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Perseverance

Persistence, or remaining firm, in the face of difficulty, is the secret to overcoming problems and being victorious. It is by means of this rescue ship that man can traverse the ocean of straightened circumstances and difficulty and arrive at the harbor of his goals.

It is impossible to arrive at a sacred goal without patience, perseverance and great tolerance. For this reason, the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him and his family), in spreading his message, wiping out the traces of disbelief and polytheism and establishing the system of monotheism, was ordered by God to persevere and was spoken to by God in this regard:

"Persevere, you and those with you, as you have been ordered to."[1]

The Most Noble Messenger's perseverance in pursuing his goals was so clear that friend and enemy alike were amazed. Even though they accused him of sorcery, insanity, lying and soothsaying and said hurtful words, engaged in war with him and constantly annoyed him and his friends, the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him and his family) stood firm like a mountain and related his divine message to the very end.

It would require many pages to mention all the circumstances in which the Noble Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him and his family) persevered. However, in order to make us more acquainted with the personality of this unrivaled role model, a few of such examples will be mentioned.

1. While in the land of Ta'if, the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him and his family) met with three brothers named 'Abdya'il, Habib and Mas'ud ibn ‘Amru, who were from among the great ones of the Thaqif (tribe) and invited them to Islam. One of the three said, "If you are a prophet of God, then I have stolen the Ka'bah."

The second one said, "Did God send you because He was incapable (of sending another)? He could have sent another who had the power to convey His message."

The third one said, "I swear by God, I will not speak to you from now on." Then they mocked the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him and his family) and disparagingly spread the news of his invitation to

others.

When the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him and his family) wanted to leave Ta'if, those brothers incited some people to surround him on both sides of his path and stone him. As a result of this stoning, the Prophet's (peace and blessings be upon him and his family) feet became wounded and bloody.2

2. Munib ibn Mudrik has narrated that ancestor has said, *"In the Age of Ignorance, we saw the Messenger of God (peace and blessings be upon him and his family) inviting people to say: 'Say there is no god but Allah, so as to be delivered.' At this point, one of the disbelievers slapped him in the face. Another poured dirt on his head and face and yet another used abusive language to him. At that point, a young girl came to the Messenger of God (peace and blessings be upon him and his family) with a container of water and he (peace and blessings be upon him and his family) washed his hands and face. Then he told her, "Be patient and do not be grieved (by thoughts) that one will overcome or abase your father (the Prophet)."*3

3. Abu Lahab and his wife Umm Jamilah, were amongst the people who annoyed and tormented the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him and his family). For this reason, they have been cursed by God in the Holy Qur'an. The chapter that begins with *tabbat* was revealed concerning them. In this chapter, the Qur'an refers to Umm Jamilah as *hammalatul–ha□ab* for she would sow dissension and spread hatred amongst people. She would fan the flames of the fire of dispute amongst people. It has been narrated that: *"This damned and wicked woman would take thorns, motes and sharp pieces of wood and lay them on the path he crossed so that whenever he wanted to go to pray, his feet would become bruised and wounded."*4

4. Unbelievers used threats, to instill fear, and they used enticement, to create desire, in trying to do away with the prophets (peace be upon them), in general, and the Prophet of Islam (peace and blessings be upon him and his family), in particular. When the leaders of the polytheists in Mecca saw the Most Noble Messenger's resoluteness and perseverance in relating his message, they made plans to threaten and entice him.

For this reason, they came to Abu Talib (the Prophet's uncle) and said, *"Your nephew says disparaging things about our gods. He mentions our religion in an ugly fashion. He laughs at our form of thinking and beliefs and considers our ancestors to be misguided. Either order him to leave us alone or leave him in our hands and do not support him."* In some history books it has been mentioned that they said: *"We will give him whatever he wants including the most beautiful women."*

When Abu Talib told the Messenger of God (peace and blessings be upon him and his family) what they said, the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him and his family) answered in the following manner, demonstrating his perseverance and firmness:

"I swear by God, if they were to put the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left hand for me to give

this matter (spreading the message of Islam) up, I will not give it up until God makes it (Islam) victorious or I die in doing so."[5]

5. Abu Jahl was one of the Prophet's most obstinate adversaries. In a threatening letter to the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him and his family) he wrote the following:

"O Muhammad, the imaginations in your head have made Mecca too small for you and made you a migrant to Madinah. So long as these ideas remain in your mind, they will make you a migrant and cause you to fall into corruption to the point where they will corrupt the people of Madinah as well and will cast them into the flames of the fire that has been kindled by your hands. I do not see this ending in any other way than for the Quraysh to make a special place for you and put you and the deceived who surround you in it in order to be free of your influence and to prevent the harm and disruption you cause.

In addition to this, the non-Muslims of Madinah and those who hold a grudge against you are going to support the Quraysh, for today, they only support you because they are afraid of you. But as soon as they realize that when you perish, they will perish as well and their families will be faced with difficult circumstances and that they and those alongside them will face poverty and helplessness as you become helpless, they will not continue to support you.

They know very well that when the enemies defeat you and enter their land by force, they will not differentiate between your friends and enemies. They will completely eradicate then as well as you; the enemies will take their wives and children captive and will plunder their property, just as they will do to your wives, children and property. Without a doubt, he who has warned you knows no limits and he who has clarified this matter has not been negligent in relating this message."

The Noble Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him and his family) said to the one who delivered Abu Jahl's letter, "Verily, Abu Jahl has threatened me with difficulty and the Lord of the Worlds has promised me support and victory. Of course, the news God relates is the most truthful of news and more appropriate to be accepted. When God supports Muhammad and His generosity and magnanimity envelop him, the anger and betrayal of none can harm him."[6]

1. Surah Hud 11: 112.
2. Hilyah al-Abrar, vol. 1, p. 177.
3. Mizan al-Hikmah, vol. 9, p. 671.
4. Majma' al-Bayan, vol. 27.
5. Sirah ibn Hisham, vol. 1, p. 283.
6. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 17, p. 343.

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