

The Faithful Tested with Calamities

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One who is afflicted by a calamity should remember that calamities, trials and tribulations are all sent by Allah to those about whom He cares, those whom He likes and towards whom He directs His attention. Before one confirms this reality by looking into the Qur'an and Sunnah, he must observe those who are afflicted in this temporal abode: He will then find out that the most afflicted of all people are those of goodness and righteousness after the prophets and

messengers of Allah. Sacred Qur'anic verses inform you of the same:

Allah Almighty has said: "And were it not that (all) men might become of one (evil) way of life, We would provide, for everyone who blasphemes against (Allah), Most Gracious, silver roofs for their houses and (silver) stairways on which they ascend" (Qur'an, 43:33); "Do not let the unbelievers think that Our respite to them is good for them: We grant them respite so they may grow in their iniquity, but they will have a shameful punishment" (Qur'an, 3:178); "When Our clear Signs are recited to them, the unbelievers say to those who believe, 'Which of the two sides is best in position? Which makes the best show in council?' But how many (countless) generations before them have We destroyed who were even better in equipment and in glitter to the eye?

Say: "If any men go astray, (Allah) Most Gracious extends (the rope) to them, until, when they see God's warning (being fulfilled, either in punishment or in (the approach of) the Hour, they will at length realize who is in the worst position, and (who is the) weakest in strength! And Allah advances in guidance those who seek guidance, and the things that endure, the good deeds, are best as rewards in your Lord's sight and best in respect of (their) eventual returns." (Qur'an, 19:73-75).

Abdul-Rahman son of al-Hajjaj has narrated saying that affliction was mentioned to Imam Abu Abdullah [al-Sadiq], peace be with him, and what Allah, the most Exalted One, the most Great, about who in the (ص) has in store for a believer, so he said that people once asked the Prophet said, "They are the (ص) life of this world is the most afflicted, tried and tested. The Prophet prophets then people whose conduct is the very best. A believer is tested according to the measure of his iman (conviction) and good deeds. One whose conviction is sound and action is good will have intensified afflictions, whereas one whose conviction is weak and so is his knowledge, his affliction will be little."

as saying, "Great rewards (ع) Zayd, the oil seller, has quoted Imam Abu Abdullah Hussein

follow great calamities. Whenever Allah, the most Exalted One, the most Great, loves some people, He tries and tests them."

peace be with him, as saying, "There are (ع) Abu Busayr quotes Imam Abu Abdullah Hussein on earth elite worshippers of Allah; whenever something precious descends from the heavens to earth, Allah diverts it from them to others; and whenever a calamity descends, He sends it their way."

too, as saying, "If Allah Almighty loves one (ع) Al-Husain ibn Alwan quotes the Imam Hussein of His servants, he pours calamities on him, drowning him in them; I and you welcome the morning then the evening in such condition."

Imam Abu Ja`far al-Baqir, peace be with him, has said, "Whenever Allah, the most Blessed, the most Exalted One, loves a servant, he immerses him in affliction. When he calls on Him, He would say, 'Here I am, O My servant! If you wish I speed up fulfilling your desire, I can do it; but if I treasure it [for you], it is better for you.'"

said, "A great (ص) Abu Abdullah, peace be with him, has said that the Messenger of Allah tribulation is rewarded with a great reward. If Allah loves one of His servants, He tests him with a great calamity. Whoever accepts it will have won the pleasure of Allah, and whoever is angered by the calamity will earn Allah's wrath."

Imam Abu Ja`far, peace be with him, has said, "Allah tries the believer in this life according to [the degree of conviction in] his faith."

Najiyah has said, "I said to Abu Ja`far, peace be with him, 'Al-Mughirah says that Allah does not afflict a believer with leprosy or leukemia or... anything else.' He said, 'He is unaware of the believer in Al-Yasin who is referred to in Surat Ya-Sin (Chapter 36 of the Holy Qur'an); his fingers were dried; then they were healed. He warned the disbelievers and returned to them the next day, but they killed him... A believer is afflicted with every calamity, and he dies in every way, but he does not kill himself."

