

Divine Trials, Humility, Supplication, and Repentance: A Comprehensive Study Based on Surah al-A'raf 7:94 and Related Quranic and Hadith Materials

1. The Central Verse and Its Principle

The Quranic verse at the center is Surah 7, Ayah 94:

وما أرسلنا في قرية من نبي إلا أخذنا أهلها بالبأساء والضراء لعلهم يضرعون

"And We did not send a prophet into any city except that We seized its people with distress and adversity so that they might humble themselves."

The verse conveys a profound divine principle concerning communities that received prophets. Allah's method of dealing with communities to whom a prophet was sent was whenever a prophet was sent to a town, and its inhabitants either rejected or were unheeding of the divine message, Allah subjected them to *al-ba'sa'i wa al-darra'i*, translated as "distress and adversity" or "suffering and misfortune."

The core purpose is stated by the phrase:

لعلهم يضرعون

This is **"so that they might humble themselves or supplicate."** The distress and adversity were not primarily for immediate destruction, but rather as a means to:

1. **Prompt humility** — softening hearts and breaking arrogance or defiance.
2. **Encourage supplication** — moving people to turn to Allah in humility, seeking His mercy and guidance.
3. **Provide an opportunity for repentance** — serving as a warning and a chance for the community to reflect, repent, and return to the path of truth and obedience before a more severe punishment.

2. The Consistent Divine Pattern: Quran Surah 6:42 and 7:94

This divine pattern is reinforced by Surah 6, Ayah 42:

ولقد أرسلنا إلى أمم من قبلك فأخذناهم بالبأساء والضراء لعلهم يتضرعون

“Indeed We sent (messengers) to nations before you, then We seized them with distress and affliction in order that they might humble themselves.”

This parallel verse uses almost identical phrasing, confirming the consistent divine methodology of using trials to evoke humility and supplication from disobedient or ungrateful communities.

Key Quranic terms:

- **/ba’sa’/ (البأساء):** difficulties including “fight, poverty, famine, flood, earthquake, and infectious diseases.”
- **/darra’/ (الضراء):** afflictions such as “sorrow, grief, disgrace, ignorance, and failure.”

These definitions show that divine trials encompass physical, economic, social, and psychological hardships. Neither any welfare is a grace nor any difficulty is a wrath, but rather a means for people to reflect on their conduct and turn to Allah.

Difficulties are described as some means for regarding Allah and managing transgressors. They can be the grace of Allah in the form of misfortunes, likened to iron being heated to become pliable and reshapeable.

Quran Surah 6, Ayah 43 is also mentioned as a warning: when punishment came, some people **“did not humble themselves; instead, their hearts became hardened.”** Thus, the divine purpose of adversity can be resisted when a community refuses to respond with repentance and supplication.

3. Human Response to Hardship and Blessings: Quran Surah al-Zumar 39:49

A detailed explanation of Surah al-Zumar, Ayah 49, highlights a significant aspect of human nature and divine wisdom concerning hardship and blessings:

فإذا مس الإنسان ضرر دعانا ثم إذا حولناه نعمة منا قال إنما أوتيته على علم بل هي فتنة ولكن
(39:49) أكثرهم لا يعلمون

"When harm touches man, he calls to Us; then when We have granted him a favor, he says: 'Only because of my knowledge [and plan of actions] I obtained it.' [It is not like that], it is only a trial, but most of them know not!"

This verse describes a common human reaction to both adversity and prosperity, emphasizing the spiritual oversight of many individuals.

Human Reaction to Hardship

When man experiences affliction, loss, harm, pain, hardship, or poverty, his inherent weakness and natural inclination towards the Divine are awakened. In such moments of distress, he turns to Allah, invoking Him for the removal of his difficulties. This illustrates a temporary return to Allah, even from those who might otherwise be heedless or averse to His Name.

Human Reaction to Blessings

The verse then describes a shift in human behavior once blessings are bestowed. When Allah grants a favor, man often attributes it solely to his own skill, knowledge, or competence. He forgets the divine source of the blessing and claims that it was obtained due to his own abilities and savoir-faire. This reflects a state of ingratitude and spiritual negligence.

An example of such ingratitude is found in the Holy Quran, where Qarun (Korah) stated, **"This has been given to me only because of the knowledge I possess"** (Quran 28:78), in response to admonitions from the scholars of the Children of Israel. Such individuals fail to realize that even the knowledge they possess is itself a divine favor.

The Divine Perspective: It Is a Trial

Addressing this vanity, the Quran clarifies that the blessings granted are not simply due to human merit, but rather, they are a trial (*fitnah*). The purpose of this trial is to reveal what lies within people's hearts when they gain worldly possessions.

Questions:

- Are they rendered desperate upon experiencing afflictions?
- Do they become vain upon gaining worldly possessions?
- Do they invoke Allah, or do they become ensnared by worldly desires upon being afflicted with vicissitudes?
- Do they consign themselves to oblivion, or do they notice their frailties and remember Allah more than before?

Allah orchestrates both hardships and bounties to test humanity, to help them comprehend the true value of their existence, and to make them realize that everything originates from Him. This process facilitates the flourishing of man's primordial natural disposition (*fitrah*) and serves as a prelude to gaining deeper knowledge and awareness.

The Ignorance of the Majority

The verse concludes by stating, "**but most of them know not!**" This highlights that the majority of people are forgetful and fail to grasp these fundamental truths. They do not recognize the deeper wisdom behind the alternating cycles of difficulty and ease, nor do they understand that blessings are a test of gratitude and humility, rather than a mere reward for their own endeavors.

Quran Surah Hud, Verse 9: "**If We make man taste mercy from Ourselves, (and) then take it off from him, verily he is despairing ungrateful.**"

Prophet Sulayman (peace be upon him) recognized this, stating: "**This is of the grace of my Lord that He may try me whether I am grateful or ungrateful; and**

whoever is grateful, he is grateful only for his ownself, and whoever is ungrateful, then surely my Lord is Self-sufficient, Honoured" (Quran 27:40).

4. Rejoicing in Mercy and Despair in Adversity: Surah Ar-Room Quran 30:36

A detailed tafsir of Surah Ar-Room, Verse 36:

و اذا اذقنا الناس رحمه فرحوا بها و ان تصبهم سيئه بما قدمت ايديهم اذا هم يقنطون

"And when We make people taste of mercy they rejoice in it, and if an evil befalls them for what their own hands have forwarded, behold, they despair."

This verse illustrates a characteristic thought pattern and spirituality of "incapacious ignorant persons." It highlights a common human tendency to react to blessings with pride and heedlessness, and to misfortune with despair.

Reaction to Mercy (Blessings)

When Allah bestows mercy upon people, causing them to "taste of mercy," such as affluence or ease, they "rejoice in it." However, clarifies that this "rejoice" (فرحوا بها /farihu biha/) does not merely mean being happy with the bounty. Rather, its purpose is "a rejoice together with pride and a kind of unawareness." This describes a mood where individuals, particularly those who are "incapacious poor persons," become proud and neglectful when they find affluence, failing to acknowledge the divine source of the blessing. In contrast, "rejoice together with thanks and remembrance of Allah not only is not bad, but also it has been enjoined," as the Quran states: "Say: 'In the grace of Allah and in His mercy...'"

Reaction to Evil (Misfortune)

Conversely, "if an evil befalls them for what their own hands have forwarded, behold, they despair." This refers to misfortunes that are a "consequence of his own deeds and sins." The phrase "what their own hands have forwarded" (بما قدمت ايديهم /bima

qaddamat 'aydihim/) specifically points to sins, as most human actions are performed with the hands, though sins can also be committed through the heart, eyes, and tongue. When such evil, stemming from their own actions, afflicts them, these individuals fall into despair.

Contrast with True Believers

The verse implicitly contrasts the behavior of these "incapacious ignorant persons" with that of true believers:

- True believers are not proud and neglectful at the time of affluence nor are they hopeless at the time of affliction.
- They recognize that the bounties are from the side of Allah (s.w.t.) and they thank Him.
- They consider afflictions as an examination and divine test, or as the fruit of their own deeds, leading them to be almost always patient and they turn to Him.
- While the faithless are caught between pride and hopelessness, the faithful are characterized by "gratitude" and "patience with perseverance."

Afflictions as a Consequence of Deeds

The verse indicates that at least a part of afflictions that afflict man is the consequence of his own deeds and sins. Through these experiences, Allah intends to warn them and He causes them to become purified and brings them towards Him.

Clarifying Apparent Contradiction with Surah 30, Verse 33

A question arises regarding a potential contradiction between this verse (Quran 30:36) and Quran Surah 30, Verse 33, which states that people "**call upon their Lord, turning to Him**" when harm afflicts them. Verse 33 seems to speak of hopefulness, while Verse 36 speaks of despair in affliction.

clarifies this by distinguishing between the types of affliction:

- **Surah 30, Verse 33** refers to 'harm' (ضر /durr/), which denotes "harmful events such as torments, earthquakes, and other afflictions" that cause all people, "irrespective of monotheist and polytheist ones," to remember Allah. This highlights "monotheistic nature" (*fitra*) and an innate turning to God in general calamity.
- **Surah 30, Verse 36** (the verse under discussion) pertains to "the sequels of man's sins and the despair emerged from them." This describes a specific type of despair that affects individuals who, due to pride in their good deeds, feel secure from divine punishment, but then fall into despair from Allah's mercy when the consequences of their evil actions befall them.

Therefore, both "pride" (in good actions) and "despair from the mercy of Allah" (due to evil actions and their consequences) are blameworthy states. The two verses address distinct scenarios of human reaction to different forms of affliction and blessing.

5. Divine Trials and the Virtue of Patience: Surah Al-Baqarah 2:155-157

Surah Al-Baqarah, Ayah 155

An extensive explanation of Surah Al-Baqarah, Ayah 155:

"[Quran 2:155] **And We will most certainly try you with somewhat of fear and hunger and loss of property and lives and fruits; and give good news to the patient,**"

Another translation is:

"And most certainly shall We try you by means of danger, hunger, and loss of worldly goods, of lives and of (labour's) fruits. But give glad tidings unto those who are patient in adversity."

This verse conveys that Allah will inevitably test believers through various forms of hardship and difficulty. These trials are an intrinsic part of life and serve to test the patience, faith, and perseverance of individuals. The verse also promises glad tidings to those who demonstrate patience in the face of these adversities.

Specific Interpretations of the Trials

A narration from Muhammad bin Muslim, from Imam Abu Abdullah as-Sadiq (peace be upon him):

حدثنا محمد بن همام قال: حدثنا عبد الله بن جعفر الحميري، قال: حدثنا الحسن بن محبوب، عن علي بن رئاب، عن محمد بن مسلم، عن أبي عبد الله جعفر بن محمد أنه قال: إن قدام قيام القائم علامات: بلوى من الله تعالى لعباده المؤمنين. قلت: وما هي؟ قال: ذلك قول الله ولنبلونكم بشيء من الخوف والجوع ونقص من الأموال والأنفس والثمرات وبشر الصابرين قال: (لنبلونكم) يعني المؤمنين، (بشيء من الخوف) من ملوك بني فلان في آخر سلطانهم، (والجوع) بغلاء أسعارهم، (ونقص من الأموال) فساد التجارات وقلة الفضل فيها، (والأنفس) موت ذريع (والثمرات) قلة ريع ما يزرع وقلة بركة الثمار، (وبشر الصابرين) عند ذلك بخروج القائم. ثم قال لي: يا محمد، هذا تأويله. إن الله يقول هو الذي أنزل عليك الكتاب منه آيات محكمات هن أم الكتاب وآخر متشابهات فأما الذين في قلوبهم زيغ فيتبعون ما تشابه منه ابتغاء الفتنة وابتغاء تأويله وما يعلم تأويله إلا الله والراسخون في العلم يقولون آمنا به كل من عند ربنا وما يذكر إلا أولو الألباب

Muhammad bin Hammam narrated from Abdullah bin Ja'far al-Himyari from al-Hasan bin Mahboob from Ali bin Ri'ab that Muhammad bin Muslim had said: "Abu Abdullah as-Sadiq had said: **"Before the rising of al-Qa'im there will be some signs, with which Allah tries His faithful people."** I said: **"What are they?"** He said: **"It is the saying of Allah, "And We will most certainly try you with somewhat of fear and hunger and loss of property and lives and fruits; and give good news to the patient."** When Allah says (We will try you) He means the believers, when He says (with somewhat of fear), He refers to the fright that is caused at the end of the rule of the family of so-and-so, (hunger) is because of expensive prices, (loss of property) is corruption of trade and littleness of profits, (lives) is quick deaths, (fruits) is little production of plants and little blessing of fruits and (give good news to the patient) when al-Qa'im appears."

Then he said to me: "O Muhammad, this is the interpretation of the verse. Allah says, "But none knows its interpretation except Allah and those who are firmly rooted in knowledge."

— Kitab al-Ghayba by Abu 'Abd Allah Muhammad b. Ibrahim al-Nu'mani, Book 2, Chapter 14, Hadith #5

According to hadith attributed to Abu 'Abdillah (Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq), these trials have specific interpretations, particularly in the context of events preceding the appearance of al-Qa'im (Imam al-Mahdi, peace be upon him):

- **"Fear"**: Refers to the fright caused by oppressive rulers, specifically mentioned as the fright caused at the end of the rule of a certain dynasty, or generally, fear of the rulers.
- **"Hunger"**: Denotes economic hardship, high cost of food, and expensive prices, which can lead to general scarcity and famines.
- **"Loss of property/wealth"**: Indicates the corruption of trades, insufficiency of gain, lack of profits, and general economic instability.
- **"Loss of lives"**: Points to catastrophic deaths, quick deaths, and mass destruction of human lives.
- **"Loss of fruits/crops"**: Refers to lengthy periods of droughts, little production of plants, lack of proceeds from what is sown, and a general lack of blessing in crops or the lack of merit in what is cultivated.

أخبرنا أحمد بن محمد بن سعيد بن عقدة قال: حدثني أحمد بن يوسف بن يعقوب أبو الحسن الجعفي من كتابه، قال: حدثنا إسماعيل بن مهران عن الحسن بن علي بن أبي حمزة، عن أبيه، عن أبي بصير قال: قال أبو عبد الله: لا بد أن يكون قدام القائم سنة يجوع فيها الناس ويصيبهم خوف شديد من القتل ونقص من الأموال والأنفس والثمرات، فإن ذلك في كتاب الله لبيّن. ثم تلا هذه الآية ولنبلونكم بشيء من الخوف والجوع ونقص من الأموال والأنفس والثمرات وبشر الصابرين

Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Sa'eed bin Oqda narrated from Ahmad bin Yousuf bin Ya'qoob from Abul Hasan al-Ju'fi from Issma'eel bin Mihran from al-Hasan bin Ali bin Abu Hamza from Abu Baseer that Abu Abdullah as-Sadiq (peace be upon him) had said: **"There must be a sedition before the appearance of al-Qa'im, during which**

people become hungry, terrified by killing and they lose their properties and lives. This has been clarified by the Book of Allah. Allah has said, "And We will most certainly try you with somewhat of fear and hunger and loss of property and lives and fruits; and give good news to the patient."

— Kitab al-Ghayba by Abu 'Abd Allah Muhammad b. Ibrahim al-Nu'mani, Book 2, Chapter 14, Hadith #6

Spiritual Lessons and the Virtue of Patience

The verse emphasizes the paramount importance of patience (*sabr*) in the face of these tests:

- **Inevitable Nature of Tests:** The verse establishes that tests and trials are an inevitable part of life, taking many forms. These experiences are not random but are part of a divine plan.
- **Purpose of Trials:** Calamities are not arbitrary; rather, they serve to test and prove an individual's personal excellence, faith, and virtues. The more an individual rises in faith in God and personal virtues, the more they may be beset with trials to prove their excellence.
- **Reward for Patience:** Those who endure these hardships with patience and perseverance are promised "good news" and ultimately, reward. Successful endurance elevates an individual to higher levels of spiritual development and brings them closer to God.
- **Patience as a Means of Help:**

عن سليمان، عن ذكره، عن أبي عبد هلالا عليه السلام في قول هلالا عز وجل: " : واستعينوا بالصبر " اقل: الصبر الصيام، واقل. إذا نزلت ابلرجل النازلة والشديدة فليصم، افن هلالا عز وجل يقول: " واستعينوا بالصبر " يعني الصيام

From Sulaiman, from whoever mentioned it, from Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him) regarding the words of Allah the Almighty: **"And seek help through patience" (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:45), he said: Patience is fasting. And he said: When a calamity or hardship befalls a man, let him fast, for**

Allah the Almighty says: "And seek help through patience," meaning fasting.

