



In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

# Submitters Perspective

Monthly Bulletin of International  
Community of Submitters

[www.masjiduntucson.org](http://www.masjiduntucson.org)



Published by Masjid Tucson  
Zul-Qi'dah 1441

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## PATIENCE A great attribute

By nature, we have in us both good qualities and evil whispers constantly struggling against each other. Patience helps us strike a balance, and maintain an even keel.

The ordinary meaning of the word patience is to maintain calm in the face of tests. But the Arabic word *sabr* can be seen as having multiple related meanings. For example, 1) patience, in the sense of being careful not hasty, 2) steadfastness, consistency and firmness of purpose, 3) systematic and constant as opposed to sporadic, 4) a cheerful attitude of calmness and perseverance in defeat or affliction as opposed to grumbling, protest, or rebellion.

The word has also been used in the Quran in the sense of self-restraint (16:126-7, 20:130, 38:17). Patience is also the restraining of fear, anger, desire and a curb against our greed for power and wealth. Patience and steadfastness can imply both endurance of bodily discomfort and mental distress. Either actively so, e.g., in performing a difficult task involving devotion; or passively, such as enduring a test or in resisting one's own weaknesses. The need for patience is for human beings (and not animals

who by nature submit to God). We have reason and passion and can use the former when the latter threatens to take us off God's path. The devilish whispers are manifest in 12:53: "I do not claim innocence for myself. The self is an advocate of vice, except for those who have attained mercy from my Lord. My Lord is Forgiver, Most Merciful." Hence, if a person controls himself or herself and does not succumb to temper in the face of provocation, (s)he is said to be patient.

God loves the steadfast (3:146) so it is an important quality for us to embody (in this article, we'll consider patience and steadfastness together as they are closely related).

The Quran is replete with instructions of patience, and great rewards have been promised for practicing it. God speaks of patience, steadfastness and other connected words more than 70 times in the Quran. He rewards those who are patient. Patience and steadfastness help us be faithful. The Quran says: [2:153] *O you who believe, seek help through steadfastness and the Contact Prayers (Salat). GOD is with those who steadfastly persevere.*

We are assured that if we are stead-

fast, we will not be left alone, God is always with us (2:153, 2:249, 8:46). [3:200] *O you who believe, you shall be steadfast, you shall persevere, you shall be united, you shall observe GOD, that you may succeed.* So those who believe, exercise patience and fear God will prosper, which includes prosperity in our mundane affairs as well as spiritual progress. In both cases, it implies happiness and the attainment of our wishes, purified by the love of God.

The Quran provides us with a number of examples of patience and steadfastness, such as Job (38:44). The Bible tells us that he was a prosperous man but suffered from a number of calamities. His cattle were destroyed, his servants slain and his family crushed under the roof. His body was covered with sores. But he remained steadfast. He implored his Lord and as a result of his perseverance, his adversity was relieved, and his family and prosperity were restored with twice as much as he had before (21:83-4, 38:41-4).

12:18 recalls the words uttered by Jacob. He was falsely told that Joseph was devoured by a wolf. His brothers produced his shirt with fake blood on it. He said, "Indeed, you have conspired

(Continued on page 2)

*(Continued from page 1)*

with each other to commit a certain scheme. All I can do is resort to a quiet patience. May GOD help me in the face of your conspiracy.” He was ultimately blessed with reunion of his son. 37:102-107 speaks of the trial of Abraham and Ismail both of whom stood firm in submission to God. God regarded it as “an exacting test indeed”.

God commands the quality of patience which these servants of His exhibited. God also expects all believers to refrain from acting in anger. They are to take action only after full consideration and thought. A powerful person is not necessarily the one who flattens his opponent in a bout but the one who is able to control his anger.

There are at least three kinds of patience mentioned in the Quran: 1) patience in the discharge of compulsory injunctions which cover the prescribed do’s; 2) patience over unlawful things which cover the prescribed don’ts and 3) patience in the face of adversity. This may carry even greater rewards than the other two because of its nature and nerve-wracking effects.

Similarly, there are at least three types of examples of patience. Firstly, those who not only withstand afflictions stoically but also joyfully. They do good even when faced with trials and tribulations. This is the example of prophets, messengers, saints and the upright. They happily accept whatever God wills and find reasons to be appreciative and joyful. Such people attain tranquility of soul and become eligible for God’s pleasure in the Hereafter. [89:27-8] *As for you, O content soul. Return to your Lord, pleased and pleasing. [3:172] For those who respond to GOD and the messenger, despite the persecution they suffer, and maintain their good works, and lead a righteous life, a great reward. [23:95-6] To show you (the retribution) we have reserved for them is something we can easily do. Therefore, counter their evil works with goodness; we are fully aware of their claims. [13:22-4] They steadfastly persevere in seeking their Lord, observe the Contact Prayers (Salat), spend from our provisions to*

*them secretly and publicly, and counter evil with good. These have deserved the best abode. They enter the gardens of Eden, together with the righteous among their parents, their spouses, and their children. The angels will enter to them from every door. “Peace be upon you, because you steadfastly persevered. What a joyous destiny.”*