Abdullah ibn Ya`fur has said, "I complained to Abu Abdullah Hussein, peace be with him, about the pain from which I was suffering—and I was quite often sick—so he said to me, 'O father of Abdullah! Had a believer come to know what rewards he earns during times of calamities, he would have wished to be cut to pieces with scissors.'"

has said, "People of righteousness will always remain ([ع] Abu Abdullah (Imam Ja`far al-Sadiq in a hardship; but it is for a short period and will lead to a very, very long period of felicity."

([ع] Hamdan quotes Abu Ja`far (Imam Muhammad al-Baqir father of Imam Ja`far al-Sadiq saying, "Allah, the most Exalted One, the most Great, tries to get closer to a believer through affliction like a man trying to get closer to his wife by giving her a present; He protects him in

the life of this world like a doctor protecting his patient." was invited once to a meal. When he entered (ص) has said that the Prophet (ع) Abu Abdullah the host's house, he saw that a hen had laid an egg on a fencing wall. The egg fell on a wedge was surprised, so (ص) in the wall and stayed on it without falling and breaking. The Prophet the man said to him, "Are you surprised about this egg (which did not break)? By the One Who sent you with the truth, I have never been afflicted with a loss [as small as losing an egg]," stood up and did not partake of that man's food at all. (ص) whereupon the Messenger of Allah said, "Allah has nothing to do with one who never suffers a loss." (ص) He

Reports similar to these are numerous, so let us be satisfied with this much. We would like to conclude this dissertation with a sacred letter written by our master, Imam al- to a group from among his cousins when (ع) Sadiq, Abu Abdullah Ja`far son of Muhammad they were afflicted with hardship by some of their enemies by way of consoling them. We narrate it through isnad to Sheikh Abu Ja`far al-Tusi—may Allah sanctify his soul—who quotes Sheikh al-Mufid Muhammad ibn al-Nu'man and al-Hussain ibn Ubaydullah al-Ghada'iri citing al-Sadu-q Abu Ja`far Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Babawayh from Muhammad ibn al-Hassan ibn al-Walid from Muhammad ibn al-Hassan al-Saffar from Muhammad ibn al-Hussain ibn Abu al-Khattab from the great trusted authority Muhammad ibn Abu Omayr from Ishaq ibn Ammar saying that Abu Abdullah Ja`far ibn Muhammad, peace be with them both, wrote Abdullah ibn al-Hassan, when he and his family were taken captives, consoling him for what had befallen him saying the following: In the Name of Allah, the most Gracious, the most Merciful

To the righteous descendants and good progeny from the son of his brother and cousin: If you have been singled out—you and your family who were taken away [captive] with you—with regard to what has happened to you, you are not alone with regard to sadness, anger, depression and heart ache besides myself. I have had my share of feeling alarmed, upset and burnt by calamity as much as you have.

But I remembered how Allah, the most Exalted One, the most Great, has commanded the righteous to be patient and to take to solace when He addresses His Prophet, peace and blessings be with him and his progeny: "Now wait for your Lord's command with patience, for truly you are in Our eyes" (Qur'an, 52:48); "So wait patiently for your Lord's command, and do not be like the companion of the whale (prophet Yunus, Jonah)" (Qur'an, 68:48); when Hamzah's corpse was mutilated: "And if (ص) and remember when He told His Prophet you retaliate, do it in no worse a way than they did to you: But if you show patience, that is indeed the best (course) for those who are patient" (Qur'an, 16:126)

and also when He says, "Enjoin prayer on your people, and be persevere. We do not ask you to provide sustenance: We provide it for you. But the (fruit of) the hereafter is for righteousness" (Qur'an, 20:132).

Other such verses are: "[Those] who say, when afflicted with calamity, "To Allah do we belong, and to Him do we return." They are the ones on whom God's blessings and mercy (descend), and they are the ones who receive guidance" (Qur'an, 2:156-57);

"Those who patiently persevere will indeed receive a reward without measure!" (Qur'an, 39:10);

"... bear with patient constancy whatever betides you, for this is firmness (of purpose) in (the conduct of) affairs" (Qur'an, 31:17);

"Moses said to his people, "Pray for help from Allah, and (wait) in patience and constancy, for the earth is God's to grant as a heritage to such of His servants as He pleases, and the end is (best) for the righteous" (Qur'an, 7:128);

"... those who have faith and do righteous deeds and (join together) in the mutual teaching of truth, and of patience and constancy..." (Qur'an, 103:3);

" We shall test you with something of fear and hunger, some loss in goods or lives or the fruits (of your toil), but give glad tidings to those who patiently persevere" (Qur'an, 2:155);

"... men and women who are patient..." (Qur'an, 33:35);

"... be patient and constant, till Allah decides, for He is the best to decide" (Qur'an, 10:109).