— Wasail al-Shia Vol. 10, Section 7, Chapter 2, Hadith 13716

عن عبد هلال بن طلحة، عن أبي عبد هلال عليه السلام في قول هلال عز وجل: " واستعينوا بالصبر والصلاة " اقل: الصبر الصوم

From Abdullah bin Talha, from Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him) regarding the words of Allah the Almighty: "**And seek help through patience and prayer**" (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:45), he said: **Patience is fasting.**

— Wasail al-Shia Vol. 10, Section 7, Chapter 2, Hadith 13718

- **Resignation to Allah's Will:** The verses immediately following (2:156-157) further elaborate on the characteristics of the patient. They are described as those who, when a misfortune befalls them, say: "**Surely we are Allah's and to Him we shall surely return.**" These individuals are recipients of blessings and mercy from their Lord and are considered followers of the right course.

Context of the Revelation

The general comment regarding Surah 2:155-157 indicates that these verses form a unified theme, likely revealed together. Their context suggests they were promulgated shortly before the law of al-jihad (war in the way of Allah) was ordered, when Muslims were commanded to fight in the cause of religion. This implies that the trials mentioned in 2:155 could have been preparatory for the immense challenges, sacrifices, and steadfastness required in the path of jihad.

6. Surah Al-Baqarah Quran 2:156-157: The Patient and Their Rewards

A detailed explanation of Surah Al-Baqarah, Ayats 156-157:

"[Quran 2:156] **Who, when a misfortune befalls them, say: Surely we are Allah's and to Him we shall surely return.**

[Quran 2:157] **Those are they on whom are blessings and mercy from their Lord, and those are the followers of the right course."**

Patience (Sabr)

Surah 2:156 specifically describes the conduct of patient individuals when confronted with misfortune. Their patience is manifested through a profound declaration:

"Surely we are Allah's and to Him we shall surely return." This statement signifies a deep recognition of Allah's ultimate ownership and sovereignty over all existence, acknowledging that everything belongs to Him and that all beings will ultimately return to Him. This expression is a core aspect of patience in Islam, indicating submission to divine will and trust in Allah's decree during difficult times.

The patient are those who, when confronted with any difficulty or misfortune, express their submission and faith by uttering this profound statement (إنا لله وإنا إليه راجعون - Istirja'). This declaration signifies several key aspects of their spiritual attitude:

- **Recognition of Allah's Ownership:** By saying "Surely we are Allah's," they acknowledge that everything belongs to Allah, including their lives, wealth, and loved ones.
- **Belief in the Ultimate Return:** The phrase "and to Him we shall surely return" affirms the reality of the Hereafter and the ultimate destination of all souls.
- **Acceptance and Submission:** This utterance is an act of profound acceptance of Allah's decree and submission to His will.

An example of Amir al-Momineen (peace be upon him):

علي بن محمد عن صالح بن أبي حماد رفعه قال جاء أمير المؤمنين (عليه السلام) إلى الأشعث بن قيس يعزيه بأخ له يقال له عبد الرحمن فقال له أمير المؤمنين (عليه السلام) إن جزعت فحق الرحم أتيت وإن صبرت فحق الله أديت على أنك إن صبرت جرى عليك القضاء وأنت محمود وإن جزعت جرى عليك القضاء وأنت مذموم فقال له الأشعث إنا لله وإنا إليه راجعون فقال أمير

المؤمنين (عليه السلام) أ تدري ما تأويلها فقال الأشعث لا أنت غاية العلم ومنتهاه فقال له أما قولك إنا لله فأقرار منك بالملك وأما قولك وإنا إليه راجعون فأقرار منك بالهلاك.

Ali ibn Muhammad has narrated from Salih ibn abu Hammad in a marfu' manner has said the following: "'Amir al-Mu'minin (peace be upon him), once visited Ash'ath ibn Qays to offer condolences for the death of his brother, called, 'Abd al-Rahman. 'Amir al-Mu'minin told him, **'If you express grief, you have observed the right of relatives; but if you exercise patience you have observed the right of Allah. If you exercise patience, you cannot escape destiny but you will be praised, and if you express grief, still you cannot escape destiny but you will be blamed.'**

Ash'ath then said to him, **'We are for Allah and to Him we return.'** 'Amir al-Mu'minin then asked, **'Do you know what its explanation is?'** Ash'ath replied, 'No, you are the end and limit of knowledge.' The Imam said, **'Your saying, "we are for Allah," is your professing that you are owned (by Allah) and your saying, "to Him we return", is your professing to die.'**"

— Al-Kafi (Vol. 3) by Shaykh Muhammad b. Yaqub al-Kulayni, Book 3, Chapter 95, Hadith #40

وهللا أعلم- رسول هللا) صل هللا عليه وآله: إذا قبض ولد المؤمن عن أبي عبد هللا) عليه السالم) اقل: اقل هللا تبارك وتعالى لمالئكته: قبضتم ولد فالن؟ فيقولون: نعم ربنا؟ اقل: فيقول: فما اقل- بما اقل العبد، عبدي؟ اقلوا: حمدك واسترجع، فيقول هللا تبارك وتعالى: أخذتم ثمرة قلبه وقرّة عينه، فحمدني واسترجع. ابنوا له بيتا في الجنة وسموه بيت الحمد

From Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him), he said: The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his family) said: **When a believer's child dies - and Allah knows best what the servant says - Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, says to His angels: "Did you take the child of so-and-so?" They say: "Yes, our Lord." He says: "What did My servant say?" They say: "He praised You and said 'We belong to Allah and to Him we return.'" Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, says: "You took the fruit of his heart and the comfort of his eyes, yet he praised Me and returned [to Me]. Build him a house in Paradise and name it the House of Praise."**

— Wasail al-Shia Vol. 3, Section 3, Chapter 73, Hadith 3532

Blessings (Salawat)

For those who demonstrate this form of patience, Allah promises specific rewards, beginning with "blessings from their Lord." These blessings, referred to as Salawat, denote divine favors, commendations, and special graces bestowed upon them. The patient ones are rewarded with "Salawat (blessings) from their Lord."

Mercy

Alongside blessings, the patient individuals are also promised "mercy from their Lord." This signifies Allah's compassion, forgiveness, and benevolence. Receiving mercy from Allah is a profound indication of His love and care for those who endure trials with steadfastness and submission.

Being Rightly Guided

Furthermore, Quran Surah 2:157 identifies the patient as "**the followers of the right course**" or "**the guided ones**." This highlights that their patient and submissive response to misfortune is a sign of true guidance from Allah. It means they are on the correct path, discerning Allah's wisdom in their trials and adhering to His directives. The guidance received is not merely intellectual but encompasses a spiritual path that leads to success and proximity to Allah.

The Promised Reward for Patience

The following rewards are for those who respond to trials with patience:

- **Blessings (Salawaat) from their Lord:** These are divine commendations and graces.
- **Mercy:** They receive Allah's special mercy.
- **Guidance:** They are guided by Allah and are considered "the followers of the right course."
- **Forgiveness:** Glad tidings of forgiveness are given.

- **The Garden (Paradise):** They are promised admission into Paradise and will be recompensed with chambers (elevated rooms) and silken garments, abiding eternally in an excellent abode.
- **Reward Without Measure:** Only the patient will be paid back their reward in full without measure.

- علي بن إبراهيم عن أبيه ومحمد بن إسماعيل عن الفضل بن شاذان جميعا عن ابن أبي عمير عن هشام بن الحكم عن أبي عبد الله (عليه السلام) قال إذا كان يوم القيامة يقوم عنق من الناس فيأتون باب الجنة فيضربونه فيقال لهم من أنتم فيقولون نحن أهل الصبر فيقال لهم على ما صبرتم فيقولون كنا نصبر على طاعة الله ونصبر عن معاصي الله فيقول الله عز وجل صدقوا أدخلوهم الجنة وهو قول الله عز وجل: (إنما يوفى الصابرون أجرهم بغير حساب).

Ali Ibn Ibrahim has narrated from his father and Muhammad Ibn Isma'il from Fadl Ibn Shadhan together who narrated from Ibn Abi 'Umayr from Hisham Ibn al-Hakam that Abu 'Abdillah (al-Sadiq) (peace be upon him) said: **"On the Day of Judgment, a group of people will raise their necks, approach the door of Paradise and knock on it. They will then be asked, 'Who are you?'. They will say, 'We are the people of patience.' They will then be asked, 'In what matters did you exercise patience?'. They will answer, 'We exercised patience in obeying Allah and patience against disobeying Allah.' Then Allah (swt) will say, 'They have spoken the truth, allow them to enter into the Paradise.' This is (the meaning of) the words of Allah (swt): «It is those who exercise patience that receive their reward without being asked to clear any accounts» (Quran 39:10).**

— Al-Kafi (Vol. 2) by Shaykh Muhammad b. Yaqub al-Kulayni, Book 1, Chapter 36, Hadith #4

عن هشام بن الحكم، عن أبي عبد الله (عليه السلام) (قل: إذا كان يوم القيامة يقوم عنق من الناس فيأتون باب الجنة فيقال: من أنتم؟ فيقولون: نحن أهل الصبر فيقال لهم: على ما صبرتم؟ فيقولون: كنا نصبر على طاعة الله، ونصبر عن معاصي الله). (فيقول الله عز وجل: صدقوا أدخلوهم الجنة، وهو قول الله عز وجل: (إنما يوفى الصابرون أجرهم بغير حساب).

From Hisham ibn al-Hakam, from Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him) who said: **On the Day of Resurrection, a group of people will stand and come to the gate of Paradise. They will be asked: Who are you? They will say: We are the people of patience. They will be asked: What were you patient about? They will say: We were patient in obeying Allah and patient in staying away from disobeying Allah. Then Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, will say: They have spoken the truth, let them enter Paradise. And this is in accordance with Allah's words: Indeed, the patient will be given their reward without account [Quran 39:10].**

— Wasail al-Shia Vol. 15, Section 2, Chapter 19, Hadith 20368

و [جعل الله] الصبر معونة على استيجاب الأجر. (أعيان الشيعة-الطبع الجديد- ج 1 ص 316)

Hazrath Fatima (peace be upon her): **(Allah rendered) patience as a help for getting reward**

— Ayan ush-Shia Ataba Al Jadeed, Vol. I, P316

This emphasizes the vast and unlimited nature of their recompense.

- **Divine Love and Companionship:** Patience leads to winning divine love and the companionship of God.
- **Good End:** It contributes to a favorable ultimate outcome.
- **Increased Blessings:** It leads to an increase in Allah's blessings.

7. Emotional Balance and True Asceticism: Surah Al-Hadid Quran 57:23

A detailed explanation of Surah Al-Hadid, Verse 23:

"In order that you not despair over what has eluded you and not exult [in pride] over what He has given you. And Allah does not like everyone self-deluded and boastful."

This verse serves as a guiding principle for believers, instructing them on how to navigate the inevitable highs and lows of worldly life with a balanced and faithful perspective.

Detachment from Worldly Outcomes

The core message of this verse is to foster a state of equilibrium and spiritual detachment regarding material possessions and outcomes. Believers are advised not to be overly distressed by what they have lost, nor to be excessively joyful about what they have gained. This perspective stems from the understanding that everything in existence is under the dominion of Allah, and all events are part of His divine plan.

- **Not Grieving Over Loss:** "**So that you may not grieve for what has escaped you**" means that one should not become depressed, despondent, or excessively sorrowful over worldly things they fail to achieve or have lost. This includes material possessions, opportunities, or even loved ones. This attitude helps maintain inner peace and prevents despair, ensuring that the individual remains connected to Allah, drawing strength and hope from the Divine regardless of worldly setbacks.
- **Not Exulting in Gain:** "**Nor be exultant at what He has given you**" cautions against excessive pride, arrogance, or boastfulness when one receives blessings, wealth, or success. Such a state can lead to conceit and divert one's focus from Allah, the true Giver of all bounties.

The Nature of Asceticism (Zuhd)

This verse is considered a comprehensive definition of true asceticism in Islam.

الإمام علي (عليه السلام): الزهد كلمة بين كلمتين ، قال الله ﷻ: «لكيلا تأسوا على ما فاتكم ولا تفرحوا بما آتاكم والله ﷻ لا يحب كل مختال فخور» فمن لم يأس على الماضي ، ولم يفرح بالآتي فقد أخذ الزهد بطرفيه

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) said: **'Asceticism is summed up between two phrases in the Quran, where Allah, most High, says, "So that you may not grieve for what has escaped you, nor be exultant at what He has given you." [Quran 57:23] Therefore, one who neither grieves about past losses nor is overjoyed about the possessions he is granted has perfected his asceticism from both sides.'**

— Bihar al-Anwar, v. 70, p. 317, no. 23

Similarly, when Hafs b. Ghiyath al-Nakhai al-Qadi asked Imam al-Sadiq (peace be upon him) about asceticism, he responded by quoting this very verse:

حدثنا محمد بن موسى بن المتوكل (رضي الله عنه)، قال: حدثنا سعد بن عبد الله، قال: حدثنا القاسم بن محمد الاصبهاني، عن سليمان بن داود المنقري، عن حفص بن غياث النخعي القاضي، قال: قلت للصادق جعفر بن محمد (عليه السلام): ما الزهد في الدنيا؟ فقال: قد حد الله عزوجل (3) ذلك في كتابه فقال: (لكيلا تأسوا على ما فاتكم ولا تفرحوا بما آتاكم)

Muhammad b. Musa b. al-Mutawakkil (ra) narrated to us. He said: Sa`d b. `Abdullah narrated to us. He said: Al-Qasim b. Muhammad al-Isfahani narrated to us from Sulayman b. Dawud al-Munqari from Hafs b. Ghiyath al-Nakha`i al-Qadi. He said: I said to al-Sadiq Ja`far b. Muhammad (peace be upon him): What is asceticism in this world? So, he said: **Allah has defined that in His Book. He says, "So that you may not grieve at the things you fail to get, nor rejoice over that which has been given to you."** (Quran 57:23)

— Al-Amali by Shaykh Muhammad b. Ali al-Saduq, Book 1, Chapter 90, Hadith #3

Asceticism, in this context, does not imply renunciation of the world entirely, but rather achieving a state of inner detachment where one is not emotionally swayed by the acquisition or loss of worldly things, remaining focused on the matters of the Hereafter. It is a prescription for the health of the soul, enabling believers to find contentment and peace in any situation, for they are not swayed by external circumstances.

Divine Preordination and the Purpose of Trials

The Quran verse follows 57:22, which mentions that everything that happens is written in a Book, and it is easy for Allah to bring about whatever He wills:

"No calamity befalls on the earth or in yourselves but it is inscribed in the Tablet before We bring it into existence. Verily, that is easy for Allah."

This provides the context for understanding why believers should adopt the attitude described in Quran 57:23.

- **Warning Against Worldly Attachment:** Calamities and blessings are preordained and serve as warnings against excessive attachment to mundane possessions and glories.
- **Spiritual Elevation:** Allah preordained afflictions and vicissitudes to enable the human soul to ascend to elevated states where it is not unduly affected by pleasant or unpleasant occurrences.
- **Connection to Allah:** The Quran emphasizes that Allah sends suffering not as punishment but to ensure believers remain connected to Him, drawing energy and hope from the Divine, irrespective of worldly gains or losses.

Allah Dislikes Arrogance and Boasting

The verse concludes with a clear statement: **"and Allah does not love any arrogant boaster."** This reinforces the spiritual discipline taught earlier. Those who exult excessively in their gains often become arrogant (mukhtal) and boastful (fakhur). Allah dislikes these qualities because they indicate a lack of humility, gratitude, and recognition that all blessings come from Him.

Practical Spiritual Balance

Practical guidance:

1. **When something is lost:** Acknowledge the pain but avoid despair. Worldly circumstances change and do not last permanently. Calamities are decreed by Allah, and true believers should react with patience and gratitude.
2. **When something is gained:** Receive it with gratitude rather than pride or boastfulness.
3. **Treat both loss and gain as part of the test of the transient world,** placing ultimate reliance on Allah rather than on changing circumstances.

The analogy of a bank staff member, who handles both deposits and withdrawals without personal joy or sadness, serves to illustrate this concept. The staff member acts as a trustee, understanding that the money is not theirs, thus their emotional state is unaffected by its flow. Similarly, believers are encouraged to view worldly possessions and outcomes as temporary trusts from Allah, fostering an inner contentment and detachment.

8. The Purpose of Divine Trials: Nahjul Balaghah, Sermon 192

A detailed explanation of the quote from Nahjul Balaghah attributed to Imam Ali (peace be upon him):

الإمام علي (عليه السلام): ولكن الله ٠ يختبر عباده بأنواع الشدائد ، ويتعبد لهم بأنواع المجاهد ، ويبتليهم بضروب المكارِه ؛ إخراجا للتكبر من قلوبهم ، وإسكانا للتذلل في نفوسهم ، وليجعل ذلك أبوابا فتحا إلى فضله ، وأسبابا ذللا لعفوه

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) said: **'But Allah tries His servants with various tribulations, renders them to worship Him through struggles, tests them with various types of distresses, all in order to extract pride out from their hearts, and to settle humbleness in their souls, and in order to make all these open doors to His grace an easy means to His pardon.'**

— Nahjul Balaghah, Sermon 192

This quote reveals that divine trials are not arbitrary acts, but rather purposeful mechanisms designed to cultivate specific spiritual states within believers and open pathways to divine mercy.