In the second category are pious people who are patient over things and events which are out of their control such as death or sickness of a loved one, loss of property, injury, disease, etc. If confronted with such circumstances, they discharge their devotional obligations fully. They too will get their due reward from God. [2:155-6] *We will surely test you through some fear, hunger, and loss of money, lives, and crops. Give good news to the steadfast. When an affliction befalls them, they say, “We belong to GOD, and to Him we are returning.” [22:35] They are the ones whose hearts tremble upon mentioning GOD, they steadfastly persevere during adversity, they observe the Contact Prayers (Salat), and from our provisions to them, they give to charity.*

A third category are those who maintain their poise in calamities and choose patience over anger. Even this conduct is desirable for one who has the power to take revenge but who refrains from doing so for God’s sake. [16:126] *And if you punish, you shall inflict an equivalent punishment. But if you resort to patience (instead of revenge), it would be better for the patient ones.*

We need to exercise patience at every step of our life seeking to please God—in want, affliction, loss of life and property, ill health, defeat in legitimate efforts and in fact, for checking every ignoble impulse in the heart.

[16:127] *You shall resort to patience—and your patience is attainable only with GOD’s help. Do not grieve over them, and do not be annoyed by their schemes.*

[42:43] *Resorting to patience and forgiveness reflects a true strength of character.*

## Surviving The Pandemic With Pain, There is Gain

We all go through painful and unfortunate events in our lives. Sometimes it pushes us down to the point that we feel like there is no way for us to become better. This is when many of us turn to God for help. God will always pick us up and put us back on our feet; that is something we have to be appreciative of. Tests from God can show us how appreciative we are towards our Creator. He will test us over and over, from right to left, up and down, again and again until we prove we can worship God alone under all circumstances. That’s why there are both ups and downs in life. As believers, we have to keep in mind that these ups and downs are from God. Whether you got a job or you lost a job, did great in your examination or badly in your examination, whether something great happened or you lost your way in life with no direction to go, God promises us happiness if we believe in Him and submit to Him alone because these worldly pleasures are only temporary.

[42:36] *Whatever you are given is no more than temporary material of this life. What GOD possesses is far better and everlasting, for those who believe and trust in their Lord.*

[3:14] *Adorned for the people are the worldly pleasures, such as the women, having children, piles upon piles of gold and silver, trained horses, livestock, and crops. These are the materials of this world. A far better abode is reserved at GOD.*

[8:28] *You should know that your money and your children are a test, and that GOD possesses a great recompense.*

*Alim*

*(Continued on page 3)*

*(Continued from page 2)*

During this pandemic, we have to keep our faith, our mind stronger than ever. For this too will pass. We gain strength and experiences from what we go through. For whatever pain we go through, we will surely gain from that.

**God promised us in the Quran:**

*[94:5] With pain there is gain. [94:6] Indeed, with pain there is gain.*

God will test us through many things. He will test us like those before us, including the prophets and many messengers.

*[2:155] We will surely test you through some fear, hunger, and loss of money, lives, and crops. Give good news to the steadfast.*

*[2:214] Do you expect to enter Paradise without being tested like those before you? They were tested with hardship and adversity, and were shaken up, until the messenger and those who believed with him said, "Where is GOD's victory?" GOD's victory is near.*

*[38:34] We thus put Solomon to the test; we blessed him with vast material wealth, but he steadfastly submitted.*

God's tests have a good reason, and understanding this is better for us. He tests us to show whether we are appreciative or unappreciative. *[27:40] The one who possessed knowledge from the book said, "I can bring it to you in the blink of your eye." When he saw it settled in front of him, he said, "This is a blessing from my Lord, whereby He tests me, to show whether I am appreciative or unappreciative. Whoever is appreciative is appreciative for his own good, and if one turns unappreciative, then my Lord is in no need for him, Most Honorable."*

During this pandemic, we may have some fear for what it is to come. But we can take heart knowing that God has it all worked out for us. This too, is part of His plan. If we turn to God, He will take care of us and we will have nothing to fear.

*[2:155] We will surely test you through some fear, hunger, and loss of money, lives, and crops. Give good news to the steadfast.*

Growing up, there were times of fears and worries. I remember when I was very young, when my parents would be on a trip somewhere far away and I would be at home for days. I would get very worried, to the point where I would cry, thinking of the worst-case scenario.

But to what extent can we be afraid? Many people live life fearing the future. Especially at times like this, we cannot help but think what the future holds with the virus spreading all over the world. "How can we possibly survive this pandemic?" This puts fear in us human beings. I stumbled upon one quote that changed my life and it is something I try to live by. It opened up a lot about what "trusting God" means.

"There is a reason they call God a presence – because God is right here, right now." – Elizabeth Gilbert

With this quote, my perspective on how I view my future has changed. To me, God is present, right here, right now. Which means whatever happens in the future is not of my knowledge, it is out of my reach. So therefore, I choose to trust in God, without fearing the future. For He is the best planner. This has helped me to live and be in the present moment. I live everyday embracing and cherishing everything He has given me today, right now, in this moment without worrying about my future. Being happy and appreciative of the moment you live in. That is, to me, what trusting God is.

