

SUMMER IMMERSION

TAFSIR OF SURAH SAAD



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Ayah 41

- Each prophet has a very different test. All their tests came from their blessings – every blessing is attached with a bala'(affliction). The greater the blessing, the greater the potential challenge that it is attached with it.
- This shows us that every individual will be tested and each one will be tested in a completely different situation.
- The similarity between the prophets (Dawud AS, Sulayman AS and Ayyub AS) mentioned in this Surah is that they were all blessed in their duniawi sense (i.e. wealth, family etc.).
- Allah is consoling the Prophet ﷺ through the stories of the previous prophets by letting him know that he is blessed; but in these blessings, there will be challenges.
- Despite the blessings given to these prophets, they too, were tested. Although they were challenged, they remained grateful servants of Allah.
- If an individual is unable to balance their responses between their blessings and challenges, they will struggle to balance their Deen.
 - Suhaib reported that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said:

عَجَّابًا لِأَمْرِ الْمُؤْمِنِ إِنَّ أَمْرَهُ كُلُّهُ خَيْرٌ وَلَيْسَ ذَاكَ لَأَحَدٍ إِلَّا لِلْمُؤْمِنِ إِنَّ أَصَابَتْهُ سَرَّاءٌ شَكَرَ فَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُ وَإِنْ أَصَابَتْهُ ضَرَّاءٌ صَبَرَ فَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُ .

Strange are the ways of a believer for there is good in every affair of his and this is not the case with anyone else except in the case of a believer for if he has an occasion to feel delight, he thanks (God), thus there is a good for him in it, and if he gets into trouble and shows resignation (and endures it patiently), there is a good for him in it. (Sahih Muslim)

- Allah will reward those who remained patient in this world, much more than those who were grateful.
- وَأَذْكُرْ – Means remember/recite, but it is also a form of dhikr. Remembering the Prophets, Companions, pious people etc. is also a form of dhikr of Allah.
- Allah; the Rabb, similarly introduces Ayyub AS as his abd; a form of honor being His servant – it is the greatest affiliation.
- Two different opinions on Ayyub's prophethood; he either came in the era of Yaqub AS or in the era of Yusuf AS. The difference is based upon whom he was married to.
- Ayyub AS had very few followers. Some narrations mentioned three to seven followers. He had the comforts of this world; he was wealthy, blessed with many children, healthy and had prominence within his community.
- Different opinions about why Ayyub AS was tested:
 - 1. Shaytan's challenge to Allah was to test Ayyub's level of obedience; if it was due to the comforts which Allah has blessed him with. Allah proved he was righteous and grateful regardless of his affliction. This is an invalid opinion as Allah doesn't have to prove anything to Shaytan and he cannot impact Allah. Hence, the one who shares this has committed bid'ah.
 - 2. The angels had a discussion with Allah about Ayyub AS – to test his obedience without the blessings Allah had bestowed. This is an invalid opinion.
 - 3. Ayyub AS invited different people to his house for da'wah. A poor person from the community attended this function although he had not been invited and Ayyub AS denied him entry into his home. Thus, it became the cause of Allah testing him. This is the most preferred opinion.
 - Abu Hurairah reported: The Prophet (ﷺ) said,

شَرُّ الظَّلَاقِمُ طَعَامُ الْوَلِيمَةِ يُمْنَعُهَا مَنْ يَأْتِيَهَا وَيُدْعَى إِلَيْهَا مَنْ يَأْبَاهَا وَمَنْ لَمْ يُحِبِ الدَّعْوَةَ فَقَدْ عَصَى اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ

"The most evil food is the food of a wedding banquet, in which those who want to come are left out and those who are invited refuse. Whoever does not answer an invitation has disobeyed Allah and his messenger." (Muslim)

- 4. Ayyub AS was tested because every prophet is tested in some way and this is the way Allah chose to test him. There is no need for explanation as it is from Allah.
- Shaytan cannot harm human beings physically, but he can only impact them through whispers that enter our chests or our hearts.
- Different opinions on why Ayyub AS said, أَنِّي مَسَّنِي الشَّيْطَنُ (Shaytan has afflicted me with distress):
 - 1. Any harm and difficulty that touches us comes from Allah. Nevertheless, out of respect for Allah and as part of the etiquettes of a servant, it is inappropriate to blame Allah and create negative assumptions about Him. Thus, the prophets attributed any afflictions to themselves or Shaytan. This is the most preferred opinion.
 - 2. This refers to the thoughts through the whispers of Shaytan. Upon being afflicted, Shaytan had put negative thoughts into Ayyub's mind about who Allah is. Thus, this is what he refers to as it had touched him and this is when he started asking Allah for a cure.
 - 3. This refers to the thought Shaytan put into his mind which caused the mistake that he committed and that's why Allah tested him.
- This is why in Surah al-Anbiya, Allah tells us he made du'a and he reflected on this cause of Shaytan which led him to the mistake he made:

وَأَيُّوبٌ إِذْ نَادَى رَبَّهُ أَنِّي مَسَّنِي الْضُّرُّ وَأَنَّتَ أَرْحَمُ الْرَّحْمَينَ