Purpose of Divine Trials

The meaning and context of this quote can be broken down into several key objectives that Allah aims to achieve through these trials:

1. **Extraction of Pride from Hearts:** The primary goal of these tribulations is "**to extract pride out from their hearts.**" Pride (arrogance, vanity) is a significant spiritual ailment that can distance a servant from Allah. When individuals face difficulties, their reliance on their own strength, wealth, or status diminishes, forcing them to turn to Allah. This process helps dismantle the ego and remove self-admiration that can hinder spiritual growth.
2. **Settlement of Humbleness in Souls:** Following the extraction of pride, the trials serve "to settle humbleness in their souls." Humility is a cornerstone of true servitude to Allah. When a person recognizes their own weakness and dependence on the Creator in times of hardship, it instills a deep sense of humility. This state of humbleness brings the servant closer to Allah, making them more receptive to divine guidance and grace.
3. **Means to Divine Grace and Pardon:** The ultimate outcome of successfully navigating these trials is "to make all these open doors to His grace an easy means to His pardon." Enduring struggles with patience and submission not only purifies the soul but also earns Allah's favor and forgiveness. The trials become a path for believers to demonstrate their sincerity, leading to greater rewards and a closer relationship with their Lord.

Broader Context of Trials

Further insights into the nature and purpose of these trials:

- **Not for Allah's Information:**

رسول الله ﷺ (صلي الله عليه وآله): علم الباطن سر من أسرار الله عز وجل ، وحكم من حكم الله ، يقذفه في قلوب من شاء من عباده

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family) said: **'The knowledge of the hidden is one of the secrets of Allah, Mighty and Exalted, and one of Allah's commands which He divulges into the hearts of whom He wills from among His servants.'**

— Kanz al-Ummal, no. 28820

حدثنا محمد بن علي ماجيلويه - رحمه الله - قال: حدثني عمي محمد بن أبي القاسم، عن محمد بن علي الكوفي، قال: حدثني موسى بن سعدان الحنطي، عن عبد الله بن القاسم، عن عبد الله بن مسكان، عن محمد بن مسلم، قال: سألت أبا عبد الله عليه السلام عن قول الله عز وجل:

We were told by Muhammed bin Ali Majilawayh, may Allah grant him mercy, that he said: I was told by my paternal uncle, Muhammed bin Abi'l-Qasim, from Muhammed bin Ali al-Kufi, that he said: I was told by Musa bin Sa'dan, the Wheat Seller, from Abdullah bin Qasim, from Abdullah bin Maskan, from Muhammed bin Muslim, that he said: I asked Abu Abdillah, peace be upon him, about the saying of Allah, Exalted and Glorious is He: **«He knows the secret and what is more hidden»** (Quran 20:7). He said: **The secret is what you conceal in yourself, and what is more hidden is what comes to your mind and then which you forget.**

— Maani al-Akhbar by Shaykh Muhammad b. Ali al-Saduq, Book 1, Chapter 82, Hadith #1

فانا يحيط علمنا بأنبائكم ولا يعزب عنا شيء من أخباركم. (بحارالانوار ج53 ص175)

Imam Mehdi (ATFS): **Indeed we have thorough knowledge which encompasses your news (incidents and affairs of life). And nothing out of your news remain hidden from us**

— Bihar ul-Anwar Vol5.3, P 175

Rather, the intention is that those hidden qualities say like, happiness and pleasure and anger or the portion of rage and fury which is given by Allah to become manifest and these hidden qualities come to out in the form of action and apparent deeds, so that reward and punishment and merit of penalty and requital becomes manifest.

- **Sign of Allah's Love:**

رسول الله ﷺ (صلي الله عليه و آله): إذا أحب الله عبدا ابتلاه، فإن صبر اجتباه ، وإن رضي اصطفاه

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family) said: '**When Allah loves a servant He tests him with tribulations, and if he endures these He selects him [for His proximity], and if he bears them with satisfaction, He distinguishes him.**'

— Bihar al-Anwar, v. 82, p. 142, no. 26

عن أبي جعفر (عليه السلام) اقل: إن هلا إذ أحب عبدا غته ابلبالء غتا، وثجه ابلبالء ثجا (،)، :
إذا دعاه اقل. لبيك عبدي، لئن عجلت لك ما سألت إني عل ذلك لقادر، ولئن ادخرت لك فما
ادخرت لك خير لك

From Abu Ja'far (peace be upon him) who said: **Indeed when Allah loves a servant, He immerses him completely in trials and pours trials upon him abundantly. When he calls upon Him, He says: "Here I am, My servant. If I hasten what you ask for, I am indeed capable of that, but what I have stored for you is better for you."**

— Wasail al-Shia Vol. 3, Section 3, Chapter 77, Hadith 3598

اقل: إن هلا ليتعاهد عبده المؤمن ابلبالء كما يتعاهد الغايب- في حديث- (عن أبي عبد هلا
(عليه السلام). أهله ابلطرف، وإنه ليحميه الدنيا كما يحمي الطبيب المريض

From Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him) - in a hadith - who said: **Indeed, Allah tends to His believing servant with trials just as an absent person tends to**

his family with gifts, and He protects him from worldly matters just as a physician protects his patient.

— Wasail al-Shia Vol. 3, Section 3, Chapter 77, Hadith 3601

- **Refuge from Misleading Trials:** Imam Ali (peace be upon him) also advised against asking Allah for refuge from all tests and trials,

محمد بن الحسين الرضي في نهج البالغة (عن أمير المؤمنين) عليه السالم، أنه اقل: ال يقولن أحدكم: اللهم إني أعوذ بك من الفتنة لأنه ليس من أحد إل وهو مشتمل عل فتنة، ولكن من استعاذ فليستعذ من مضالت الفتن، افن هلا. (يقول:)واعلموا أنما أموالكم وأوالدكم فتنة

Muhammad bin Al-Hussein Al-Radi in (Nahj al-Balagha) from Amir al-Muminin (peace be upon him), that he said: **None of you should say: "O Allah, I seek refuge in You from trial (fitna)," for there is no one who is not encompassed by trial. But whoever seeks refuge, let him seek refuge from the misleading trials, for Allah says: And know that your wealth and your children are but a trial** [Quran, 8:28].

— Wasail al-Shia Vol. 7, Section 2, Chapter 59, Hadith 8940

Forms of Trials

Divine testing is not limited to difficulties; it encompasses a wide range of experiences:

- **Adversity:** This includes fear, hunger, illness, loss, poverty, humiliation, and other forms of distress.
- **Prosperity:** Blessings such as wealth, power, honor, and high status can also constitute tests. Sermon 192 specifically cautions against viewing wealth or descendants as proof of Allah's pleasure, emphasizing that prosperity itself may contain opportunities for trial. As Abu 'Abdillah (peace be upon him) stated:

عن بعض أصحابه رفعه قال قال أبو عبد الله (عليه السلام) ما أعطي عبد من الدنيا إلا اعتبارا وما زوي عنه إلا اختبارا.

It is narrated from him (narrator of the Hadith above) from certain individuals of his people in a marfu' manner from Abu 'Abdillah (peace be upon him) who has said the following: **"Whatever a servant is given of worldly things is to make him learn a lesson and whatever is withheld from him is to place him under the trial."**

— Al-Kafi (Vol. 2) by Shaykh Muhammad b. Yaqub al-Kulayni, Book 1, Chapter 107, Hadith #6

The spiritual outcome of any test depends entirely on an individual's response, rather than simply the pleasantness or pain of the circumstances.

The Proper Response to Tribulation

The constructive response to tribulation involves:

- **Patience:** Enduring difficulties with steadfastness.
- **Repentance:** Turning back to Allah in sincerity.
- **Humility:** Recognizing one's dependence on Allah.
- **Renewed Obedience:** Reaffirming commitment to Allah's commands.

Trials are not evidence of abandonment by Allah but can serve as a means of spiritual formation, leading the person back to Him.

9. Prompting Humility and Overcoming Arrogance

Prompt humility refers to a deep, internal spiritual state of submission and recognition of one's subservience to Allah, coupled with the acknowledgment of one's equality with or lack of superiority over others. This state is divinely bestowed and cultivated through conscious effort, aiming to transform the individual's spiritual disposition from pride and resistance to receptiveness and obedience.

Humility is described as:

- A noble and precious trait.
- A gift from Allah.
- The root of all virtues.
- A moral value rooted in faith, reason, and wisdom.
- Not merely an outward display but a state where the heart is compliant.

Key aspects of humility include:

- **Internal recognition:** Knowing that one is no better than anyone else and behaving accordingly.
- **Submission to Allah's will:** Recognizing and submitting to Allah's will and undertaking actions for His sake.
- **Self-awareness:** Being mindful of one's own spiritual impurities and place as a servant of Allah.

Humility stands in direct opposition to arrogance and pride, which are considered significant obstacles to the human journey and are characterized by disobedience and selfishness. Arrogance involves thinking of oneself as better than others, a mistake exemplified by Iblis (Satan), which led to his curse.

ألتواضع الرضا بالمجلس دون شرفه، وان تسلم على من لقيت، وأن تترك المراء وإن كنت محقا.
(تحف العقول ص296)

Imam Mohammad Baqir (peace be upon him): **Humility and humbleness (means) is to be pleased and contented with sitting in, an assembly at a place lower than ones status and honor, and saluting anybody one meets and abandoning dispute even if one is right**

— Tuhaf al-Uqul, P 296

عن السكوني، عن أبي عبد هلالا (عليه السالم) اقل: من التواضع أن ترضى ابللمجلس دون المجلس، وأن تسلم على من تلقى. وأن تترك المراء وإن كنت محقا، وال تحب أن تحمد على التقوى

From Al-Sakuni, from Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him) who said: **From humility is that you are content with a lower sitting place, that you greet whoever you meet, that you abandon argumentation even if you are right, and that you dislike being praised for piety.**

— Wasail al-Shia Vol. 12, Section 1, Chapter 75, Hadith 15779

عن السكوني، عن أبي عبد الله (عليه السلام) عن آبيه (عليهم السلام) اقل: إن من التواضع أن يرضى ابلمجلس دون المجلس، وأن يسلم عدل من يلقي، وأن يترك المراء وإن كان محقا، وال تحب أن تحمد عدل التقوى

From Al-Sakuni, from Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him), from his forefathers (peace be upon them), he said: **Among the traits of humility is to be content with sitting in a lower position when there are higher positions available, to greet whoever one meets, to avoid arguing even if one is right, and to dislike being praised for piety.**

— Wasail al-Shia Vol. 15, Section 2, Chapter 28, Hadith 20501

Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq on Humility and Arrogance

عن عيل بن إبراهيم، عن أبيه، عن ابن أبي عمير، عن معاوية بن عمار، عن أبي عبد الله (عليه السلام) اقل: سمعته يقول: ان في السماء ملكين موكلين ابلعباد، فمن تواضع هلل رفعاه، ومن تكبر وضعاه

From Ali ibn Ibrahim, from his father, from Ibn Abi Umayr, from Muawiyah ibn Ammar, from Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him) who said: **I heard him saying: In the heaven there are two angels assigned to the servants. Whoever shows humility for Allah, they elevate him, and whoever shows arrogance, they lower him.**

— Wasail al-Shia Vol. 15, Section 2, Chapter 28, Hadith 20493

- علي بن إبراهيم عن أبيه عن ابن أبي عمير عن معاوية بن عمار عن أبي عبد الله (عليه السلام) قال سمعته يقول إن في السماء ملكين موكلين بالعباد فمن تواضع لله رفعاه ومن تكبر وضعاه

Ali ibn Ibrahim has narrated from his father from Ibn Abi 'Umayr from Mu'awiyah ibn 'Ammar from Abu 'Abdillah (peace be upon him) who has said the following: "I heard the Imam saying, **'In heaven there are two angels who guard the servants (of Allah). Whoever is humble before Allah, they raise him up, and whoever is arrogant, they bring him low.'**"

— Al-Kafi (Vol. 2) by Shaykh Muhammad b. Yaqub al-Kulayni, Book 1, Chapter 59, Hadith #2

ما من رجل تكبر أو تجبر إلا لذلة وجدها في نفسه.

Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (peace be upon him) said: **Whenever a man behaved arrogantly, it was for a humiliation that he found in himself.**

— al-Kafi by Shaykh al-Kulayni, Volume 2, Page 312

ما من رجل تكبر أو تجبر إلا لذلة وجدها في نفسه. (اصول كافي ج 2 ص 312)

Imam Jaffar Sadiq (peace be upon him): **A man does not become proud hearted and arrogant but for the self-abjection which he finds in his soul**

— Usul-Al Kafi, Vol. 2, P 312

Humble Individuals are Considered Closest to Allah and Others.

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his pure progeny) stated:

إن التواضع يزيد صاحبه رفعة، فتواضعوا يرفعكم الله.

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family) said: **Humbleness increases its owner in high standing, so be humble and Allah will raise you up.**

— al-Kafi by Shaykh al-Kulayni, Volume 2, Page 121

ان الزرع ينبت في السهل و لاينبت في الصفا فكذلك الحكمة تعمر في قلب المتواضع و لا تعمر في قلب المتكبر الجبار!

Imam Musa Kazim (peace be upon him) said: **Cultivation grows on soft land, not on the stones! Similarly knowledge and wisdom sprout on the heart of modest people, not on the heart of the unjust arrogant persons!**

— 1. Tuhaful Uqul, page 296. Mustadrak Alwasail, vol 11, page 299.

الإمام الكاظم (عليه السلام) : إن الزرع ينبت في السهل ولا ينبت في الصفا ، فكذلك الحكمة تعمّر في قلب المتواضع، ولا تعمّر في قلب المتكبر الجبار؛ لأن الله ٥ جعل التواضع آلة العقل

Imam Musa Kazim (peace be upon him) said, '**Verily a seed grows in soft ground and does not grow on stone, in the same way that wisdom thrives in the heart of the humble and does not thrive in the heart of the proud and haughty, because Allah has made humbleness the instrument of the intellect.**'

— Bihar al-Anwar, v. 78, p. 312, no. 1

The analogy between hard stone and an arrogant heart elucidates why such a heart cannot properly receive, cultivate, or benefit from knowledge and wisdom. An arrogant heart is unreceptive because pride creates a barrier to learning and acceptance. Ignorance and arrogance frequently co-exist, as arrogant individuals are unwilling to admit their lack of knowledge. If a truth contradicts their pride or perceived self-importance, they tend to not only deny it but actively oppose it. This resistance to truth, especially when it comes from those they consider their subordinates or peers, often leads them to remain in a state of "compound ignorance," where they are unaware of their own ignorance.

Practical means of cultivating humility and softening hearts:

- Gentle speech.
- Modeling humility by greeting people, listening attentively, relinquishing needless arguments, and treating others as one wishes to be treated.
- Remembering dependence on God and the temporary nature of worldly status, ability, health, and possessions.
- Presenting truth with patience and respect.
- Sincere repentance and remembrance of God.

It also notes qualifications: humility does not equate to accepting abuse or validating another person's arrogance. In situations involving an arrogant person, excessive humility might increase their conceit. Firmness may be necessary, but it should be expressed without personal pride, humiliation, or hostility. Arrogance is considered a grave offense, as it attempts to usurp a Divine attribute, leading to severe consequences, including humiliation on the Day of Judgment and prevention from entering heaven.

Additional qualifications include:

- **Modesty for women:** Women are instructed to be modest and humble, avoiding the flaunting of charms as practiced in the days of pagan ignorance.
- **Balance in application:** Unwise application could lead to self-humiliation or foster arrogance in others.
- **Context with non-believers:** Humbleness should be primarily for believers and "should be avoided in front of non-believers."
- **Against arrogance:** "Being proud in front of an arrogant is humbleness for him."
- **Respect based on piety:** One should not be humble to someone due to their wealth; Islam respects people based on their faith in Allah and piety, not their status or wealth.

10. Encouraging Supplication (Du'a)

In Islam, supplication (*Du'a*) holds immense importance as a fundamental act of worship and a direct means of connection between a believer and Allah. Encouraging people to turn to Allah in humility through supplication is crucial for their spiritual well-being, acknowledging divine authority, and seeking guidance and mercy.

Supplication is described as:

- "The weapon of a believer," "the weapon of the man of faith," and "the weapon of believers."