*[9:51] Say, "Nothing happens to us, except what GOD has decreed for us. He is our Lord and Master. In GOD the believers shall trust.*

*[3:160] If GOD supports you, none can defeat you. And if He abandons you, who else can support you? In GOD the believers shall trust.*

Today as you go on about your day, try to cherish everything you see and be appreciative of everything God has provided for you, whether it's something as small as feeling the wind against your skin, the sound of birds chirping in the trees, or the sky. Try to FEEL them in your heart and thank God while doing so.

*[35:27-8] Do you not realize that God sends down from the sky water, whereby we produce fruits of various colors. Even the mountains have different colors; the peaks are white or red or some other color. And the ravens are black. Also, the people, the animals, and the livestock come in various colors. This is why the people who truly reverence God are those who are knowledgeable. God is Almighty, Forgiving.*

*[6:99] He is the One who sends down from the sky water, whereby we produce all kinds of plants. We produce from the green material multitudes of complex grains, palm trees with hanging clusters, and gardens of grapes, olives and pomegranate; fruits that are similar, yet dissimilar. Note their fruits as they grow and ripen. These are signs for people who believe.*

As human beings, we lead such busy lives, so we tend to ignore what surrounds us. We wake up in the morning, follow the same routine every single day just to find ourselves at the end of the day lying in bed, getting ready to sleep. It is important that during this time, with many people going unemployed, we take this as a teaching, a blessing, instead of feeling too sad about it. Take this time to build a closer bond with God, be aware of nature, with what surrounds you every single day that you tend to ignore. You'll be amazed at how much you have been missing out on. God is the greatest, He has provided us all of this for a specific purpose. Be aware, be happy, trust God, live in God's kingdom, commemorate God frequently to sustain a righteous life. You will never have to worry ever again.

*Adil*

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ISSN 1089-053X

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## Independence Day

July 4<sup>th</sup> is American Independence Day, celebrating the issuance of the Declaration of Independence, which includes the famous phrase: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

I was realizing that in my life, God blessed me with several personal “independence” days. When I left my parent’s home in Albany, NY and moved across the country to Tucson, Arizona, I was declaring an independence. Many years later when I asked a friend for a Quran and then asked her to show me how to do the Contact Prayers, I was declaring independence from my Christian upbringing and all those ties to Jesus as an idol. I became truly independent. I wasn’t going to live in the same place as my parents, but much more importantly, I wasn’t going to blindly follow in their religious footsteps.

God gave me the guidance, the will and the opportunity to break free and declare independence. And then to happily and completely acknowledge my total dependence on Him.

*[22:15] If anyone thinks that GOD cannot support him in this life and in the Hereafter, let him turn completely*

*to (his Creator in) heaven, and sever (his dependence on anyone else). He will then see that this plan eliminates anything that bothers him. That’s where our allegiance lies, and that’s where our happiness lies, in the worship of God alone.*

And those truths written over 200 years ago are just as applicable today. All men are created equal. The only difference is one’s level of righteousness, and that’s known only to God. God has bestowed many rights and blessings on us—life is sacred, freedom is guaranteed and we may pursue happiness in this world, though our focus should be on the Hereafter.

*[17:18] Anyone who chooses this fleeting life as his priority, we will rush to him what we decide to give him, then we commit him to Gehenna, where he suffers forever, despised and defeated.*

*[17:19] As for those who choose the Hereafter as their priority, and work righteousness, while believing, their efforts will be appreciated.*

So, Happy Independence Day. It’s a gift from God.

### *Freedom of Choice*

*[33:72] We have offered the responsibility (freedom of choice) to the heavens and the earth, and the mountains, but they refused to bear it, and were afraid of it. But the human being accepted it; he was transgressing, ignorant.*

Lydia

## Be included in our email list for weekly reminders

God has blessed us with the opportunity to send weekly reminders to submitters in our email list. The weekly reminder email is not very long. It usually consists of the topic of the week, and the related Quranic verses and links to get more information . The reminder is sent every Thursday, God willing.

*[51:55] And remind, for the reminder benefits the believers.*

We would like every submitter, whether receiving our newsletters or not, to be included in the list. You can join the list from: <https://masjiduntucson.org/current/weekly.html> Or you can email [info@masjiduntucson.org](mailto:info@masjiduntucson.org) and say that you want to be in the weekly reminder list. If you want to make it a short email, you can write “weekly reminder” in the subject line and send it.

If you also include the city and state you live in, we can compile this information and use it (God willing ) for submitters without a community who are asking to communicate with other submitters in their area.

Please help us to help you and other submitters by joining the list.

*[3:200] O you who believe, you shall be steadfast, you shall persevere, you shall be united, you shall observe GOD, that you may succeed.*

*[87:9] Therefore, you shall remind; perhaps the reminder will benefit.*

*Note: Your comments are also welcome and appreciated.*