was driven from his home, starved in the boycott, and at Ṭā'if he was stoned until the blood filled his sandals. At Uhud his

tooth was broken and his face was bloodied and his beloved uncle Ḥamzah was killed and mutilated. If hardship were a sign of Allah's anger, it would never have touched the one Allah loved most. The trials of the prophets are the clearest proof that suffering is not abandonment, but a road that even the closest to Allah must walk.

And the Companions inherited this understanding. When Khabbāb ibn al-Aratt, may Allah be pleased with him, came to the Prophet ﷺ in the depths of the persecution at Makkah, complaining of the torture they endured and asking him to pray for relief, the Prophet ﷺ reminded him of the believers before them, of whom a man would be placed in a pit and sawn in two through his head, or have his flesh combed from his bones with iron combs, and none of it would turn him from his religion. He promised that Allah would complete this affair, but he taught them that the road to that victory passed through patience under trial. These were not people spared hardship; they were people who learned to carry it for the sake of Allah.

The Two Wings of the Believer in Trial: Patience and Prayer

So what is the believer to do when the trial descends? Allah did not leave us to face it with our bare hands. He gave us two wings by which the soul rises above its hardship, and He named them together in a single verse.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ *

O you who believe, seek help through patience and prayer. Indeed, Allah is with the patient.

Sūrah al-Baqarah (2:153)

Patience and prayer, ṣabr and ṣalāh. Patience is the inner strength that holds the heart steady and restrains the tongue from complaint against Allah, and prayer is the door through which the broken servant pours out his need before the only One who can lift it. And see the promise at the end of the verse, the sweetest words a suffering heart can hear: indeed, Allah is with the patient. The one who is patient is not alone in his trial; the Lord of the heavens and the earth is with him, supporting him, watching him, and preparing his reward. The scholars explained that patience is of three kinds, and the believer needs all three: patience in carrying out the obedience of Allah even when it is heavy, patience in restraining oneself from disobedience even when desire pulls hard, and patience under the painful decrees of Allah without complaint against Him. The trial we speak of today calls chiefly upon this third patience, the patience of the heart that submits to the decree of its Lord, holds its tongue from objection, and trusts that the One who sent the hardship is wiser and more merciful than we can comprehend. And what a reward it is, for Allah set the recompense of the patient apart from every other deed, promising it without limit and without measure.

إِنَّمَا يُوفَّى الصَّابِرُونَ أَجْرَهُمْ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ *

Indeed, the patient will be given their reward without measure.

Sūrah az-Zumar (39:10)

Every other deed is rewarded by a known multiple, ten times, seven hundred times, more or less. But the reward of patience alone is poured out without measure and without reckoning, as if to say that the one who endured for the sake of Allah will be given a reward too vast to be counted. And the Prophet ﷺ taught us that the true patience Allah rewards is the patience of the first moment, the self-control exercised at the very instant the calamity strikes, before the heart has had time to grow accustomed to it.

إِنَّمَا الصَّبْرُ عِنْدَ الصَّدْمَةِ الْأُولَى.

Patience is only at the first strike of the calamity.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** Bukhārī 1283, Muslim 926 **Authenticity:** Muttafaqun ‘Alayh

The reward is greatest for the one who holds himself together in the first shock of the news, who turns immediately to Allah rather than to despair, for anyone can grow calm once time has dulled the wound, but the believer is the one who meets the blow itself with the words, indeed, to Allah we belong and to Him we shall return.

Trials in the Life We Actually Live

It would be a failure of this gathering to speak of the trials of the prophets and never name the trials that sit in our own homes and our own chests this very week. The forms have changed, but the test is the same.

The Trial of Anxiety and the Restless Heart

Many of us today are tested not by famine or the sword but by a quiet, grinding anxiety, a dread that has no name, a heart that will not rest. This too is a trial named by Allah, the trial of fear, and the believer meets it not only with the help of medicine and counsel, which are themselves from Allah, but with patience and prayer and the remembrance of the One in whose hand is every outcome. The trial of the anxious heart is real, and its reward is real, and the One who promised to be with the patient is with the one who turns to Him in his fear.

The Trial of Comparison

Ours is an age that has invented a new and subtle trial: the endless display of other people's blessings. We scroll through the curated highlights of a thousand lives, the weddings and the wealth and the

holidays and the smiling families, and we are tested with envy and with despair over our own portion, never seeing the hidden trials that every one of those lives also carries. The believer must remember that Allah apportioned to each soul its own test and its own gift, that no life is without hardship however polished its surface, and that the wealth he envies in another may be that person's trial, just as the hardship he carries is his own. Contentment with the decree of Allah is the cure for this modern disease.