- "The pillar of religion," "the center pillar of the religion," and "the support of the religion."
- "The light of the heavens and the earth."
- "The essence of worship" and "the brain of worship."
- "The superior worship of the community after recitation of the Quran."
- A form of conversation between the creature and their Lord.
- A means by which predetermined calamities can be warded off.

رسول الله (صلي الله عليه وآله): الدعاء سلاح المؤمن وعمود الدين ونور السماوات والأرض

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family) said: '**Supplication is the weapon of the believer, the pillar of religion, and the light of the heavens and the earth.**'

— al-Kafi, v. 2, p. 468, no. 1

الدعاء سلاح المؤمن وعمود الدين ونور السماوات والأرض.

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family) said: **Supplication is the weapon of the believer, the pillar of religion, and the light of the heavens and earth.**

— al-Kafi by Shaykh al-Kulayni, Volume 2, Page 468

وبهذا الإسناد قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله: الدعاء سلاح المؤمن، وعماد الدين، ونور السموات والأرض [فعليكم بالدعاء واخلصوا النية].

God's Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) said, "**Supplication is the weapon of a believer. It is the pillar of the religion, light from the heavens and the Earth. (Thus I advise you to say supplications and purify your intentions.)**"

— Uyun akhbar al-Rida (Vol. 2) by Shaykh Muhammad b. Ali al-Saduq, Book 1, Chapter 1, Hadith #95

الإمام علي (عليه السلام) : نعم عون الدعاء الخشوع

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) said: **'The best aid for supplication is humility.'**

— Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 9945

عن السكوني، عن أبي عبد هلالا (عليه السالم) (اقل: اقل رسول هلالا) (صل هلالا عليه وآله): الدعاء
سالح المؤمن، وعمود الدين. ونور السماوات والأرض

From al-Sakooni, from Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him), he said: **Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his family) said: Supplication (dua) is the weapon (silah) of the believer, the pillar of religion, and the light of the heavens and earth.**

— Wasail al-Shia Vol. 7, Section 2, Chapter 8, Hadith 8654

Humility in Supplication

Humility is an essential component of supplication, as it profoundly impacts its acceptance and efficacy.

- **Acknowledgement of Allah's Authority:** Expressing humility and acknowledging one's dependence on Allah is crucial in a supplication because it recognizes Allah's power and authority, and acknowledges the individual's limitations and need for guidance and protection. Ayatullah Sistani states that this acknowledgment is essential in a supplication.
- **Antithesis of Arrogance:**

عن زرارة، عن أبي جعفر (عليه السالم) (اقل: إن هلالا عز وجل يقول:) (إن الذين يستكبرون
عن عبادتي سيدخلون جهنم. داخرين) (اقل: هو الدعاء

From Zurarah, from Abu Ja'far (peace be upon him) who said: **Indeed Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, says: "Indeed, those who are too proud to worship Me will enter Hell humiliated" [Quran, 40:60]. He said: It is (referring to) the supplication (dua).**

— Wasail al-Shia Vol. 1, Section 2, Chapter 1, Hadith 8599

عن محمد بن مسلم اقل: سألت أبا جعفر (عليه السلام) عن قول هلالا عز وجل: (فما : استكانوا لربهم وما يتضرعون) اقل. الاستكانة هي الخضوع والتضرع رفع اليدين والتضرع بهما

From Muhammad bin Muslim who said: I asked Abu Ja'far (peace be upon him) about the saying of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic: **"They did not humble themselves to their Lord, nor did they supplicate"** [Quran, 23:76]. He said: **Submission is humility, and supplication is raising the hands and beseeching with them.**

— Wasail al-Shia Vol. 7, Section 2, Chapter 12, Hadith 8679

عن عبد العليل، عن أبي عبد هلالا (عليه السلام) اقل: قلت له: ما الكبر؟ اقل: أعظم الكبر : أن تسفه الحق وتغمص الناس، قلت .وما تسفه الحق؟ اقل: يجهل الحق ويطعن عل أهله

From Abdul A'la, from Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him) who said: **I asked him: What is arrogance? He said: The greatest arrogance is that you reject the truth and belittle people. I asked: What is rejecting the truth? He said: When one ignores the truth and criticizes its people.**

— Wasail al-Shia Vol. 16, Section 1, Chapter 60, Hadith 20817

- **Divine Expectation:** The Quran links not humbling oneself to the Lord with not supplicating, as in the verse: **"They did not humble themselves to their Lord, nor did they supplicate"** [Quran, 23:76]. Imam Baqir (peace be upon him) explained that **"Submission is humility, and supplication is raising the hands and beseeching with them."** This indicates that humility is an intrinsic part of the act of supplication itself.

عن محمد بن مسلم عن أبي عبد هلالا (عليه السلام) (في قوله عز وجل) (فما استكانوا لربهم وما يتضرعون) اقل: التضرع رفع .اليدين

Muhammad bin Muslim narrated from Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him) regarding the saying of the Mighty and Majestic: **"But they did not humble themselves to**

their Lord, nor did they supplicate with earnest supplication." He said:
Supplication is raising the hands.

— Wasail al-Shia Vol. 7, Section 2, Chapter 12, Hadith 8680

Meaning and Context of Quran 23:76

A detailed explanation of Quran 23:76:

(76) و لقد اخذناهم بالعذاب فما استكانوا لربهم و ما يتضرعون

"And indeed We inflicted chastisement on them, but they were not submissive unto their Lord, nor do they humble themselves."

The preceding verse, Quran Surah al-Mu'minun, Verse 75, sets the stage by explaining the deep-seated resistance of these individuals to divine guidance:

"If We had mercy on them and removed the distress which is on them, they would obstinately persist in their transgression, blindly wandering on."

Explanation of Key Terms

- **'istikanat (استكانت):** An Islamic tradition explains this Arabic word to mean 'to humble oneself'.
- **tadarru' (تضرع):** In the context of this verse, tadarru' means 'to raise the hands in supplication' or 'to humble oneself'. The word is derived from dara'a (ضرع), which means to grasp an udder, and tadarru' refers to the one who milks. This has been extended to mean the yielding associated with humility. While some narrations connect tadarru' to raising hands during prayer and supplication, this is seen as an expression of one of the extensions of its broader meaning.

Supplication versus recitation:

عن معاوية بن عمار اقل قلت ألبى عبد هللا (عليه السالم) رجالن افنتحا الصالة في ساعة واحدة فتال هذا القرآن فكانت تالوته أكثر من دعائه ودعا هذا أكثر فكان دعاؤه أكثر من تالوته ثم انصراف في ساعة واحدة أيهما أفضل؟ اقل كل فيه فضل كل حسن قلت إني قد علمت أن كال حسن وأن كال فيه فضل فقال الدعاء أفضل أما سمعت قول هللا عز وجل " وائل ربكم ادعوني أستجب لكم إن الذين يستكبرون عن عبادتي سيدخلون جهنم داخرين " هي وهللا العبادة هي وهللا أفضل هي وهللا أفضل أليست هي العبادة هي وهللا العبادة هي وهللا العبادة أليست هي أشدهن؟ هي. وهللا أشدهن هي وهللا أشدهن

From Mu'awiyah ibn 'Ammar who said: I asked Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him): "Two men began prayer at the same time. One recited the Quran such that his recitation was more than his supplication, while the other supplicated more such that his supplication was more than his recitation. Then they both finished at the same time. Which of them is better?" He said: **"Both have excellence, both are good."** I said: "I know that both are good and both have excellence." So he said: **"Supplication is better. Have you not heard the words of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic: 'And your Lord says: Call upon Me, I will answer you. Indeed, those who disdain My worship will enter Hell humiliated.'** [Quran, 40:60]" **By Allah, it is worship. By Allah, it is better. By Allah, it is better. Is it not worship? By Allah, it is worship. By Allah, it is worship. Is it not the most intense of acts? By Allah, it is the most intense. By Allah, it is the most intense.**

— Wasail al-Shia Vol. 6, Section 10, Chapter 6, Hadith 8383

أحمد بن فهد في (عدة الداعي) (اقل: اقل الباقر) (عليه السالم) لبريد بن معاوية وقد سأله: كثرة القراءة أفضل أم كثرة الدعاء؟ (فقال: كثرة الدعاء أفضل، ثم قرأ: قل يعبؤا بكم ربي لوال دعائكم

Ahmad bin Fahd narrated in (Uddat al-Da'i) that Al-Baqir (peace be upon him) was asked by Buraid bin Mu'awiyah: Which is better, abundant recitation (of Quran) or abundant supplication? He replied: **Abundant supplication is better**, then he recited: **"Say, 'What would my Lord care for you if not for your supplication?'"** [Quran 25:77]

— Wasail al-Shia Vol. 7, Section 2, Chapter 3, Hadith 8630

Meaning of Quran Verse 23:76

And We had gripped them with suffering [as a warning], but they did not yield to their Lord, nor did they humbly supplicate, [and will continue thus]

(Quran 23:76)

Verse 76 describes Allah's action of inflicting chastisement upon these obstinate unbelievers. Despite experiencing divine punishment, they remained unyielding:

- They were not submissive (istakanu) unto their Lord.
- They did not humble themselves (yattadarra'un).

This implies that the chastisement, which was intended as a lesson or a warning through calamities, had no effect on them. They were so hardened that the punishment did not lead them to humility or submission to the truth. The verse conveys that there is often no use in preaching to a black-hearted individual, as catastrophic events could not remove them from their state of conceit and transgression.

The subsequent verse, Quran Surah al-Mu'minun, Verse 77, details the ultimate consequence for those who remain obstinate: **"Until, when We open against them a gate of severe chastisement, behold! They will get into despair at it."**

Etiquettes and Conditions for Supplication

Etiquettes and conditions for supplication:

- Purification (*Wudu*).
- Facing the Qibla.
- Raising hands, turning them over, and moving them in a way indicating submission, deference, and humility. Upon completion, the hands should be passed over the face, head, and chest.
- Attentiveness and sincerity.
- Full trust and hope in Almighty Allah.
- Praise and glorification before personal requests.
- Invoking blessings upon the Holy Prophet and his Household at the beginning and conclusion. A supplication is considered "enshrouded" until this invocation is made.
- Expressing requests in a humble and respectful manner.

- Not leaving out even small requests as the Owner of the small is also the Owner of the big.

Benefits of Supplication

Benefits of supplication include:

- It increases the faith of the supplicant.
- It provides hope and strength to a distressed soul.
- It brings the supplicant closer to the Creator.
- It increases humility, which in turn fosters piety.
- It curbs ego and vanity.

The Superiority of Supplication

A narration from Mu'awiyah ibn 'Ammar, who asked Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him) about two men: one recited the Quran more than supplication, and the other supplicated more than recitation. The Imam said: **"Supplication is better. Have you not heard the words of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic: 'And your Lord says: Call upon Me, I will answer you. Indeed, those who disdain My worship will enter Hell humiliated.'** [Quran, 40:60]"

عن حماد بن عيسى، عن أبي عبد هلالا (عليه السلام) اقل: سمعته يقول في حديث: إن الدعاء هو العبادة، إن هلالا عز وجل. (يقول: إن الذين يستكبرون عن عبادتي سيدخلون جهنم داخرين) وائل: ادعوني أستجب لكم

From Hammad bin Isa, from Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him) who said: I heard him say in a hadith: **Indeed, supplication (dua) is worship (ibadaah). Indeed, Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, says: Indeed, those who are too proud to worship Me will enter Hell humiliated** [Quran, 40:60]. **And He said: Call upon Me; I will respond to you** [Quran, 40:60].

— Wasail al-Shia Vol. 1, Section 2, Chapter 1, Hadith 8600

عن عبيد بن زرارة، عن أبيه، عن رجل اقل اقل أبو عبد هلا (عليه السالم) الدعاء هو العبادة التي اقل هلا: (إن الذين يستكبرون عن عبادتي سيدخلون جهنم داخرين

From Ubayd bin Zurarah, from his father, from a man who said: Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him) said: "**Supplication (dua) is the worship (ibadaah) which Allah referred to when He said: Surely those who are too proud to worship Me will enter Hell in humiliation.**" [Quran, 40:60]

— Wasail al-Shia Vol. 7, Section 2, Chapter 1, Hadith 8602

اقل: ادعه وال تقل: قد فرغ من الأمر، افن الدعاء هو- في حديث- (عن الحسن بن المغيرة، عن أبي عبد هلا) (العبادة، إن هلا عز وجل يقول: (إن الذين يستكبرون عن عبادتي سيدخلون جهنم داخرين) (واقل: ادعوني أستجب لكم

From Al-Hasan bin Al-Mughira, from Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him) - in a hadith - he said: **Supplicate and do not say: The matter has already been decreed, for supplication (dua) is worship (ibadaah). Indeed Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, says: [Those who are too arrogant to worship Me will enter Hell humiliated]** [Quran, 40:60]. **And He said: [Call upon Me and I will respond to you]** [Quran, 40:60].

— Wasail al-Shia Vol. 7, Section 2, Chapter 6, Hadith 8642

11. Repentance (Tawbah) as an Opportunity

Providing an opportunity for repentance serves as a warning and a chance for the community to reflect on their ways, repent from their sins, and return to the path of truth and obedience before a more severe punishment. This approach is rooted in divine mercy, the pursuit of human guidance, and the preventative goals of the Islamic punishment system.

The rationale and purpose include:

1. **Awakening and Guidance through Warnings:** God's warnings awaken sinners and caution them about the consequences of their actions. They motivate return to the true path and seek God's mercy.
2. **Mercy and Forgiveness through Repentance:** Allah grants humans the opportunity for repentance and forgiveness because He is aware that they are prone to sin. The doors of repentance are always open, even for those who have committed terrible crimes. Punishment is conditional upon the absence of sincere repentance.
3. **Deterrence and Preservation of Innate Nature:** Punishments are intended as a strong deterrent to keep people away from sins and preserve their pure innate nature. The system aims to prevent sins rather than merely inflict punishment.

Averting Punishments in Islamic Law

رسول الله (صلي الله عليه وآله): إن الله عزوجل رفيق يحب الرفق في الأمر كله

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family) said: '**Verily Allah, Mighty and Exalted, is lenient and loves leniency in all matters.**'

— Kanz al-Ummal, no. 537

رسول الله (صلي الله عليه وآله) : ادرؤوا الحدود عن المسلمين ما استطعتم ، فإن وجدتم للمسلم مخرجا فخلوا سبيله ؛ فإن الإمام لأن يخطئ في العفو خير من أن يخطئ في العقوبة

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family) said: '**Avert the punishments from the Muslims as much as you can, and if you can find a way out for a Muslim, then make way for him, for it is better for the Imam to err in reprieving than in punishment.**'

— Kanz al-Ummal, no. 12971

لا تعاجل الذنب بالعقوبة واجعل بينهما للاعتذار طريقا. (بحار الانوار ج 78 ص 113)

Imam Hasan (peace be upon him): **Do not make haste in punishing the sinner for his sin and let a way (passage) between the two (fault and punishment) excuse and apology**

— Bihar ul-Anwar Vol. 78, P 113

Repentance (Tawbah) as a Fundamental and Vital Concept

Repentance, or *Tawbah*, is described as a fundamental and vital concept, representing a means of deliverance, purification, and attaining Allah's mercy. It involves a sincere turning away from sin and towards Allah.

Key Elements of Repentance

Key elements of repentance include:

- **Remorse and shame:** Feeling ashamed and deeply remorseful for past sins.
- **Asking for forgiveness:** Seeking Allah's forgiveness with the tongue.
- **Firm resolve:** Making a steadfast decision to abandon sins forever and never repeat them.
- **Making amends:** Taking practical actions to rectify past wrongs, such as performing *Qaza* (repeating missed duties) or returning usurped property.
- **Purity:** Repentance purifies the self from sin, akin to how water cleanses clothes from dirt.

الإمام علي (عليه السلام): التوبة على أربعة دعائم: ندم بالقلب، واستغفار باللسان، وعمل بالجوارح، وعزم أن لا يعود

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) said: **'Repentance stands on four pillars: remorse with the heart, asking for forgiveness with the tongue, work with the limbs, and resolve not to repeat [the offense].'**

— Bihar al-Anwar, v. 78, p. 81, no. 74

Further elaboration on the four pillars:

1. **Remorse with the Heart:** This is the internal feeling of regret and sorrow for the sins committed. It signifies a genuine acknowledgment of wrongdoing and a deep sadness for having disobeyed Allah (SWT). This emotional state is fundamental, as without true remorse, any verbal or physical act of repentance would be superficial.
2. **Asking for Forgiveness with the Tongue:** This pillar involves expressing one's regret and seeking pardon from Allah (SWT) through verbal supplications, such as reciting Istighfar (e.g., "Astaghfirullah"). This vocal declaration solidifies the inner remorse and articulates the desire for divine mercy.
3. **Work with the Limbs (Good Deeds):** This refers to concrete actions taken to rectify past mistakes and to engage in righteous deeds. It can include making amends for wrongs done to others, fulfilling neglected religious obligations (like missed prayers or fasts), or generally increasing acts of obedience to Allah (SWT). This pillar emphasizes that repentance is not merely a feeling or a statement, but requires practical effort and a change in behavior.
4. **Resolve Not to Repeat the Offense:** This is a firm determination and commitment never to return to the sin again. It is a forward-looking aspect of repentance, ensuring that the individual is dedicated to maintaining a state of purity and obedience. Without this resolve, repentance would be incomplete and temporary.

