

Calamities and Afflictions: How to Cope?

Summary:

Imam Zayn Al-Abideen^{-asws} said: 'No calamity afflicted Amir Al-Momineen^{-asws} except he^{-asws} prayed during that day a thousand Cycles Salat, and he^{-asws} gave in charity to sixty poor ones, and fasted three months.

And Imam Ali^{-asws} said to his^{-asws} children: 'Whenever you are afflicted with a calamity, then do similar to what (I^{-asws}) do, for I^{-asws} have seen Rasool-Allah^{-saww} doing like that, therefore follow the impacts of your Prophet^{-saww}, and do not oppose him^{-saww}, for Allah^{-azwj} will be Opposed to you. Allah^{-azwj} the Exalted Says: **And the one who is patient and forgives, surely that is from the matters requiring determination [42:43]**'.

Then Zayn Al-Abideen^{-asws} said: 'Thus, I^{-asws} have not ceased to do the deeds of Amir Al-Momineen^{-asws}.¹

Rasool-Allah^{-saww} said: 'One from you who is afflicted with a calamity, let him remember my^{-saww} calamity, for he will never be afflicted with a calamity mightier than it!²

Facing the Calamities:

تَمَّحُجُ الْبَلَاغَةِ، قَالَ ع مَرَارَةُ الدُّنْيَا حَلَاوَةٌ الْآخِرَةِ وَ حَلَاوَةُ الدُّنْيَا مَرَارَةُ الْآخِرَةِ.

(The book) 'Nahj Al Balagah' –

'He^{-asws} (Amir Al-Momineen^{-asws}) said: 'Bitterness of the world is sweetness of the Hereafter, and sweetness of the world is bitterness of the Hereafter''.³

وَ عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ الْوَلِيدِ بِإِسْنَادِهِ قَالَ: لَمَّا أُصِيبَ عَلِيُّ ع بَعَثَنِي الْحَسَنُ إِلَى الْحُسَيْنِ ع وَ هُوَ بِالْمَدَائِنِ فَلَمَّا قَرَأَ الْكِتَابَ قَالَ يَا لَهَا مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ مَا أَعْظَمَهَا مَعَ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ص قَالَ مَنْ أُصِيبَ مِنْكُمْ بِمُصِيبَةٍ فَلْيَذْكُرْ مُصَابِي فَإِنَّهُ لَنْ يُصَابَ بِمُصِيبَةٍ أَعْظَمَ مِنْهَا.

And from Abdullah Bin Al Waleed, by his chain, said,

'When Ali^{-asws} was killed, Al-Hassan^{-asws} sent me to Al-Husayn^{-asws}, and he^{-asws} was at Al-Madain. When he^{-asws} read the letter, he^{-asws} said: 'O the calamity of it! How mighty it is, along with that Rasool-Allah^{-saww} said: 'One from you who is afflicted with a calamity, let him remember my^{-saww} calamity, for he will never be afflicted with a calamity mightier than it!''⁴

وَ قَالَ أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ع مَنْ قَصُرَ عُمُرُهُ كَانَتْ مُصِيبَتُهُ فِي نَفْسِهِ وَ مَنْ طَالَ عُمُرُهُ تَوَاتَرَتْ مَصَائِبُهُ وَ رَأَى فِي نَفْسِهِ وَ أَجْبَائِهِ مَا يَسُوؤُهُ.

¹ Bihar Al-Anwaar V 78 – The Book Cleanliness – Ch 18 H 17 d (Chapters on Funerals)

² Bihar Al-Anwaar V 78 – The Book Cleanliness – Ch 18 H 26 g (Chapters on Funerals)

³ Bihar Al-Anwaar V 78 – The Book Cleanliness – Ch 18 H 28 (Chapters on Funerals)

⁴ Bihar Al-Anwaar V 78 – The Book Cleanliness – Ch 18 H 26 g (Chapters on Funerals)

And Amir Al-Momineen^{-asws} said: 'One whose lifespan is short, his calamities would be within himself, and one whose lifespan is prolonged, his calamities would be recurring, and he would see in himself and his loved ones what would worsen him.'⁵

وَقَالَ زَيْنُ الْعَابِدِينَ ع مَا أَصِيبَ أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ع بِمُصِيبَةٍ إِلَّا صَلَّى فِي ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمِ أَلْفَ رَكْعَةٍ وَ تَصَدَّقَ عَلَى سِتِّينَ مِسْكِينًا وَ صَامَ ثَلَاثَةَ أَيَّامٍ

And Zayn Al-Abideen^{-asws} said: 'No calamity afflicted Amir Al-Momineen^{-asws} except he^{-asws} prayed during that day a thousand Cycles Salat, and he^{-asws} gave in charity to sixty poor ones, and fasted three months'.