The Trial of Ease

And we must not forget that ease is itself a trial, often a more dangerous one than hardship. Allah tests with hunger, but He also tests with plenty; He tests with fear, but He also tests with safety. Many a believer who stood firm in adversity was undone by comfort, forgetting Allah the moment the pressure lifted, growing heedless in his health and his wealth as he never grew in his sickness and his poverty. The believer watches himself in ease as carefully as in hardship, asking whether his blessings are drawing him nearer to Allah in gratitude or carrying him away in heedlessness.

And let us be honest that our age makes the trial of ease heavier than ever, for it surrounds us with comfort and distraction at every moment, a screen to soothe every silence and a pleasure to numb every ache, so that we are rarely forced to sit with our own hearts or to feel our need for Allah. The believer must be awake to this. The comfort that lets us forget death, forget the prayer, forget the poor, and forget the One who gave us every blessing, is a trial we are quietly failing even as we congratulate ourselves on our good fortune. To pass the test of ease is to let every blessing become a reason for gratitude and a means of obedience, rather than a soft pillow upon which the heart falls asleep.

A Moment of Honest Accounting

Before we close this first khuṭbah, let each of us hold his trials up to the light of these truths. When hardship strikes me, is my first response the words Allah loves, indeed to Allah we belong and to Him we shall return, or is it complaint and despair? Do I see my trial as a punishment that proves Allah has abandoned me, or as a test that may prove He is drawing me near? Am I seeking help in patience and prayer, or in distraction and complaint to people who cannot lift my burden? And in my times of ease, am I as mindful of Allah as I am in my hardship, or does comfort make me forget the One who gave it? These questions are not meant to add to our burdens, for the answers themselves are a comfort. They are the lantern of the believer who knows that his trials are weighed and recorded and rewarded, and that the One who sent the trial has promised to be with him through every moment of it.

I say these words of mine, and I seek the forgiveness of Allah for me and for you, so seek His forgiveness, for indeed He is the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful.

أَقُولُ قَوْلِي هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ لِي وَلَكُمْ فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ.

I say this statement of mine, and I seek the forgiveness of Allah for myself and for you, so seek His forgiveness, for He is the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful.

Closing of the First Khutbah

The Second Khutbah

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ، وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى أَشْرَفِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَالْمُرْسَلِينَ، نَبِيِّنَا مُحَمَّدٍ
وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ. اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ، كَمَا صَلَّيْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ
وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مُجِيدٌ.

All praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds, and may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon the noblest of the Prophets and Messengers, our Prophet Muḥammad, and upon his family and all his Companions. O Allah, send blessings upon Muḥammad and upon the family of Muḥammad as You sent blessings upon Ibrāhīm and upon the family of Ibrāhīm. Indeed, You are Praiseworthy and Glorious.

A Reminder Carried Home

Dear brothers and sisters, in the first khuṭbah we learned that no believer is left untested, that Allah foretold the very forms our trials would take and promised glad tidings, blessings, mercy, and guidance to the patient. We saw that hardship is often a sign of Allah's love rather than His anger, that every pain wipes away sin, that the prophets themselves walked this road before us, and that the believer faces his trials with the two wings of patience and prayer. The danger now is that we are comforted for an hour and then crumble at the next hardship as though we had never heard any of it. So let us turn this understanding into a practice we can hold when the trial comes.

A Practical Plan for the Time of Trial

First, when the calamity strikes, reach immediately for the words Allah placed in our mouths, before the heart has time to panic, and do not be ashamed of grief, for tears and sorrow are not impatience, only complaint against Allah is. The Prophet ﷺ taught a complete supplication for the moment of loss, and promised an astonishing reward to whoever says it with sincerity.

مَا مِنْ مُسْلِمٍ تُصِيبُهُ مُصِيبَةٌ فَيَقُولُ: إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ، اللَّهُمَّ أَجِرْنِي فِي مُصِيبَتِي
وَأَخْلِفْ لِي خَيْرًا مِنْهَا، إِلَّا أَخْلَفَ اللَّهُ لَهُ خَيْرًا مِنْهَا.

There is no Muslim who is struck by a calamity and says: Indeed, to Allah we belong and to Him we shall return; O Allah, reward me in my affliction and replace it for me with something better, except that Allah replaces it for him with something better.

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim **Hadith No:** 918 **Authenticity:** Ṣaḥīḥ

Umm Salamah, may Allah be pleased with her, who narrated this supplication, tells us how she lived it. When her beloved husband Abū Salamah died, she said these very words, and a thought crossed her mind: who could possibly be better for me than Abū Salamah? Yet she trusted the promise of Allah and said the du‘ā in full, asking Him to replace her loss with something better, even when her grieving heart could not imagine what that better thing could be. And Allah replaced Abū Salamah for her with none other than the Messenger of Allah ﷺ himself, who married her and raised her to be a Mother of the Believers. She could not see, in the darkness of her grief, the gift that Allah was preparing on the other side of her patience. Neither can we, when our own trials fall, but her story teaches us to say the words and trust the promise even when our hearts cannot yet see the wisdom.