The Prophet's Definition of Sincere Repentance

رسول الله ﷺ (صلي الله عليه وآله) - وقد سئل عن التوبة النصوح :- هو الندم على الذنب حين يفرط منك، فتستغفر الله ﷻ بندا متك عند الحافر، ثم لا تعود إليه أبدا

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family) said: '**Sincere repentance is remorse for the sin as soon as it slips out from you; then you ask Allah for forgiveness, then you never return to it.**'

— Kanz al-Ummal, no. 10302

Sincere repentance (*Tawbah Nasuhah*) means to turn away from a sin and firmly resolve never to return to it again. It is a repentance that is genuine and heartfelt, distinguishing itself from superficial or temporary changes.

Further Conditions and Elements of Sincere Repentance

Additional conditions and elements crucial for genuine and accepted repentance:

- **Comprehensive Rectification:** Sincere repentance involves more than a verbal declaration. It requires reforming one's conduct, fulfilling neglected obligations, and restoring the rights of other people.
- **Obligation of Sincere Repentance and Its Conditions:**

عن كميل بن زياد أنه اقل المير المؤمنين (عليه السلام): العبد يصيب الذنب فيستغفر : هللا فقال: اي ابن زايد التوبة، قلت ليس؟ اقل: ال، قلت: كيف؟ اقل: ان العبد إذا أصاب ذنبا اقل: استغفر هللا ابلتحريك، قلت: وما التحريك؟ اقل: الشفتان ،واللسان يريد ان يتبع ذلك ابلحقيقة، قلت: وما الحقيقة؟ اقل: تصديق القلب واضمار أن ال يعود إلى الذنب الذي استغفر منه قلت: اذا فعلت ذلك أفان من المستغفرين؟ اقل: ال النك لم تبلغ إلى الصل بعد، قلت: أفصل الاستغفار ما هو؟ اقل: الرجوع إلى التوبة عن الذنب الذي استغفرت منه وهي أول درجة العابدين وترك الذنب والاستغفار اسم واقع لستة معان، ثم ذكر الحديث نحوه

From Kumayl ibn Ziyad who said to Amir al-Mu'minin (peace be upon him):

When a servant commits a sin and seeks Allah's forgiveness... He said: O Ibn Ziyad, that's repentance. I said: Is it not? He said: **No**. I said: How so? He said:

When a servant commits a sin and says "Astaghfirullah" with movement.

I said: What is movement? He said: **The lips and tongue, intending to follow**

it with truth. I said: What is truth? He said: **Confirmation of the heart and concealing the intention to never return to the sin from which he sought**

forgiveness. I said: If I do that, am I among those who seek forgiveness? He

said: **No, because you have not yet reached the foundation.** I said: What is

the foundation of seeking forgiveness? He said: **Returning to repentance**

from the sin you sought forgiveness for, and this is the first level of

worshippers. Abandoning sin and seeking forgiveness comprises six

meanings - then he mentioned the hadith similarly. Obligation Of Sincere Repentance And Its Conditions

— Wasail al-Shia Vol. 16, Section 1, Chapter 87, Hadith 21029

اقل الصدوق: وقد روي أن التوبة النصوح هو أن يتوب الرجل من ذنب وينوي أن ال . يعود إليه أبدا

Al-Saduq said: **It has been narrated that sincere repentance is when a person repents from a sin and intends never to return to it again.**

— Wasail al-Shia Vol. 16, Section 1, Chapter 87, Hadith 21027

- **Pondering and Rectifying Loss:** A necessary condition for asking repentance is to ponder upon the Highness and Glory of Allah and about the disobedience committed.
- **The Condition of Wilayah:** Repentance requires the recognition of the rights of the People of the Household (Ahl al-Bayt) and hoping for reward through them. The acceptance of deeds is conditional upon *Wilayah*, which is the love and obedience towards the People of the Household. Imam al-Sadiq (peace be upon him) stated that Allah will not accept repentance except through the guardianship of the People of the House.
- **Timeliness of Repentance:** Repentance is not accepted if it is delayed until death presents itself and the person says, "Indeed, I repent now." Nor is it accepted from those who die while they are disbelievers (*Kafirs*).

و سئل الصادق عليه السلام: عن قول الله عز و جل «○» و ليست التوبة للذين يعملون السيئات «○ حتى إذا حضر أحدهم الموت قال إني تبت الآن ○»

قال «ذاك إذا عاين أمر الآخرة

Imam Jafar ibn Muhammad Al-Sadiq (peace be upon him) was asked about the words of Allah (swt), the Mighty and Glorious: **But repentance is not [accepted] of those who [continue to] do evil deeds up until, when death comes to one of them, he says, 'Indeed, I repent now'.** (Quran Surah An Nisa 4:18).

Imam (peace be upon him) said: **That is when they witness the realities of the Hereafter.**

— Man La Yahduru al-Faqih (Vol. 1) by Shaykh Muhammad b. Ali al-Saduq, Book 1, Chapter 24, Hadith #352

اقل الصدوق: وسئل الصادق (عليه السلام) عن قول هلال عز وجل: (وليس التوبة للذين يعملون السيئات حتى إذا حضر أحدهم الموت اقل إني تبت آلن) اقل (عليه السلام): ذاك إذا عاين أمر الآخرة

Al-Saduq said: Al-Sadiq (peace be upon him) was asked about Allah's saying: "**And of no effect is the repentance of those who continue to do evil deeds until death faces one of them and he says: 'Now I repent'**" [Quran 4:18]. He (peace be upon him) said: **That is when one witnesses the matter of the hereafter.**

— Wasail al-Shia Vol. 16, Section 1, Chapter 93, Hadith 21061

- **Signs of a Penitent Person:** A truly repentant person demonstrates several signs, including sincerity to God in their actions, shunning falsehood, being firmly attached to the truth, and eagerness to do good.

حدثنا محمد بن موسى بن المتوكل - رضي الله عنه - قال: حدثنا علي بن إبراهيم ابن هاشم، قال: حدثنا محمد بن عيسى بن عبيد الله اليقطيني، عن يونس بن عبد الرحمن، عن عبد الله بن سنان، وغيره، عن أبي عبد الله عليه السلام قال: التوبة النصوح أن يكون باطن الرجل كظاهره وأفضل. وقد روي أن التوبة النصوح هو أن يتوب الرجل من ذنب وينوي أن لا يعود إليه أبدا.

We were told by Muhammed bin Musa bin Mutawakkil, may Allah be pleased with him, that he said: We were told by Ali bin Ibrahim ibn Hashim, that he said: We were told by Muhammed bin Isa bin Ubaidullah al-Yaqteeni, from Yunus bin Abdul-Rahman, from Abdullah bin Sinan, and others, from Abu Abdillah, peace be upon him, that he said: **The sincere repentance is that a man's internal (side) is like his apparent (side) and (even) better. It has been reported that the sincere repentance is that a man repents from a sin and intends to not return to it.**

— Maani al-Akhbar by Shaykh Muhammad b. Ali al-Saduq, Book 1, Chapter 149,
Hadith #3

The Four Qualities

وقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله: «أربع من كن فيه كان في نور الله عز وجل الأعظم من كان عصمة أمره شهادة أن لا إله إلا الله و أني رسول الله و من إذا أصابته مصيبة قال «إنا لله و إنا إليه راجعون» و من إذا أصاب خيرا قال «الحمد لله رب العالمين» و من إذا أصاب خطيئة قال «أستغفر الله و أتوب إليه».

Messenger of Allah (sw) said: **There are four qualities; whoever possesses them will be in the greatest light of Allah (swt), the Exalted and Glorious:**

One whose protection is in the testimony that there is no god but Allah (swt) and that I am the Messenger of Allah (sw),

And who, when afflicted with a calamity, says:

Inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi raji'un Indeed, we belong to Allah (swt) and to Him we will return

And who, when blessed with goodness, says:

Al-hamdu lillahi Rabbi al-'alamin All praise is due to Allah (swt), the Lord (azj) of the worlds

And one who, when committing a sin, says:

Astaghfiru Allaha wa atubu ilayh I seek forgiveness from Allah (swt) and repent to Him.

— Man La Yahduruh al-Faqih (Vol. 1) by Shaykh Muhammad b. Ali al-Saduq, Book 1, Chapter 27, Hadith #514

The Urgency of Repentance

People should not misuse the period of divine respite. Imam Zain al-Abidin (a) is quoted: “**My God! You are He who has opened a door to Your pardon and named it ‘repentance’ for You said, ‘Repent to God with unswerving (sincere) repentance’** (Quran, 66:8). What is the excuse for him who remains heedless of entering the door after its opening?”

The Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) outlined four signs of one who is repentant: sincerity to Allah in actions, shunning falsehood, firm attachment to truth, and eagerness to do good.

Falling into Sin Again After Repenting

- **The Ideal of Not Returning:** Sincere repentance ideally means that one never repeats the sin again. This is the firm resolution and intention required at the time of repentance.
- **Allah's Mercy for Repeated Repentance:** It is acknowledged that it can be difficult for humans to avoid sinning altogether. Allah (SWT) loves His worshippers who face temptation and repent repeatedly. If a person repents sincerely, and then due to human weakness, falls into the same sin again, Allah will still accept their repentance and pardon their sin, provided they are truly sorry for their actions each time.
- **Distinction from Mockery:** It is crucial to distinguish between genuine repentance followed by a relapse due to human weakness, and merely uttering words of repentance while intending to continue sinning. The latter is not considered true repentance and is akin to making light of Allah (SWT).
- **Need for Renewed Repentance:** If one falls into sin again after repenting, the individual must repent again, renewing their sincerity and commitment, and fulfilling all the conditions of repentance.

Significance and Effects of Repentance

Sincere repentance carries immense significance and leads to profound spiritual effects:

- **Divine Forgiveness and Transformation:** It can lead to Allah converting past sins into good deeds, and Allah forgives failings altogether, leading to success and entry into gardens beneath which rivers flow.
- **Purification and Proximity to Allah:** Repentance removes the pollutions of infelicity and disobedience, allowing one to reach a state of true faith and enjoy the bounties of obedience and proximity to Allah.
- **Divine Love and Protection:** Allah loves those who repent. When a servant turns to God with sincere repentance, Allah loves them and covers their sins in this world and the Hereafter.
- **Restoration of Connection:** The bond between the person and Allah, which was broken due to sinning, becomes firm again.
- **Starting Anew:** One who repents from sin is likened to one who has not sinned at all, offering a clean slate.

12. Personal Responsibility, Divine Justice, and Consequences

Personal Responsibility, Divine Justice, Individual Accountability, And the Consequences of Deeds.

A fundamental principle is that each individual is solely accountable for their own deeds and thoughts. This personal responsibility is considered a sign of dignity and high status.

The Quran states in Surah Fussilat 41:46:

“whoever acts righteously does so for the benefit of their own soul, while whoever commits evil does so to their own detriment.”

The Quranic principle that **"no soul bears the burden of another."** (Quran 6:164)
Individuals are not held responsible for the actions of others merely due to friendship, kinship, or association. God holds each person responsible for deeds under their control, emphasizing human free will to act and earn reward or punishment based on their choices. Various Quranic verses:

And fear a Day when no soul will suffice for another soul at all, nor will intercession be accepted from it, nor will compensation be taken from it, nor will they be aided.

(Quran 2:48)

And fear a Day when no soul will suffice for another soul at all, nor will intercession be accepted from it, nor will compensation be taken from it, nor will they be aided.

(Quran 6:145)

Whoever is guided is only guided for [the benefit of] his soul. And whoever errs only errs against it. And no bearer of burdens will bear the burden of another. And never would We punish until We sent a messenger.

(Quran 17:15)

And no bearer of burdens will bear the burden of another. And if a heavily laden soul calls [another] to [carry some of] its load, nothing of it will be carried, even if he should be a close relative. You can only warn those who fear their Lord unseen and have established prayer. And whoever purifies himself only purifies himself for [the benefit of] his soul. And to Allah is the [final] destination.

(Quran 35:18)

If you disbelieve - indeed, Allah is Free from need of you. And He does not approve for His servants disbelief. And if you are grateful, He approves it for you; and no bearer of burdens will bear the burden of another. Then to your

Lord is your return, and He will inform you about what you used to do. Indeed, He is Knowing of that within the breasts.

(Quran 39:7)

That no bearer of burdens will bear the burden of another

(Quran 53:38)

Accountability extends to every deed, however small:

"So whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it, And whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it."

(Quran 99:7-8)

A person's deeds remain with them after death, serving as a companion in the grave and on the Day of Resurrection until judgment. This comprehensive accountability is proportionate to one's intellectual capacity. Allah revealed to Moses (peace be upon him):

أبي جعفر (عليه السلام) اقل: أوج هلا إلى موسى (عليه السلام): أن أؤخذ عبادي عى قدر ما . أعطيتهم من العقل

From Abu Ja'far (peace be upon him) who said: **Allah revealed to Moses (peace be upon him): I hold My servants accountable according to the measure of intellect I have given them.**

— Wasail al-Shia Vol. 1, Section 2, Chapter 3, Hadith 68

أبي جعفر (عليه السلام) اقل: إنما يداق هلا العباد فى الحساب يوم القيامة عى قدر ما آتاهم من العقول فى الدنيا

From Abu Ja'far (peace be upon him) who said: **Allah will hold His servants accountable on the Day of Judgment according to the intellect He gave them in this world.**

— Wasail al-Shia Vol. 1, Section 2, Chapter 3, Hadith 64

Divine justice is paramount, ensuring that Allah is not unjust to His servants, as affirmed in Quran Surah Fussilat 41:46. **Whoever does righteousness - it is for his [own] soul; and whoever does evil [does so] against it. And your Lord is not ever unjust to [His] servants.**

Faith in Divine Justice

Divine justice requires that each person be recompensed according to what they have earned, and no one is wronged. Imam 'Ali (peace be upon him) states that

الإمام علي (عليه السلام) - لما سئل عن العدل : العدل إلا تتهمه

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) when asked about faith in Allah's divine justice, replied, '**[Faith in] divine justice is that you do not accuse Him of anything.**'

— Nahjul Balaghah, Saying 470

Resurrection and judgment are presented as clear manifestations of this justice, where good deeds are rewarded and evil deeds are punished. Allah does not burden a soul with more than it can handle. Moreover, a community is not punished until a messenger or prophet has been sent to guide them.

The consequences of deeds are precise:

- Good deeds benefit the individual.
- Evil deeds harm the individual.
- **No bearer of burdens will bear the burden of another;** (Quran 6:164) each soul is held in pledge for its own deeds.
- Every deed is subject to proportionate recompense, without injustice. The full moral significance of human actions is realized in the hereafter.

13. Internal Change, Gratitude, and Ingratitude

The Quranic principle:

“Surely Allah does not change what is with a people until they change what is within themselves.” (Surah Al-Ra’ad, Quran 13:11)

This principle establishes a fundamental divine law governing the relationship between human actions, internal states, and collective circumstances. It underscores human agency, responsibility, and the direct correlation between inner transformation and external realities, encompassing both the bestowal and withdrawal of divine blessings.

Explains:

- **Human agency and responsibility:** Allah’s actions regarding a people’s circumstances are responsive to their own choices and behavior.
- **Internal transformation:** “Change what is within themselves” refers to a shift in thoughts, actions, behavior, attitudes, hearts, and souls.
- **Reciprocity in divine dealings:** Allah will not withdraw a favor or blessing unless the people themselves act in a way that warrants such a withdrawal.

Surah Al-Anfal, Quran 8:53 further clarifies:

“That is because Allah does not change a blessing He has bestowed on a people unless they change what is in their own selves, and Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.”

The story of the people of Saba’ (Sheba), referenced in Surah Saba, Quran 34:19.

