

Chapter 3: Patience in Islamic Codices

Faith may be defined as something which consists of ethics, legal rights, and public instructions (learning). The same is the case for any other constructive social school or organisation. We may therefore classify faith into the following:

- (I) The basis for understanding of man and the world. This is known as world-view.
- (II) On the basis of these principles, the overall direction for the movement and human action (ideology).
- (III) Within these boundaries, guidelines or regulations for relationship of man with Allah, with self, with fellow human beings, and with other creatures.
- (IV) A series of moral guidelines for maintaining the required necessary momentum or endeavour for achieving perfection or exaltedness, and accomplishing success in various fields of life.

Of course, this vast complex, includes personal matters related to the personal interests of individuals, as well as social matters pertaining to various large groups of humanity, and affairs concerning these groups and the Islamic community (Ummah). Let us see in the above complex of faith, what is the influence and roll played by patience. In other words, a person committed to religion will act as follows:

- (I) He must believe in religious principles.
- (II) He must obey the religious regulations.
- (III) He must be familiar with the special clauses dealing with ethics.

If one fulfils all the above three, in his conduct, one could rightly be called a true believer. We will now examine the role played by patience in the life of a believer in following religion in the true sense.

In a geometrical figure which consists of lines and angles, each point, arc and semi-circle creates a special effect. Let us see what influence and role is played by patience in the geometrical figure representing the faith of a true believer. Let us consider the example of an automobile which is supposed to move someone together with his household belongings to a certain location. After passing

through various streets, this automobile finally reaches the desired final destination.

What is responsible for moving this automobile? Is it the engine? What thing is responsible for providing this strength or power to the engine? Of course, it is the petrol. Therefore in the life of a believer, patience may be compared to the engine or the petrol which gives life and strength to that engine.

Without patience, the truth and steadfast logic of the exalted school of religion would not have been understood. The divine learning (revelations) of this school which blessed humanity would have lost its colour with the passage of time. The ultimate hope of victory of truth over falsehood, which provides fresh life-giving blood for powerful hands and steadfast steps of believers, would have been silenced. And the laws and guidelines of religion which control and check the human tendencies of transgression would have become inactive.

The heroic field of valour and martyrdom for the sake of Allah and religion would have been converted into a graveyards of ideologies. The international congress of Hajj would have remained empty. The humming, sensational and confidential communications of the burning lovers (believers) in the middle of night, with the Beloved (Allah) would have been silenced, the beautiful scene of "Jihad-e-Akbar" with the self ("great self-struggle"), namely fasting and self-restriction would have lost its charms. The arteries of the economy of the Islamic state would have dried up, and charity and alms-giving for the pleasure of Allah would have been ignored.

Without patience all the higher educational and ethical values of Islam (piety, trust, and righteousness) would have been forgotten; and in essence, each parameter of religion which requires action and efforts, would have remained deprived of them. Because religion requires practice, which is not possible without patience. Therefore what provides life-giving fresh blood to this giant complex, or what provides motion to this train is nothing else but patience. With the above discussion, the substance and meaning of this divine inspiration could be clearly understood.

According to some documented narrations related to the infallible Imams, the importance of patience has been defined as follows:

"Patience out of faith is like a head to a body."

The head of a person holds the most critical importance as far as life is concerned. One may tolerate the absence of different parts in the human body such as hands, feet, eyes, ears etc. But if the head which is the controlling room for the whole nervous system, does not exist or is crippled, then all the parts and systems of the body will become crippled. The body may remain alive, but in reality it will not be different than a dead body.

Sometimes, it may be that a part of the body may perform an outstanding task. May be the fist, a powerful hand, fingers, or the eyes of a person might conduct excellent performance in discharging many duties, but all that is accomplished is because of the presence of the head. Patience holds similar

importance in the structure of religion.

Without patience the existence of Monotheism (Tawheed) will not be possible either. The prophethood and the prophetic mission would not have produced any fruits. The rights of the deprived people could not have been obtained from the tyrants. Prayers, fasting, and other rituals would also have been meaningless.

Therefore it is patience which fulfils all the aspirations of religion and humanity. If at the very beginning of Islam, if the Prophet (S) would have not offered resistance against all that severe opposition, for the sake of truth, of course, the slogan "there is no god but Allah" would have been suffocated within the boundary walls of his home, at its very inception.

What kept Islam alive and intact was patience. If the pious people of Allah and great divine prophets would have not been patient against opposition and obstacles in their path, today there would have not been left any trace and influence of monotheism. The single factor responsible for keeping alive the system of monotheism, since the very beginning of human creation has been patience. Which has been the flag carrier for this heavenly ideology till today, and will continue to do the same till the last day of judgement.

The most logical ideas and sayings of human beings, if not accompanied by the patience practised by their founders, would have dried off in their throats and tongues. They would have disappeared in the turbulent waves of the ocean of history forever. It is therefore quite clear that patience holds the similar relationship with the religious body, as the position of head relative to a human body. The Commander of Faithful in his sermon "Qaseah" explains the victory of the deprived of history over the tyrants and success of their noble ideas as follows:

"When Allah witnessed their patience in resisting the tortures and hardships, which were inflicted upon them, because of their love for him and following the path Of truth, he opened over them gates of divine assistance in the midst of those difficult bottlenecks of misfortunes. The deprived of yesterday¹ after they find themselves as rulers and governors. Their glory, fame, prestige, reached to a point, which had never been imagined in their best of dreams."²

And, this is a Tradition of history, which will never be changed till the very end, as the laws of Allah are constant, irrespective Of time. Therefore after the above detailed explanation one could describe in a nutshell the position of patience in the complex of Islam as follows:

Patience is responsible for the fulfilment of all the aspirations, and all the short term and long term goals whether individual or social.

¹. The present book is based on the lectures of Ayatollah Khamene'i at a Mashhad Mosque 20 years ago as mentioned in the introduction. Now, in retrospect, the best manifestation of the above sermon of the Commander of the Faithful could be, the victory of the Islamic Revolution on February 11th, 1979.

In an article a few years ago written by Dr. Hassan Ghafourifard, the then Head of the Physical Education Organisation in a Sports Magazine, it was mentioned that Ayatollah Khamene'i was confined in Iranshahr (Sistan and Baluchestan Province), a town with the worst climatic conditions in the south-east of Iran, before the victory of Islamic Revolution.

Today, by the Grace of Allah he is the Leader of the Muslims. The honour and fame awarded to him and to all other leaders, now who were imprisoned under the Pahlavi regime is a clear manifestation of the above sermon. (Tr.)

[2.](#) Nahj-ul-Balagha Sermon No. 234

Source URL:

<https://www.al-islam.org/discourses-patience-sayyid-ali-khamenei/chapter-3-patience-islamic-codices#comment-0>