And 'remember' when Job cried out to his Lord, "I have been touched with adversity, and You are the Most Merciful of the merciful." (21:38)

- Another commonality we find in the stories of the prophets mentioned in this Surah was the small slip-up they made.
- This shows us that Allah is sensitive towards His servants. Because Ayyub AS turned away the poor man from his gathering, he suffered from this challenge.
- The Prophet (ﷺ) was similarly reprimanded for frowning and turning away the blind Companion, Ibn Umm Maktum and was reprimanded in Surah 'Abasa.
 - Abu Hurairah reported: Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said,

"من عاد لي ولیا، فقد آذنته بالحرب، وما تقرب إلى عبدي بشيء أحب إلىه مما افترضت عليه، وما يزال عبدي يتقرب إلىه بالنواقل حتى أحبه فإذا أحببته كنت سمعه الذي يسمع به، وبصره الذي يبصر به، ويده التي يبطش بها، ورجله التي يمشي بها، وإن سأله، أعطيته، ولئن استعاذه، لأعيذه"

"Allah, the Exalted, has said: 'I will declare war against him who treats with hostility a pious worshipper of Mine. And the most beloved thing with which My slave comes nearer to Me, is what I have enjoined upon him; and My slave keeps on coming closer to Me through performing Nawafil (voluntary prayers or doing extra deeds besides what is obligatory) until I love him, (so much so that) I become his hearing with which he hears, and his sight with which he sees, and his hand with which he strikes, and his leg with which he walks; and if he asks Me something, I will surely give him, and if he seeks My Protection (refuge), I will surely protect him'. (Al-Bukhari)

- مَسٌّ – Means touch; the slightest form of touch/a graze.
- Ayyub AS used the word مَسٌّ in his du'as to not display ingratitude to Allah. It is out of adab towards Allah.
- Despite his great challenge, Ayyub AS submitted to Allah and never asked for shifa (cure).
- This teaches us when we turn towards Allah, we simply present our situation in front of Him. There's no need to ask Him as He is the Most Generous – He will give us what is needed. Allah gave him shifa out of His Rahmah.
- With regards to tests in life, Allah has stated:

وَلَنَبْلُونَنَّكُم بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخُوفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ

We will certainly test you with a touch of fear and famine and loss of property, life, and crops. (2:155)

- Ayyub AS was severely tested in all areas mentioned above by Allah.
 - His health: He had a contagious skin disease; his skin used to fall off, revealing his muscles and bones.
 - His wealth: Due to his illness, he wasn't able to earn or make a living – he was boycotted/quarantined.
 - His family: He lost the support of his children; they took all his money and left him.

- This is why Ayyub AS was deemed the most patient of prophets; he endured physical pain but remained strong spiritually.
- For years, he continued to suffer through his condition, and the only person that remained by his side was his wife, Rahma/Leah, by his side to take care of him.
- Two different words were used:
 - نُصْب - Refers to bala'; it is distress/difficulty. It is also read as نَصْب. This refers to his health.
 - عَذَاب - Refers to torment; this is because he faced multiple challenges. This refers to his wealth and family.
- Ibn Abbas would say, "We do not know of any person who was tested more than Ayyub AS in his physical health, wealth and family."
- His tongue, his heart and his mind were the only things that were not tested. Thus, he was able to make dhikr, remember Allah etc.
- There are differing opinions on the duration of his affliction; for either 18 years or 7 years.
 - His wife said to him: "O Ayyub, you are the prophet and the messenger of Allah. You have the closest relationship to Allah. Ask Allah to take you out of this harm that you are in!"
 - He replied: "Tell me how long did I enjoy good health and riches? I am ashamed to call on my Lord to remove my hardship, for I have not suffered longer than the years of good health and plenty."
 - Only after 18 years/7 years, he felt comfortable asking Allah to relieve him from his hardship.
- During his illness, they had no money and no income, so his wife became the caretaker. She took up a job to provide for them.
- One day, she had no job and could not find anything to feed her husband. So, she cut her hair and sold it to the wife of a rich man. As a result, she brought back two dishes rather than one that day.
- Upon confessing to her husband of her actions, he expressed his disapproval as this was considered haram. Thus, he swore, "When I'm cured, I will lash you a hundred times."

- Two possible reasons for his actions:
 - Out of rage because what she did was impermissible.
 - This was part of the shariah of Bani Israel.
 - Every shariah has its own penal code system and theirs was if they sold their body parts, the punishment is a hundred lashes.
 - This is the correct opinion; he submitted himself to Allah's shariah.

Ayah 42

- This speaks about how he was cured by Allah after his illness.
- In his weakness, he had to strike the ground with his feet, before Allah caused a spring of water to flow. This action is similar to Hajar stomping her feet on the ground when the spring of zam zam sprouted.
- This shows us that even in a dire state, Allah requires us to make an effort. Our reliance upon Allah must be coupled with efforts based on our resources/capabilities.
- **كض** – Refers to a kick/thud; usually used to kick-start a horse
- Allah gave him shifa through water:
 - Some opined there were two springs which sprouted; one spring of water was to wash himself in and the other, for him to drink from.
 - Others say there was only one source of spring; he bathed and drank from the same water.