Imam Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him) explained:

عن جميل بن صالح، عن سدير اقل: سأل رجل أب عبد هلالا (عليه السلام) عن قول هلالا عز وجل: (اقبلوا ربنا ابعد بين أسفارنا وظلموا أنفسهم) الآية، فقال: هؤلاء قوم كانت لهم قرى متصلة ينظر بعضها إلى بعض، وأنهار جارية، وأموال ظاهرة، فكفروا، نعم هلالا وغيروا ما بأنفسهم من عافية هلالا فغير هلالا ما بهم من نعمة، وإن هلالا لا يغير ما بقوم حتى يغيروا ما بأنفسهم أفرسل هلالا عليهم سيل العرم فغرق قراهم وخرب ديارهم، وذهب أموالهم، وأبدلهم مكان جناتهم جنتين ذواتي اكل خبط. (وأثل وشيء من سدر قليل، ثم اقل: ذلك جزيناهم بما كفروا وهل نجازي إل الكفور

From Jameel bin Salih, from Sadeer who said: A man asked Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him) about the words of Allah the Mighty and Majestic: "**Our Lord, lengthen the distance between our journeys, and they wronged themselves**" [Quran 34:19], so he said: **These were people who had connected villages within sight of each other, flowing rivers, and abundant wealth. They were ungrateful for Allah's blessings and changed what was within themselves of Allah's wellbeing, so Allah changed the blessings they had. Indeed Allah does not change what is with a people until they change what is within themselves. So Allah sent upon them the flood of the dam which drowned their villages, destroyed their homes, took away their wealth, and replaced their gardens with two gardens bearing bitter fruit, tamarisk and something of sparse lote trees.** Then he said: "**That is how We repaid them for their ingratitude. And do We punish except the ungrateful?**" [Quran 34:17]

— Wasail al-Shia Vol. 15, Section 2, Chapter 44, Hadith 20617

Repelling Calamity with Supplication

The final instruction in the hadith emphasizes the power of supplication: "**and repel calamity with supplication, for supplication is a protective shield that repels calamity even after it has been firmly decreed.**"

- **A Shield Against Calamity:** The hadith explicitly calls supplication a "protective shield."
- **Overcoming Decreed Calamity:** Significantly, the hadith states that supplication "repels calamity even after it has been firmly decreed." Imam Musa Ibn Jafar (Al-Kadhim) (peace be upon him) further clarified this, saying,

الإمام الكاظم (عليه السلام): عليكم بالدعاء ، فإن الدعاء لله ، والطلب إلى الله یرد البلاء وقد قدر وقضي ولم يبق إلا إمضاؤه ، فإذا دعي الله عزوجل وسئل صرف البلاء صرفه

Imam al-Kazim (peace be upon him) said, '**I urge you to supplicate, for verily supplication to Allah and seeking from Allah repels calamity which**

may have been destined and decreed with just the execution remaining, so if Allah is supplicated and is asked to avert a calamity, it is averted.'

— al-Kafi, v. 2, p. 470, no. 8

عن أبي والد اقل: اقل أبو الحسن موسى (عليه السلام): عليكم ابلدعاء افن الدعاء هلل والطلب إلى هللا يرد البلاء وقد قدر. وقضي ولم يبق إلإ إمضاؤه، فإذا دعي هللا عز وجل وسئل صرف البلاء صرفه

Abu Wallad narrated that Abu al-Hasan Musa (peace be upon him) said: **Hold fast to supplication, for indeed supplication to Allah and seeking from Allah repels calamity even after it has been decreed and determined, and only its execution remains. So when Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, is called upon and asked, He averts the calamity and turns it away.**

— Wasa'il al-Shia Vol. 7, Section 2, Chapter 7, Hadith 8643

- **Proactive Repulsion:** Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his progeny) advised,

رسول الله ﷺ (صلي الله عليه و آله): ادفعوا أبواب البلاء بالدعاء

'Repel the doors of calamity with supplication.'

— Bihar al-Anwar, v. 93, p. 288, no. 3

الإمام الصادق (عليه السلام): من تخوف بلاء يصيبه فتقدم فيه بالدعاء لم يره الله عز وجل ذلك البلاء أبدا

Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (peace be upon him) said, **'The one who fears the onset of a calamity and precedes it with supplication, Allah will never afflict him with that calamity.'**

— Makarim al-Akhlaq, v. 2, p. 10, no. 1992

عن أبي والد اقل: اقل أبو الحسن موسى (عليه السلام): عليكم ابلدعاء افن الدعاء هلل والطلب إلى هللا يرد البلاء وقد قدر. وقضي ولم يبق إلإ إمضاؤه، إذا دعي هللا عز وجل وسئل صرف البلاء صرفه

Abu Wallad narrated that Abu al-Hasan Musa (peace be upon him) said: **Hold fast to supplication, for indeed supplication to Allah and seeking from Allah repels calamity even after it has been decreed and determined, and only its execution remains. So when Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, is called upon and asked, He averts the calamity and turns it away.**

— Wasa'il al-Shia Vol. 7, Section 2, Chapter 7, Hadith 8643

عن أبي همام إسماعيل بن همام، عن الرضا (عليه السلام) اقل: اقل عيل بن الحسين (عليه السلام): إن الدعاء والبلاء. ليترافقان إلى يوم القيامة، إن الدعاء ليرد البلاء وقد أبرم إبراما

From Abu Hammam Ismail bin Hammam, from Al-Ridha (peace be upon him) who said: Ali bin Al-Hussein (peace be upon him) said: **Indeed, supplication and calamity accompany each other until the Day of Resurrection. Supplication repels calamity even if it has been firmly decreed.**

— Wasa'il al-Shia Vol. 7, Section 2, Chapter 7, Hadith 8644

- **Universal Need for Supplication:** Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (peace be upon him) emphasized that

الإمام علي (عليه السلام): ادفعوا أمواج البلاء بالدعاء ، ما المبتلى الذي استدر به البلاء بأحوج إلى الدعاء من المعافى الذي لا يأمن البلاء

'Repel the surges of calamity with supplication. The person who is continuously facing calamities is not more in need of supplication than that person who is free and secure from calamity.'

— Bihar al-Anwar, v. 93, p. 301, no. 37

- **Effectiveness Against Different Calamities:**

عن أبي همام إسماعيل بن همام، عن الرضا (عليه السلام) اقل: اقل عيل بن الحسين (عليه السلام): إن الدعاء والبالء. ليترافقان إلى يوم القيامة، إن الدعاء ليرد البالء وقد ابرم إبراما

From Abu Hammam Ismail bin Hammam, from Al-Ridha (peace be upon him) who said: Ali bin Al-Hussein (peace be upon him) said: **Indeed, supplication and calamity accompany each other until the Day of Resurrection. Supplication repels calamity even if it has been firmly decreed.**

— Wasa'il al-Shia Vol. 7, Section 2, Chapter 7, Hadith 8644

عن الحسن بن عيل الوشاء، عن أبي الحسن (عليه السلام) اقل: كان عيل بن الحسين (عليه السلام) يقول: الدعاء يدفع البالء. النازل ما لم ينزل

From Al-Hassan bin Ali Al-Washsha, from Abu Al-Hassan (peace be upon him) who said: **Ali bin Al-Hussein (peace be upon him) used to say: Supplication repels the descending calamity as long as it has not descended.**

— Wasa'il al-Shia Vol. 7, Section 2, Chapter 7, Hadith 8650

The Three Situations and Obligatory Responses

،عن أبي حمزة الثمالي اقل: سمعت أبا عبد هلا (عليه السلام) يقول: العبد بين ثالث: بالء، وقضاء، ونعمة فعليه للبالء من هلا الصبر فريضة، وعليه للقضاء من هلا التسليم فريضة، وعليه للنعمة من هلا الشكر. فريضة أقول: وتقدم ما يدل عدل ذلك، وأيتي ما يدل عليه، ثم إن الوجوب الذي يفهم من الخير وغيره مخصوص، زاد عليه مستحب كعدم إظهار التأثير أصال ببعض المراتب كالرضا ببلقضاء وعدم النكار القلبي، وما. واستشعار الفرح والسرور بلمصيبة ظاهرا وابطنا، وهلا أعلم

From Abi Hamza Al-Thumali who said: I heard Aba Abdullah (peace be upon him) saying: **The servant faces three situations: trial, decree, and blessing. For the trial from Allah, patience is obligatory upon him; for the decree from Allah, submission is obligatory upon him; and for the blessing from Allah, gratitude is obligatory upon him. I say: What indicates this has preceded, and what**

indicates it will come. Then the obligation that is understood from the latter and others is specific to certain levels, such as being content with the decree and absence of denial in the heart. What exceeds this is recommended, such as not showing any effect at all, and feeling joy and pleasure with the calamity both outwardly and inwardly, and Allah knows best.

— Wasail al-Shia Vol. 3, Section 3, Chapter 76, Hadith 3583

اقل أبو عبد هلا (عليه السالم): اقل هلا عز وجل: عبدي المؤمن ال أصره في شئ إل جعلته خيرا له. فليرض بقضائي، وليصبر عدل بالئي، وليشكر نعمائي أكتبه اي محمد من الصديقين عندي

Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him) said: **Allah Mighty and Majestic says: My believing servant, I do not turn him to anything except I make it good for him, so let him be content with My decree, let him be patient with My trials, and let him be grateful for My blessings. O Muhammad, I shall write him among the truthful ones with Me.**

— Wasail al-Shia Vol. 3, Section 3, Chapter 75, Hadith 3545

حدثنا أبي رضي الله عنه قال: حدثنا سعد بن عبد الله، عن أحمد بن أبي عبد الله عن أبي القاسم عبد الرحمن بن حماد، عن أبي عمران عمرو بن مصعب العزمي، عن أبي حمزة الثمالي قال: سمعت أبا جعفر عليه السلام يقول: العبد بين ثلاثة: بلاء وقضاء ونعمة. فعليه في البلاء من الله الصبر فريضة، وعليه في القضاء من الله التسليم فريضة، وعليه في النعمة من الله عز وجل الشكر فريضة

(The compiler of the book narrated) that his father - may God be pleased with him - narrated that Sa'ed ibn Abdullah quoted Ahmad ibn Aba Abdullah, on the authority of Abil Qasim Abdul Rahman ibn Himad, on the authority of Abi Imran Amr ibn Mus'ab al-Arzami, on the authority of Abi Hamzih al-Somali, **"I heard Abi Ja'far al-Baqir (MGB) say, 'One is caught in between three things: calamities, destiny and blessings. It is incumbent upon him to be patient in the face of calamities sent from God. It is incumbent upon him to submit to the destiny determined for him by God. It is also incumbent upon him to be grateful for the blessings sent to him by the Honorable the Exalted God."**

— Al-KhiSal by Shaykh Muhammad b. Ali al-Saduq, Book 4, Chapter 11, Hadith #2

The obligation understood from the hadith, specific to certain levels, includes being content with the decree and the absence of denial in the heart. What goes beyond this, such as not showing any outward effect of distress or even feeling joy and pleasure with the calamity both outwardly and inwardly, is considered recommended rather than strictly obligatory.

The Interrelation of Patience, Submission, and Gratitude

Islamic teachings, patience (*sabr*), submission (*taslim*), and gratitude (*shukr*) are fundamental virtues that guide a believer's relationship with Allah (SWT). These concepts are deeply interconnected, providing a holistic framework for navigating life's challenges and blessings.

Patience (Sabr):

Patience in Islam is a highly valued trait, often described as equivalent to fasting due to its demanding nature of abstaining from desires.

رسول الله ﷺ (صلي الله عليه وآله): الصبر رضا

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family) said: '**Patience is satisfaction [with Allah's decree].**'

— Kanz al-Ummal, no. 6499

Patience is considered the "**head of faith**," signifying its crucial role in one's spiritual well-being and belief,

عن أبي عبد هلالا (عليه السالم) اقل: الصبر من اليمان بمنزلة الرأس من الجسد، فإذا ذهب الرأس ذهب الجسد، كذلك إذا ذهب الصبر ذهب اليمان

From Abi Abdullah (peace be upon him) who said: **Patience is to faith like the head is to the body. When the head is gone, the body is gone, likewise when patience is gone, faith is gone.**

— Wasail al-Shia Vol. 3, Section 3, Chapter 76, Hadith 3567

If patience is lost, faith becomes useless.

Islamic teachings delineate three primary forms of patience:

1. Patience in the face of hardships and difficulties (calamities): This involves enduring adversity with steadfastness, without complaint to others, a quality Imam al-Baqir (peace be upon him) defined as "graceful patience."

ـ أبو علي الأشعري عن محمد بن عبد الجبار عن أحمد بن النضر عن عمرو بن شمر عن جابر قال قلت لأبي جعفر (عليه السلام) يرحمك الله ما الصبر الجميل قال ذلك صبر ليس فيه شكوى إلى الناس.

Abu Ali al-Ash'ari has narrated from Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Jabbar from Ahmad ibn al-Nadr from 'Amr ibn Shamir from Jabir who has said the following: "Once I said to abu Ja'far (peace be upon him) 'May Allah grant you favors, what is graceful patience?' The Imam said, **'That is the patience in which there is no complaint before the people.'**"

— Al-Kafi (Vol. 2) by Shaykh Muhammad b. Yaqub al-Kulayni, Book 1, Chapter 47, Hadith #23

الإمام الباقر (عليه السلام) ـ لما سئل عن الصبر الجميل ـ: ذلك صبر ليس فيه شكوى إلى الناس

Imam Mohammad Baqir (peace be upon him) was once asked about graceful patience [**graceful patience (al-Sabr al-jamil)** – mentioned in the Quran 12:18, 12:83 (ed.)], to which he replied, **'That is the patience that is devoid of complaint to other people.'**

— al-Kafi, v. 2, p. 93, no. 23

2. Patience in performing obligatory acts: This refers to perseverance and stoicism in fulfilling religious duties, even when one's ego or desires may resist.

3. Patience in resisting sinful behavior: This involves avoiding evil deeds and resisting temptations, even if they offer temporary pleasure.

Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (peace be upon him) reiterated these three forms:

الإمام علي (عليه السلام): الصبر: إما صبر على المصيبة ، أو على الطاعة ، أو عن المعصية ، وهذا القسم الثالث أعلى درجة من القسمين الأولين

'Patience comes in the form of either persevering in the face of an affliction, or enduring an act of obedience, or restraining oneself against an act of disobedience. And this third type is of a higher calibre than the first two.'

— Sharh Nahjul Balaghah li Ibn Abi al-Hadid, v. 1, p. 319

Submission (Taslim):

Submission means accepting and submitting to the will of Allah, surrendering one's own desires and ego to God's pleasure. It entails not being dissatisfied with one's Master, whether one attains worldly possessions or not, and not being satisfied with oneself for doing little in terms of deeds. Submission is considered the "head of obedience to Allah," reflecting a profound trust in Allah's plan and wisdom.

Gratitude (Shukr):

Gratitude is more than merely recognizing a blessing internally. It encompasses acknowledging Allah as the true Benefactor, expressing praise with the tongue, and using the blessing in obedience rather than disobedience. It is fulfilled through the heart (knowing the Giver), speech (proclaiming thankfulness), and bodily actions (directing blessings toward worship and righteous conduct). Gratitude is considered a requirement of being humane and is closely linked to the increase and preservation of blessings, as "thanking for the blessing causes it to be preserved from alteration and guarantees its sustenance." Imam Ali (peace be upon him) stated that "thankfulness is the adornment of wealth."

14. The Concept of Istidraj (Gradual Divine Punishment)

عن سفيان بن السمط اقل: اقل أبو عبدهللا (عليه السالم): إذا أراد هللا عز وجل بعبد خيرا أفذب ذنبا أتبعه بنعمة ويذكره الاستغفار، وإذا أراد هللا عز وجل بعبد شرا أفذب ذنبا أتبعه بنعمة فينسيه الاستغفار ويتمادى به، وهو قول هللا عز وجل (سنستدرجهم من حيث ال يعلمون) ابلنعم عند المعاصي

From Sufyan bin al-Simt who said: Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him) said: **When Allah, Mighty and Majestic, wants good for a servant who commits a sin, He follows it with a hardship and reminds him to seek forgiveness. And when Allah, Mighty and Majestic, wants evil for a servant who commits a sin, He follows it with a blessing which makes him forget to seek forgiveness and persists in it. This is the meaning of Allah's words "We will gradually lead them to destruction from where they do not know" [Quran 7:182] through blessings at times of disobedience.**

— Wasail al-Shia Vol. 16, Section 1, Chapter 85, Hadith 21000

Meaning of the Hadith

The hadith, narrated from Sufyan bin al-Simt, who quotes Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him), outlines two distinct scenarios regarding Allah's interaction with a sinful servant:

1. **When Allah intends good for a sinful servant:** If a servant commits a sin, and Allah's divine wisdom and mercy aim to guide and purify them, He responds by sending a hardship or affliction. This difficulty serves as a spiritual catalyst, awakening the servant's conscience, reminding them of Allah, and prompting them to seek forgiveness and return to the righteous path.
2. **When Allah intends ill for a sinful servant (allowing destruction):** Conversely, if a servant commits a sin, and Allah's decree is to allow them to stray further, He responds by continuing or increasing blessings and worldly favors. These blessings, rather than prompting reflection, lead the servant to spiritual heedlessness, causing them to forget their sins, neglect repentance, and persist in their wrongdoing. This gradual bestowal of comforts while the

individual remains disobedient is identified as *istidraj*—being gradually drawn toward destruction without realizing it.