"Be informed, Uncle and Cousin, that Allah, the most Exalted One, the most Great, does not mind a loyal servant of His suffers for some time, and there is nothing dearer to Him than one who perseveres while being harmed, exhausted and fatigued.

And He, Blessed and Exalted is He, did not care for any period of time about the riches of this life going to His enemy. Had it not been so, His foes would not have killed His loyal servants, intimidated them, jailed them, while His enemies are secure, living in comfort, high in places, having power over others.

Had it not been so, both Zakariyya (Zacharius) and his son Yahya (John the Baptist) would not have been killed wrongfully and aggressively due to the oppression of an oppressor. Had it not been so, your grandfather, Ali ibn Abu Talib, peace be with him, would not have been killed when he undertook to follow the commandments of Allah, the most Great, the most Sublime, nor your uncle al-Hussain son of Fatima, peace be with them both, due to persecution and enmity.

"Had it not been so, Allah, the most Exalted One, the most Great, would not have stated in His Book the following: "And were it not that (all) men might become of one (evil) way of life, We would provide, for everyone who blasphemes against (Allah), the Most Gracious, silver roofs

for their houses and (silver) stairways on which they ascend" (Qur'an, 43:33);

"Do they think that, because We have granted them abundance of wealth and sons, We would hasten them on in every good? Nay! They (simply) do not understand" (Qur'an, 23:55-56)."

"Had it not been so, this tradition would not have come to be: "Had the believer not felt saddened by it, I would have made for the unbeliever a headband of iron, so no headache can ever reach him."

"Had it not been so, this tradition would not have been narrated: "Life in this world is not worth to Allah, the most Exalted One, the most Great, the wing of a mosquito."

"Had it not been so, Allah would not have let an apostate take of its water a handful to drink.

"Had it not been so, this tradition would not have been narrated: "Had a believer been on the summit of a mountain, Allah would have sent him an unbeliever or a hypocrite to harm him."

"Had it not been so, this tradition would not have been narrated: "If Allah loves some people, or a servant, He would pour affliction on them/him, so they/he do(es) not get out of grief except to fall into another."

"Had it not been so, this tradition would not have been reported: "There are no dosages dearer to Allah Almighty, which His believing servant swallows in the life of this world, than one of suppressing anger and outrage, and one of grief at the time of a calamity about which he is patient with good consolation and hope for His rewards."

would not have prayed for (ص) "Had it not been so, the companions of the Messenger of Allah those who oppressed them to have a long lifespan, physical health and an abundance of wealth and children.

"Had it not been so, we would not have come to know that whenever the Messenger of Allah singled out a man to pray for mercy and forgiveness for him, the man would be martyred. (ص)

"So, O uncle, cousin, cousins and brothers, take to patience, accept, surrender and commit yourselves to Allah, the most Exalted One, the most Great; accept and be patient about His decree; uphold obedience to Him and obey His command.

"May the Almighty pour on us and on yourselves patience, and may He conclude for us and for yourselves with happiness. May He save us and yourselves from every perdition by His Might; surely He hears, and He is near. Allah blesses the Chosen One from among His creation, Muhammad the Prophet and his progeny, peace and blessings of Allah be with them all."

This is the end of the consolation verbatim as copied from the book titled Al-Tatimmat wal Muhimmat, and with it do we conclude this dissertation, praising Allah Almighty for what He and his progeny, the people (ص) has enabled us to achieve, blessing the Man of the Message of infallibility and equity.

It was completed by its author, the one who is in need for Allah Almighty, Zain ad-Din Ali ibn Ahmad al-Shami al-Amili, may Allah deal with him through His favor and forgive him through His boon.

It was completed during the daytime of Friday, the first of the anticipated sacred month of Rajab in the year 954 A.H., praising, blessing, greeting and seeking Allah's forgiveness. All praise belongs only to Allah; His peace and blessing be with our master Muhammad, his progeny and companions