Second, seek help where Allah told you to seek it, in patience and in prayer, turning to the prayer mat in your distress rather than away from it, and pouring out your need to Allah in the depth of the night when others are asleep. Third, remind yourself in the moment of three things: that the pain is wiping away your sins, that the reward of the patient is without measure, and that this hardship was measured out by a Lord who loves you and who promised that He will never burden a soul beyond what it can carry, and that with every hardship He has joined an ease.

ج
لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا *

Allah does not burden a soul beyond its capacity.

Sūrah al-Baqarah (2:286)

Fourth, surround yourself in your trial with the company of the patient and the righteous, who remind you of Allah and lift you when you are weak, rather than with those who only deepen your despair. And let your patience be constant and steady through the long trial, not only in its first dramatic hour, for the Prophet ﷺ taught that the deeds dearest to Allah are the most lasting, even when they are small, and the patience that endures month after month is more beloved to Allah than a single burst of endurance that collapses when the trial drags on. And hold fast, always, to the promise Allah repeated twice for emphasis, that no hardship is sent without an ease bound to it.

فَإِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا * إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا *

So indeed, with hardship comes ease. Indeed, with hardship comes ease.

Sūrah ash-Sharḥ (94:5 to 6)

Between Hope and Fear

Let no one leave this place crushed beneath the weight of his trial, imagining that his suffering is a sign of Allah's abandonment, for we have heard that the most beloved to Allah were the most tested, and that every pain is a purification and the reward of the patient is beyond measure. And let no one grow so secure in his present ease that he forgets it too is a test he can fail. Brothers and sisters, walk between the two wings of hope and fear: hope in a Lord who is with the patient and who has bound an ease to every hardship and a reward without measure to every patience, and fear of meeting Him having met His decree with rage and complaint rather than patience and contentment. The believer grieves, for grief is human and the Prophet ﷺ himself wept at the loss of his son, but he never despairs, for despair is to think badly of Allah.

The Promise to the Patient

Let us not forget where this road of patience leads, for the one who endures the long night of his trial is carried by the dawn that Allah has promised him. Upon the patient are the blessings of their Lord and His mercy and His guidance; the patient will be given their reward without measure on the Day when every other deed is counted; and every hardship in this world will look small beyond words when the believer sees what Allah had been preparing for him through it. The Companions understood that the trials of a few short years purchase a reward that never ends, and they bore the saw and the comb and the burning sand for the sake of a Garden whose breadth is the heavens and the earth. Every patience you hold, every time you say to Allah we belong and to Him we return, every prayer you turn to instead of despair, is a step toward the reward without measure. Do not weigh your trials only by their pain. Weigh them by what your Lord is preparing for you through them.

Closing Du‘ā

Dear brothers and sisters, let us raise our hands to the One who tests us out of wisdom and lifts our burdens out of mercy. O Allah, make us among the patient with whom You are, and give us the glad tidings You promised them.

O Allah, relieve the distress of every believer who is tested this hour, and replace their hardship with ease. O Allah, heal our sick and the sick of the Muslims, mend our broken hearts, settle the debts of the indebted, and grant relief to all who are gripped by anxiety and fear. O Allah, make our trials a purification and not a punishment, a means of nearness and not of distance, and let us meet every decree of Yours with patience and contentment. O Allah, do not burden us beyond what we can bear,

and join to every hardship You send us an ease. O Allah, forgive the believing men and the believing women, the living among them and those who have passed. O Allah, set right the affairs of this Ummah, unite the hearts of the Muslims upon truth, and protect our families and our children in an age of trial. O Allah, grant safety and provision to our brothers and sisters who are oppressed and afraid in every land, for You are the All Powerful and they have none besides You.

O Allah, forgive us and our parents, and have mercy upon them as they raised us when we were small. O Allah, accept from us our prayers, our fasting, and our patience, and overlook our shortcomings and our sins. O Allah, grant us beneficial knowledge, hearts that truly fear You, and sincere deeds for Your Face alone. O Allah, make us of those who are grateful in ease and patient in hardship, and seal our lives with the best of deeds. Our Lord, give us good in this world and good in the Hereafter, and protect us from the punishment of the Fire.

The Final Reminder

Remember the command of your Lord, with which Allah closes the affair, the command of justice and excellence and kindness to kin, the way of life by which the believer holds his footing even through the storm.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ
يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ *

Indeed, Allah commands justice, excellence, and giving to relatives, and He forbids immorality, wrongdoing, and oppression. He admonishes you that you may take heed.

Sūrah an-Nahl (16:90)

So remember Allah, the Most Great, and He will remember you. Thank Him for His favours and He will increase you. And establish the prayer.

وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