The Quranic Principle of Istidraj

The concept of *istidraj* is central to understanding the second part of the hadith. It refers to a subtle and gradual process where Allah grants increasing worldly prosperity to individuals or nations who ignore divine reminders and persist in their disobedience, instead of immediate punishment. This seeming ease leads them to arrogance, a false sense of security, and deeper heedlessness, ultimately culminating in sudden and severe punishment or despair.

The Quran clarifies this principle:

"And those who belie Our Signs, soon, step by step, We will draw them on from where they do not know. And I will grant them respite. Verily My devising is strong." (Quran 7:182-183)

Allah does not immediately punish those who reject His signs but grants them respite, allowing them opportunities for admonishment and awareness. However, if they fail to heed, He may entangle them in difficulties or, through *istidraj*, lead them to ruin by showering them with bounties. These bounties are not signs of divine approval but rather a prelude to their downfall, making them oblivious to the impending doom.

الإمام علي (عليه السلام): ما ابتلى الله ُ أحدا بمثل الإملاء له

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) said: '**Allah does not try anyone with anything as [severe as] respite [i.e. a false sense of security].'**

— Mizan al-Hikmah – Volume 4 Page 2948

ـ عدة من أصحابنا عن أحمد بن محمد بن علي بن الحكم عن عبد الله بن جندب عن سفيان بن السمط قال قال أبو عبد الله (عليه السلام) إن الله إذا أراد بعبد خيرا فأذنب ذنبا أتبعه بنقمة

ويذكره الإستغفار وإذا أراد بعبد شرا فأذنب ذنبا أتبعه بنعمة لينسيه الإستغفار ويتمادي بها وهو قول الله عز وجل سنستدرجهم من حيث لا يعلمون بالنعمة عند المعاصي

A number of our people have narrated from Ahmad ibn Muhammad from Ali ibn al-Hakam from 'Abd Allah ibn Jundab from Sufyan ibn al-Samt who has said the following: "Abu 'Abd Allah (peace be upon him) has said, '**When Allah wills good for a servant upon his committing a sin He causes it to be followed by a misfortune to remind him of the need to plead for forgiveness. When Allah wills evil for a servant upon his committing a sin He causes it to be followed by his gaining bounties that make him forget the need to plead for forgiveness and continue in sin. This is indicated in the words of Allah, the Most Majestic, the Most Holy, 'We gradually lead those who have called Our revelations mere lies, to destruction. Their destruction will be such that they will not even notice how it seized them.'** (7:182) This happens to them by means of His granting them bounties when they commit sins.'"

— Al-Kafi (Vol. 2) by Shaykh Muhammad b. Yaqub al-Kulayni, Book 1, Chapter 202, Hadith #1

- عدة من أصحابنا عن سهل بن زياد وعلي بن إبراهيم عن أبيه جميعا عن ابن محبوب عن ابن رثاب عن بعض أصحابه قال سئل أبو عبد الله (عليه السلام) عن الإستدراج فقال هو العبد يذنب الذنب فيملئ له وتجدد له عندها النعم فتلهيه عن الإستغفار من الذنوب فهو مستدرج من حيث لا يعلم.

A number of our people have narrated from Sahl ibn Ziyad and Ali ibn Ibrahim has narrated from his father all from ibn Mahbub from ibn Ri'ab from certain individuals of his people who has said the following: "Abu 'Abd Allah (peace be upon him) was asked about al-'Istidraj, (gradual steps). The Imam said, '**It happens when a servant (of Allah) commits a sin he is given respite, new bounties come to him and he overlooks beseeching forgiveness for sins, thus, he is taken in gradual steps but he has not taken any notice of it.'**"

— Al-Kafi (Vol. 2) by Shaykh Muhammad b. Yaqub al-Kulayni, Book 1, Chapter 202, Hadith #2

Blessings Leading to Further Sin (Istidraj)

The hadith's mention of "gradually leading them to destruction from where they do not know" is a key concept in Islamic teachings, known as *istidraj*.

- **Quranic Verse 7:182:** "**We will overtake them by degrees, from whence they know not.**" This means that Allah may increase bounties on a person who commits sins, causing them to become more absorbed in worldly life and forget about Allah, thus gradually drawing them towards ruin.
- **Imam al-Sadiq (peace be upon him):** Explained that when a servant commits a sin, a scourge is renewed for him, and he becomes gradual in deception. However, if he seeks forgiveness, it is not written against him.

Sin as a Cause of Hardship and Deprivation

Misfortunes and the removal of blessings are often consequences of sins.

- **Quranic Support:** The verse "**Whatever hardship befalls you is the result of your own deeds. Allah pardons many of your sins**" (Quran 42:30) is repeatedly cited as foundational to this understanding.
- **Imam al-Sadiq (peace be upon him):** "No vein is injured, no failure takes place, no headache or illness occurs but because of the sin

عن هشام بن سالم، عن أبي عبد الله (عليه السلام) اقل: أما إنه ليس من عرق يضرب
وال نكبة وال صداع وال مرض إل بذنب وذلك قول هلال عز وجل: في كتابه: (وما أصابكم
من مصيبة فبما كسبت أيديكم ويعفو عن كثير) اقل: ثم اقل: وما يعفو هلال. أكثر مما
يؤاخذ به

From Hisham bin Salim, from Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him) who said:
Indeed, there is no vein that throbs, no misfortune, no headache, and no illness except due to a sin. And that is the saying of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, in His Book: "And whatever strikes you of disaster - it is for what your hands have earned; but He pardons much" [Quran 42:30]. Then he said: **And what Allah pardons is more than what He holds accountable for.**

— Wasail al-Shia Vol. 15, Section 2, Chapter 40, Hadith 20565

عن أبي عبد هلالا)عليه السالم(اقل: صداع ليلة يحط كل خطيئة إال الكبائر.

From Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him) who said: **A night of headache removes all sins except the major ones. Recommendation Of Considering Illness As A Trial And Being Patient ...**

— Wasail al-Shia Vol. 2, Section 7, Chapter 1, Hadith 2466

- **Imam Ali (peace be upon him):**

أيها الناس، إن الدنيا تغر المؤمل لها والمخلد إليها، ولا تنفس بمن نافس فيها، وتغلب من غلب عليها. وإيم الله، ما كان قوم قط في غض نعمة من عيش فزال عنهم إلا بذنوب اجتروها، لان (الله ليس بظلام للعبيد) ولو أن الناس حين تنزل بهم النقم، وتزول عنهم النعم، فزعوا إلى ربهم بصدق من نياتهم، ووله من قلوبهم، لرد عليهم كل شارد، وأصلح لهم كل فاسد،

"O people, surely this world deceives him who longs for it and who is attracted towards it. It does not behave niggardly with him who aspires for it and overpowers him who overpowers it. By Allah, no people are deprived of the lively pleasures of life after enjoying them, except as a result of sins committed by them, because certainly Allah is not unjust to His creatures. Even then, when calamities descend upon people and pleasures depart from them, they turn towards Allah with true intention and the feeling in their hearts that He will return them everything that has fled from them and cure all their ills."

— Nahj al-Balaghah, Sermon 178

Hardship as a Means of Purification and Mercy

When Allah intends good for a servant, even hardship becomes a means of spiritual growth and purification.

- **Divine Intention for Good:**

عن سفيان بن السمط اقل: اقل أبو عبدهللا (عليه السالم): إن هلا إذا أراد بعبد خيرا أفذب ذنبا أتبعه بنقمة ويذكره .الاستغفار

From Sufyan ibn al-Simt who said: Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him) said:

When Allah intends good for a servant who commits a sin, He follows it with a punishment and reminds him to seek forgiveness.

— Wasail al-Shia Vol. 16, Section 1, Chapter 90, Hadith 21040

الإمام الصادق (عليه السلام): إذا أراد الله عز وجل بعبد خيرا فأذب ذنبا تبعه بنقمة ويذكره الاستغفار، وإذا أراد الله عز وجل بعبد شرا فأذب ذنبا تبعه بنعمة لينسيه الاستغفار ويتمادي به، وهو قول الله عز وجل: «سنستدرجهم من حيث لا يعلمون». بالنعم عند المعاصي

Imam al-Sadiq (peace be upon him) said, '**When Allah wants good for a servant who commits a sin, He follows it with a punishment and reminds him to ask for forgiveness. But if Allah, wants bad for a servant who commits a sin, He follows it with a favor that makes him forget to ask for forgiveness and continue sinning. This is the meaning of Allah's verse, "We will draw them imperceptibly [into ruin], whence they do not know"**⁸¹: with favors whenever they sin.'

— Bihar al-Anwar, p. 229, no. 41

- **Trials for Honoring a Servant:**

الإمام الباقر (عليه السلام): إن الله تبارك وتعالى إذا كان من أمره أن يكرم عبدا وله عنده ذنب ابتلاه بالسقم، فإن لم يفعل فبالحاجة، فإن لم يفعل شدد عليه عند الموت. وإذا كان من أمره أن يهين عبدا وله عنده حسنة أصح بدنه، فإن لم يفعل وسع عليه في معيشته، فإن لم يفعل هون عليه الموت

Imam Mohammad Baqir (peace be upon him) said, '**When Allah, Blessed and most High, wants to honour a servant who has previously committed a sin, He tries him with illness, and if not with that then with need. And if not with that, then He makes his death difficult. But when He wants to**

humiliate a servant who has done some good previously, He makes his body healthy, or makes his sustenance abundant, or makes his death easy.'

— A'alam al-Din, no. 433

- **Sins Exchanged for Ailments:**

عن عيل (عليه السالم) في المرض يصيب الصبي؟، اقل: كفارة لوالديه.

From Ali (peace be upon him) regarding sickness that afflicts a child, he said: **It is an expiation for the parents.**

— Wasail al-Shia Vol. 2, Section 7, Chapter 2, Hadith 2475

الإمام علي (عليه السلام): إذا ابتلى الله ُ عبداً أسقط عنه من الذنوب بقدر علته

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) said: **'When Allah afflicts a servant with illness, sins shed away from him in proportion to the severity of his ailment.'**

— Da'aim al-Islam, v. 1, p. 218

وعن أبي جعفر (ع) قال إن الله تبارك وتعالى اذا كان من أمره أن يكرم عبدا وله عنده ذنب ابتلاه بالسقم، فإن لم يفعل ابتلاه بالحاجة، فإن هو لم يفعل شدد عليه عند الموت، وإذا كان من أمره أن يهين عبدا وله عنده حسنة أصح بدنه، فإن هو لم يفعل وسع في معيشته، فإن هو لم يفعل هون عليه الموت.

It has been narrated that Abu Ja'far (al-Baqir) (peace be upon him) said:

"When Allah decides to honor a servant but the servant has committed sins, He afflicts him with an ailment. If not that, He puts him in need; and if not that, He intensifies the severity of his death (in order that his sins may be forgiven). And when He decides to disgrace a person who has done some good, He bestows him with well-being. If not that, He amplifies his livelihood; and if not that, He makes his death easy."

— Kitab al-Mu min by Husayn b. Sa id al-Ahwazi, Book 1, Chapter 1, Hadith #11

وعن أبي جعفر (ع) قال: قال الله تبارك وتعالى وعزتي، لا أخرج لي عبدا من الدنيا أريد رحمته إلا استوفيت كل سيئة هي له، إما بالضيق في رزقه أو ببلاء في جسده وأما خوف أدخله عليه، فإن بقي عليه شيء شددت عليه الموت. وقال (ع): وقال الله وعزتي، لا أخرج لي عبدا من الدنيا وأريد عذابه إلا استوفيته كل حسنة له؛ إما بالسعة في رزقه أو بالصحة في جسده وإما بأمن أدخله عليه، فإن بقي عليه شيء هونت عليه الموت.

It has been narrated that Abu Ja'far (al-Baqir) (peace be upon him) said: **Allah [M.G] has said: By My Honor! I do not take a servant of Mine from the world, if I intend mercy for him, until all his sins are removed—either by a straitening in his livelihood, by an affliction in his body or a fear that I cause him to experience. And if anything remains on him thereafter, I make his dying difficult. Abu Ja'far (peace be upon him) also said: Allah has also said: By My Honor! If I intend to chastise a servant of Mine, I do not take him from the world until I compensate him fully for his good deeds—either by increasing his livelihood, by health in his body or by a sense of security that I cause him to experience. And if anything remains for him thereafter, I make his dying easy.**

— Kitab al-Mu min by Husayn b. Sa id al-Ahwazi, Book 1, Chapter 1, Hadith #12

عن الصباح بن سيابة قال: قلت لأبي عبد الله (ع): ما أصاب المؤمن من بلاء فبذنّب؟ قال لا، ولكن ليسمع أنينه وشكواه ودعاءه الذي يكتب له بالحسنات وتحط عنه السيئات وتدخر له يوم القيامة.

Al-Sabbah ibn Siyabah narrated: I asked Abu 'Abd Allah (peace be upon him), 'The affliction that befalls a believer is it because of a sin?' **'No,'** he replied, **'It is so that He (Allah) may hear his wails and complaints and supplications for which good deeds are recorded for him and misdeeds are wiped out from him, and a treasure is amassed for him for the Day of Resurrection.**

— Kitab al-Mu min by Husayn b. Sa id al-Ahwazi, Book 1, Chapter 1, Hadith #34

عن الرضا (عليه السلام) اقل: المرض للمؤمن تطهير ورحمة، وللکافر تعذيب ولعنة، وإن المرض ال يزال. ابلؤمن حتى ال يكون عليه ذنب

From Al-Ridha (peace be upon him) who said: **Illness for a believer is purification and mercy, and for a disbeliever is punishment and curse, and illness continues with the believer until no sin remains upon him.**

— Wasail al-Shia Vol. 2, Section 7, Chapter 1, Hadith 2465

- **Allah's Forgiveness:**

حدثنا الحسين بن سعيد قال: حدثنا النضر بن سويد عن ابن سنان عن حفص قال: سمعت أبا عبد الله عليه السلام يقول: ما من عبد مؤمن يذنب ذنبا الا أجله الله سبع ساعات من النهار فان هو تاب لم يكتب عليه شيئا وان لم يفعل كتبت عليه سيئة فاتاه عباد البصري فقال له: بلغنا انك قلت: ما من عبد يذنب ذنبا الا أجله الله سبع ساعات من النهار فقال: ليس هكذا قلت ولكني قلت: ما من عبد مؤمن يذنب ذنبا الا أجله الله سبع ساعات من نهاره هكذا قلت.

Al-Husayn ibn Sa id narrated to us, "Al-Nadr ibn Suwayd narrated to us, from Ibn Sinan, from HafS who said, 'I heard Aba 'Abdillah (a) say, "**There is no believing servant who commits a sin but that Allah delays for him [the recording of that sin] for seven hours of the day. If he repents [in that time], nothing is recorded against him but if he fails to do so, one evil deed is recorded against him.**" So 'Abbad al-BaSri came to him and said, "We have been informed that you said there is no servant who commits a sin but that Allah delays [its recording] for him for seven hours of the day?" So he (a) replied, "**That is not how I said it. Rather, I said: there is no believing servant who commits a sin but that Allah delays [its recording] for him for seven hours of his day – that is how I said it.**"[1]"

— Kitab al-Zuhd by Husayn b. Sa id al-Ahwazi, Book 2, Chapter 12, Hadith #1

حدثني أحمد بن محمد عن أبيه عن محمد بن أحمد عن إبراهيم بن إسحاق عن عبد الله بن أحمد عن محمد بن سنان عن الرضا ع قال: المرض للمؤمن تطهير و رحمه و للكافر تعذيب و لعنه و إن المرض لا يزال بالمؤمن حتى لا يكون عليه ذنب.

It was narrated to me by Ahmad b. Muhammad from his father from Muhammad b. Ahmad from Ibrahim b. Ishaq from Abdillah b. Ahmad from Muhammad b. Sinan from al-Ridha (peace be upon him) who said: **"Illness purifies a believer. It is a mercy for him and a chain and curse for an infidel. A believer remains ill till the time his sins are forgiven."**

— Thawab al-A'mal wa 'iqab al-A'mal by Shaykh Muhammad b. Ali al-Saduq, Book 2, Chapter 440, Hadith #1

The Decisive Sign: Proximity to Allah

The true indicator of divine favor or displeasure is not the presence of hardship or prosperity itself, but rather whether these experiences bring a person closer to Allah or lead them deeper into heedlessness and disobedience. A believer should maintain an awareness of Allah's blessings regardless of their circumstances, as Imam Ali al-Hadi (peace be upon him) reminded Abu Hashim during his severe hardship.