Ayah 43

- After this, Allah removed his afflictions and he looked better than he had ever looked; he was given double the beauty, stature etc.
- When his wife returned, she saw him and said, "May Allah bless you! Have you seen Allah's Prophet, the one who is sorely tested? By Allah, I have never seen a man who looks more like him than you, if he were healthy." He said, "I am he." She was initially in disbelief but was finally able to recognize him through his smile.
- Allah gifted him with his family. There are different opinions:
 - All 20 of his children who left, came back to him.
 - All 20 of his children had passed away at this time, but Allah brought them back to life again.
 - Allah gave him the same number of children.

- Allah gave him many more blessings in His mercy as this was due to him asking for Allah's mercy in times of affliction.
- Allah's mercy was in return for his patience, steadfastness, repentance, humility and constant turning to Allah.

Ayah 44

- Ayyub AS was upset about something his wife had done, so he swore an oath that if Allah healed him, he would strike her with one hundred lashes.
- When Allah healed him, He instructed Ayyub AS to gather a bundle of hay, with a hundred stems, and touch her with it. This was to fulfill his oath while recognizing her service, mercy, compassion and kindness to him.
- This was the solution and way out for her in a dire circumstance. Hence, Ayyub AS did not break his vow and at the same time, he did not dismiss her situation.
- Allah praised and commanded Ayyub AS: **إِنَّا وَجَدْنَاهُ صَابِرًا نَعْمَ الْعَبْدُ إِنَّهُ أَوَّابٌ** (Truly, We found him patient. How excellent a servant! Verily, he was ever oft-returning in repentance).
- Nevertheless, this statement could also refer to his wife; she was equally patient. This is referenced to the concept that Allah in the Qur'an uses a masculine noun in the story of Maryam AS while referring to her; because she was a role model for both men and women.
- **نَعْمَ الْعَبْدُ إِنَّهُ أَوَّابٌ** - These two words are being repeated as per the previous prophets. It shows us that Ayyub AS kept turning to Allah out of love not tawbah.
- In order to be this type of servant, it's important to build a prior relationship with Allah. So, when we are tested, negative thoughts don't settle into our minds and our hearts.
- The first two prophets were gifted despite being tested, while Ayyub AS was being tested without being gifted. Thus, his situation is far more relatable to us – to teach us that this is the state of a believer; they remain patient and grateful when tested.
- According to Imam Ghazali, the one who is grateful is better than one who is patient. The patient person considers a hardship to be a hardship but stays quiet, while the grateful person considers a hardship to be a blessing and thanks Allah for it.

- Meaning, a grateful person is better because they have no resentment towards Allah but complete submission to Him despite their challenges.
 - Abu Hurairah reported: The Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said,

الظَّاعِمُ الشَّاكِرُ بِمَنْزِلَةِ الصَّائِمِ الصَّابِرِ

"The one who eats gratefully has the status of one who fasts patiently." (al-Tirmidhi)

- We should stop asking Allah for patience, but rather, ask for ease.
 - Mu`adh bin Jabal narrated that the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) heard a man supplicating, saying:

**اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ تَمَامَ النِّعْمَةِ . فَقَالَ "أَيُّ شَيْءٍ تَمَامُ النِّعْمَةِ" . قَالَ دَعْوَةٌ دَعَوْتُ بِهَا أَرْجُو
بِهَا الْخَيْرَ . قَالَ "فَإِنَّ مِنْ تَمَامِ النِّعْمَةِ دُخُولَ الْجَنَّةِ وَالْفَوْزَ مِنَ النَّارِ" . وَسَمِعَ رَجُلًا وَهُوَ يَقُولُ
يَا ذَا الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ فَقَالَ "فَقِدْ اسْتُحِبِّبَ لَكَ فَسَلْ" . وَسَمِعَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ
رَجُلًا وَهُوَ يَقُولُ اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الصَّبَرَ . فَقَالَ "سَأَلْتَ اللَّهَ الْبَلَاءَ فَسَلْهُ الْعَافِيَةَ" .**

O Allah! Verily, I ask You for the bounty's completion (Allāhumma, innī as'aluka tamāman-) said: "What thing is the bounty's completion?" He said: "A supplication (دُعَةٌ) ni `mah)." So he said: "Indeed, part of the bounty's (دُعَةٌ) that I made, that I hope for good by it." He heard a (دُعَةٌ) completion is the entrance into Paradise, and salvation from the Fire." And he man while he was saying: "O Possessor of Majesty and Honor (Yā Dhal-Jalāli wal-Ikrām)" So heard a man while (دُعَةٌ) said: "You have been responded to, so ask." And the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) he was saying: "O Allah, indeed, I ask You for patience (Allāhumma, innī as'alukaṣ-ṣabr)" He said: "You have asked Allah for trial, so ask him for Al- `Afīyah." (al-Tirmidhi) (دُعَةٌ)