و روي عن أبي هاشم الجعفري أنه قال : أصابتنى ضيقة شديدة فصرت إلى أبي الحسن علي بن محمد عليه السلام فاستأذنت عليه فأذن لي فلما جلست قال يا أبا هاشم أي نعم الله عليك تريد أن تؤدي شكرها قال أبو هاشم فوجمت فلم أدر ما أقول له فابتدأني عليه السلام فقال إن الله عز و جل رزقك الإيمان فحرم به بدنك على النار و رزقك العافية فأعانك على الطاعة و رزقك القنوع فصانك عن التبذل يا أبا هاشم إنما ابتدأتك بهذا لأنني ظننت أنك تريد أن تشكو لي من فعل بك هذا قد أمرت لك بمائة دينار فخذها.

It is narrated from Abu Hashim Al-Jafari that he said: I was afflicted with severe hardship, so I went to Abu Al-Hasan Imam Ali ibn Muhammad Al-Hadi (peace be upon him), peace be upon him. I sought permission to enter, and he granted me permission.

When I sat down, Imam (peace be upon him) said:

'O' Abu Hashim, which of Allah's (swt) blessings upon you do you wish to fulfill its gratitude?'

Abu Hashim said: I was speechless and did not know what to say.

Then Imam (peace be upon him), peace be upon him, initiated the conversation and said:

'Indeed, Allah (swt), the Mighty and Majestic, has granted you faith, by which He (swt) has made your body forbidden to the Fire.

He (swt) has granted you well-being, enabling you to obey Him (swt). He (swt) has granted you contentment, protecting you from disgrace.

O' Abu Hashim, I began with this because I thought you were about to complain to me about who has caused this hardship to you. I have ordered for you one hundred dinars, so take them.'

— Man La Yahduruh al-Faqih (Vol. 4) by Shaykh Muhammad b. Ali al-Saduq, Book 1, Chapter 175, Hadith #5863

The Role of Gratitude Amidst Blessings and Hardships

Imam Ali al-Hadi (peace be upon him)'s advice to Abu Hashim, who was afflicted with severe hardship, highlights the importance of recognizing Allah's blessings even when complaining. He reminded Abu Hashim of the blessings of faith, well-being, and contentment, which protect one from the Fire and enable obedience, before addressing the hardship.

15. Conclusion

Surah 7:94 illustrates Allah's justice and mercy, where difficulties are sent as a corrective measure to awaken spiritual consciousness and lead people back to Him in humility, thereby offering them a chance for salvation. Difficulties are not always a manifestation of Allah's wrath; they can be a form of divine grace, like iron heated to

become malleable. They remove heedlessness, train the human heart, and prompt humility and supplication.

The outcome is conditional. Individuals and communities retain the choice to respond with repentance or to harden their hearts further. Divine warnings serve as a catalyst for repentance, urging return to obedience before severe consequences. Allah's mercy enfolds all wrongdoers who turn repentant unto Him, and the door of His mercy remains open for those who sincerely repent.

By embracing personal responsibility, acknowledging divine justice, understanding the consequences of deeds, cultivating humility, engaging in humble supplication, and seeking sincere repentance, believers align themselves with Allah's will and seek His boundless mercy, forgiveness, and guidance.

The Quranic principle: **"Surely Allah does not change what is with a people until they change what is within themselves"** (Quran Surah Al-Ra'ad, 13:11). This principle establishes a fundamental divine law governing the relationship between human actions, internal states, and collective circumstances. It underscores human agency, responsibility, and the direct correlation between inner transformation and external realities, encompassing both the bestowal and withdrawal of divine blessings.

Gratitude (*Shukr*) is essential for the perpetuation and increase of blessings, while ingratitude can lead to their withdrawal and invite divine chastisement. Imam Musa ibn Ja'far (peace be upon him) said:

عن محمد عبد هلالا ابن يزيد النهشيل، عن أبي الحسن موسى بن جعفر (عليه السلام) اقل: التحدث بنعم هلالا شكر، وترك ذلك كفر، افرتبطوا نعتم ربكم ابلشكر وحصنوا أموالكم ابلزكاة، وادفعوا البلاء ابلدعاء، افن الدعاء جنة منجية ترد البلاء وقد ابرم إبراما

From Muhammad Abdullah ibn Yazid al-Nahshali, from Abu al-Hasan Musa ibn Ja'far (peace be upon him) who said: **Speaking about Allah's blessings is gratitude, and abandoning that is disbelief. So bind the blessings of your Lord with thankfulness, fortify your wealth with zakat, and repel calamity with**

supplication, for supplication is a protective shield that repels calamity even after it has been firmly decreed.

— Wasail al-Shia Vol. 7, Section 2, Chapter 8, Hadith 8660

The concept of *istidraj*, a process of gradual entrapment where Allah grants a person or nation increased worldly prosperity despite their disobedience and ignorance of divine reminders. This can lead to arrogance and a false sense of security, eventually culminating in sudden punishment and despair. **"When Allah, Mighty and Majestic, wants good for a servant who commits a sin, He follows it with a hardship and reminds him to seek forgiveness. And when Allah, Mighty and Majestic, wants evil for a servant who commits a sin, He follows it with a blessing which makes him forget to seek forgiveness and persists in it. This is the meaning of Allah's words 'We will gradually lead them to destruction from where they do not know' [Quran 7:182] through blessings at times of disobedience."**

In Islamic understanding, hardship, blessings, and divine gradual punishment (*istidraj*) are interconnected aspects of Allah's plan, serving as tests, means of purification, or forms of divine strategy. Hardship serves multiple purposes: spiritual growth and training, discipline and warning, expiation for sins, elevation of status, fostering appreciation, and divine chastisement. Blessings are also considered a part of the divine test, examining faith and resolve. *Istidraj* is a process of gradual entrapment where Allah grants blessings to a person who commits a sin but keeps them from repenting.

وعن أبي عبد الله (ع) قال: قال النبي (ص): قال الله (جل جلاله) إن من عبادي المؤمنين لعبادا لا يصلح لهم أمر دينهم إلا بالغنى والسعة والصحة في البدن؛ فأبلوهم بالغنى والسعة والصحة في البدن فيصلح لهم أمر دينهم. وقال: إن من العباد لعبادا لا يصلح لهم أمر دينهم إلا بالفاقة والمسكنة والسقم في أبدانهم، فأبلوهم بالفقر والفاقة والمسكنة والسقم في أبدانهم فيصلح لهم أمر دينهم.

Abu 'Abd Allah (peace be upon him) narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: Allah [M.G] has said: **Amongst My believing servants there are those whose religious affairs are not set right except by wealth, affluence and health; so, I give them these as their lot that the affairs of their religion may be set**

right. And amongst the servants there are those whose religious affairs are not set right except by hunger, poverty and disease; so, I afflict them with hunger, poverty and disease so that the affairs of their religion may be set right for them.

— Kitab al-Mu min by Husayn b. Sa'id al-Ahwazi, Book 1, Chapter 1, Hadith #37

And the narration from Nahj Al-Fasahah:

وصب المؤمن كفارة الخطايا

Hazrat Mohammad (peace be upon him and his family): **A believer's sickness is the atonement of his sins**

— Nahj Al-Fasahah

ما يصيب المؤمن وصب ولا نصب ولا سقم ولا أذى ولا حزن إلا كفر الله به من خطاياه

Hazrat Mohammad (peace be upon him and his family): **A believer won't be exposed to any suffering, hardship, disease, harm and sorrow, unless God ignores some of his sins (in lieu of them)**

— Nahj Al-Fasahah

إن لله عقوبات في القلوب والأبدان: ضنك في المعيشة ووهن في العبادة. وما ضرب عبد بعقوبة أعظم من قسوة القلب.

Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (peace be upon him) said: **Verily, Allah has punishments for the hearts and bodies: difficulty in livelihood and weakness in worship. And never has a servant been hit with a punishment greater than hardness of the heart.**

— Tuhaful-Uqul by Ibn Shu'ba al-Harrani, Volume 0, Page 296

إن لله عقوبات فى القلوب و الأبدان: ضنك فى المعيشة و وهن فى العبادة و ما ضرب عبد
!بعقوبة أعظم من قسوة القلب

Imam Mohammad Baqir (peace be upon him) said:

**God chastises man (for sins and disobedience) through the spirit and the body:
indigence in livelihood, indolence in worship, but God has not punished any
servant with something worse than hardheartedness**

— 1. Tuhaful Uqul, page 217

In essence, a comprehensive framework in which divine trials, humility, supplication, repentance, gratitude, patience, and submission are interconnected elements of a believer's spiritual journey. These principles guide believers toward recognizing Allah's sovereignty, accepting His guidance, and returning to a path of righteousness, all while seeking His boundless mercy, forgiveness, and guidance.

References

Quranic References

- Quran 2:45
- Quran 2:48
- Quran 2:155
- Quran 2:155–157
- Quran 2:156
- Quran 2:156–157
- Quran 2:157
- Quran 4:18
- Quran 6:42

- Quran 6:43
- Quran 6:145
- Quran 6:164
- Quran 7:94
- Quran 7:182
- Quran 7:182–183
- Quran 8:28
- Quran 8:53
- Quran 11:9
- Quran 12:18
- Quran 12:83
- Quran 13:11
- Quran 17:15
- Quran 20:7
- Quran 23:76
- Quran 23:77
- Quran 25:77
- Quran 27:40
- Quran 28:78
- Quran 30:33
- Quran 30:36

- Quran 34:17
- Quran 34:19
- Quran 35:18
- Quran 39:7
- Quran 39:10
- Quran 39:49
- Quran 40:60
- Quran 41:46
- Quran 42:30
- Quran 53:38
- Quran 57:22
- Quran 57:23
- Quran 66:8
- Quran 99:7–8

Hadith, Tafsir, and Classical Source References

Al-Kafi / Usul al-Kafi

- Al-Kafi, Vol. 3, Book 3, Chapter 95, Hadith #40
- Al-Kafi, Vol. 2, Book 1, Chapter 36, Hadith #4
- Al-Kafi, Vol. 2, Book 1, Chapter 47, Hadith #23
- Al-Kafi, Vol. 2, Book 1, Chapter 59, Hadith #2
- Al-Kafi, Vol. 2, Book 1, Chapter 107, Hadith #6

- Al-Kafi, Vol. 2, Book 1, Chapter 202, Hadith #1
- Al-Kafi, Vol. 2, Book 1, Chapter 202, Hadith #2
- Al-Kafi, v. 2, p. 93, no. 23
- Al-Kafi, v. 2, p. 121
- Al-Kafi, v. 2, p. 312
- Al-Kafi, v. 2, p. 468, no. 1
- Al-Kafi, v. 2, p. 470, no. 8
- Usul al-Kafi, Vol. 2, P. 312

Wasail al-Shia / Wasa'il al-Shia

- Vol. 1, Section 2, Chapter 1, Hadith 8599
- Vol. 1, Section 2, Chapter 1, Hadith 8600
- Vol. 1, Section 2, Chapter 3, Hadith 64
- Vol. 1, Section 2, Chapter 3, Hadith 68
- Vol. 2, Section 7, Chapter 1, Hadith 2465
- Vol. 2, Section 7, Chapter 1, Hadith 2466
- Vol. 2, Section 7, Chapter 2, Hadith 2475
- Vol. 3, Section 3, Chapter 73, Hadith 3532
- Vol. 3, Section 3, Chapter 75, Hadith 3545
- Vol. 3, Section 3, Chapter 76, Hadith 3567
- Vol. 3, Section 3, Chapter 76, Hadith 3583
- Vol. 3, Section 3, Chapter 77, Hadith 3598

- Vol. 3, Section 3, Chapter 77, Hadith 3601
- Vol. 6, Section 10, Chapter 6, Hadith 8383
- Vol. 7, Section 2, Chapter 1, Hadith 8602
- Vol. 7, Section 2, Chapter 3, Hadith 8630
- Vol. 7, Section 2, Chapter 6, Hadith 8642
- Vol. 7, Section 2, Chapter 7, Hadith 8643
- Vol. 7, Section 2, Chapter 7, Hadith 8644
- Vol. 7, Section 2, Chapter 7, Hadith 8650
- Vol. 7, Section 2, Chapter 8, Hadith 8654
- Vol. 7, Section 2, Chapter 8, Hadith 8660
- Vol. 7, Section 2, Chapter 12, Hadith 8679
- Vol. 7, Section 2, Chapter 12, Hadith 8680
- Vol. 7, Section 2, Chapter 59, Hadith 8940
- Vol. 10, Section 7, Chapter 2, Hadith 13716
- Vol. 10, Section 7, Chapter 2, Hadith 13718
- Vol. 12, Section 1, Chapter 75, Hadith 15779
- Vol. 15, Section 2, Chapter 19, Hadith 20368
- Vol. 15, Section 2, Chapter 28, Hadith 20493
- Vol. 15, Section 2, Chapter 28, Hadith 20501
- Vol. 15, Section 2, Chapter 40, Hadith 20565
- Vol. 15, Section 2, Chapter 44, Hadith 20617

- Vol. 16, Section 1, Chapter 60, Hadith 20817
- Vol. 16, Section 1, Chapter 85, Hadith 21000
- Vol. 16, Section 1, Chapter 87, Hadith 21027
- Vol. 16, Section 1, Chapter 87, Hadith 21029
- Vol. 16, Section 1, Chapter 90, Hadith 21040
- Vol. 16, Section 1, Chapter 93, Hadith 21061

Bihar al-Anwar / Bihar ul-Anwar

- Bihar al-Anwar, v. 53, p. 175
- Bihar al-Anwar, v. 70, p. 317, no. 23
- Bihar al-Anwar, v. 78, p. 81, no. 74
- Bihar al-Anwar, v. 78, p. 113
- Bihar al-Anwar, v. 78, p. 312, no. 1
- Bihar al-Anwar, v. 82, p. 142, no. 26
- Bihar al-Anwar, v. 93, p. 288, no. 3
- Bihar al-Anwar, v. 93, p. 301, no. 37
- Bihar al-Anwar, p. 229, no. 41
- Bihar ul-Anwar, Vol. 53, P. 175
- Bihar ul-Anwar, Vol. 78, P. 113

Works by Shaykh al-Saduq

- Al-Amali by Shaykh Muhammad b. Ali al-Saduq, Book 1, Chapter 90, Hadith #3

- Maani al-Akhbar, Book 1, Chapter 82, Hadith #1
- Maani al-Akhbar, Book 1, Chapter 149, Hadith #3
- Uyun akhbar al-Rida, Vol. 2, Book 1, Chapter 1, Hadith #95
- Al-KhiSal, Book 4, Chapter 11, Hadith #2
- Thawab al-A'mal wa 'iqab al-A'mal, Book 2, Chapter 440, Hadith #1
- Man La Yahduruh al-Faqih, Vol. 1, Book 1, Chapter 24, Hadith #352
- Man La Yahduruh al-Faqih, Vol. 1, Book 1, Chapter 27, Hadith #514
- Man La Yahduruh al-Faqih, Vol. 4, Book 1, Chapter 175, Hadith #5863

Kitab al-Ghayba by al-Nu'mani

- Kitab al-Ghayba, Book 2, Chapter 14, Hadith #5
- Kitab al-Ghayba, Book 2, Chapter 14, Hadith #6

Nahjul Balaghah / Nahj al-Balaghah

- Nahjul Balaghah, Sermon 192
- Nahjul Balaghah, Saying 470
- Nahj al-Balaghah, Sermon 178
- Sharh Nahjul Balaghah li Ibn Abi al-Hadid, v. 1, p. 319

Kanz al-Ummal

- Kanz al-Ummal, no. 537
- Kanz al-Ummal, no. 6499
- Kanz al-Ummal, no. 10302
- Kanz al-Ummal, no. 12971

- Kanz al-Ummal, no. 28820

Kitab al-Mu min by Husayn b. Sa'id al-Ahwazi

- Kitab al-Mu min, Book 1, Chapter 1, Hadith #11
- Kitab al-Mu min, Book 1, Chapter 1, Hadith #12
- Kitab al-Mu min, Book 1, Chapter 1, Hadith #34
- Kitab al-Mu min, Book 1, Chapter 1, Hadith #37

Kitab al-Zuhd by Husayn b. Sa'id al-Ahwazi

- Kitab al-Zuhd, Book 2, Chapter 12, Hadith #1

Tuhaf al-Uqul / Tuhaful Uqul

- Tuhaf al-Uqul, P. 296
- Tuhaful Uqul, page 296
- Tuhaful Uqul, page 217
- Tuhaf al-Uqul by Ibn Shu'ba al-Harrani, Volume 0, Page 296
- Mustadrak Alwasail, vol. 11, page 299

Other Classical Sources

- Ayan ush-Shia Ataba Al Jadeed, Vol. I, P. 316
- Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 9945
- Makarim al-Akhlaq, v. 2, p. 10, no. 1992
- Mizan al-Hikmah, Volume 4, Page 2948
- A'alam al-Din, no. 433
- Da'aim al-Islam, v. 1, p. 218

- Nahj Al-Fasahah