وَقَالَ لِأَوْلَادِهِ إِذَا أُصِيبْتُمْ بِمُصِيبَةٍ فَافْعَلُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا أَفْعَلُ فَإِنِّي رَأَيْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ص هَكَذَا يَفْعَلُ فَاتَّبِعُوا أَمْرَ نَبِيِّكُمْ وَ لَا تُخَالِفُوهُ فَيُخَالِفَ اللَّهُ بِكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى يُسْأَلُ وَ لَمْ يَنْ صَبَرَ وَ عَفَرَ فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ

And he^{-asws} said to his^{-asws} children: 'Whenever you are afflicted with a calamity, then do similar to what (I^{-asws}) do, for I^{-asws} have seen Rasool-Allah^{-saww} doing like that, therefore follow the impacts of your Prophet^{-saww}, and do not oppose him^{-saww}, for Allah^{-azwj} will be Opposed to you. Allah^{-azwj} the Exalted Says: **And the one who is patient and forgives, surely that is from the matters requiring determination [42:43]**'.

ثُمَّ قَالَ زَيْنُ الْعَابِدِينَ ع فَمَا زِلْتُ أَعْمَلُ بِعَمَلِ أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ع.

Then Zayn Al-Abideen^{-asws} said: 'Thus, I^{-asws} have not ceased to do the deeds of Amir Al-Momineen^{-asws}'⁶.

وَرُوي أَنَّ مُوسَى ع قَالَ يَا رَبِّ ذَلَّنِي عَلَى عَمَلٍ إِذَا أَنَا عَمَلْتُهُ نَلْتُ بِهِ رِضَاكَ

And it is reported that Musa^{-as} said: 'O Lord^{-azwj}! Point me^{-as} upon a deed, when I^{-as} were to do it, I^{-as} would achieve Your^{-azwj} Satisfaction with it'.

فَأَوْحَى اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ يَا ابْنَ عِمْرَانَ إِنَّ رِضَايَ فِي كُرْهِكَ وَ لَنْ تُطِيقَ ذَلِكَ

Allah^{-azwj} Revealed to him^{-as}: "O son^{-as} of Imran^{-as}! My^{-azwj} Satisfaction is in your^{-as} dislike, and you^{-as} will never (be able to) endure that!"

قَالَ فَخَرَّ مُوسَى ع سَاجِدًا بَاكِئًا فَقَالَ يَا رَبِّ حَصَصْتَنِي بِالْكَلامِ وَ لَمْ تُكَلِّمْ بَشَرًا قَبْلِي وَ لَمْ تَذَلَّنِي عَلَى عَمَلٍ أَنَا لِي بِهِ رِضَاكَ

He (the narrator) said, 'Musa^{-as} fell down in Sajdah, crying. He^{-as} said: 'O Lord^{-azwj}! You^{-azwj} have Particularised me^{-as} with the speech, and You^{-azwj} have not Spoken to a mortal before me^{-as}, and You^{-azwj} did not point upon a deed I^{-as} can achieve Your^{-azwj} Satisfaction with it!'

فَأَوْحَى اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ أَنَّ رِضَايَ فِي رِضَاكَ بِفَضَائِي.

⁵ Bihar Al-Anwaar V 78 – The Book Cleanliness – Ch 18 H 17 b (Chapters on Funerals)

⁶ Bihar Al-Anwaar V 78 – The Book Cleanliness – Ch 18 H 17 d (Chapters on Funerals)

Allah^{-azwj} Revealed to him^{-as}: "My^{-azwj} Satisfaction in your^{-as} being satisfied with My^{-azwj} Decree!"⁷

وَقَالَ ع عَلَى قَبْرِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ص سَاعَةَ ذُفْنِ إِنْ الصَّبْرَ لَجَمِيلٍ إِلَّا عَنكَ وَ إِنْ الْجُرْعَ لَفَيْحٍ إِلَّا عَلَيْكَ وَ إِنْ الْمَصَابَ بِكَ لَجَلِيلٍ وَ إِنَّهُ قَبْلَكَ وَ بَعْدَكَ لَجَلِيلٌ.

And he^{-asws} said at the grave of Rasool-Allah^{-saww} the time he^{-saww} was buried: 'The patience is beautiful except about you^{-saww}, and the alarm is ugly except upon you^{-saww}, and the calamity with you^{-saww} is majestic, and it was little before you^{-saww} and after you^{-saww}'.⁸

20- تَمَجُّجُ الْبَلَاغَةِ، وَ دَعْوَاتُ الرَّوَّانِدِيِّ، قَالَ ع مَنْ عَظَّمَ صِعَاژَ الْمَصَائِبِ ابْتِلَاءَهُ اللَّهُ بِكِبَارِهَا.

(The book) 'Nahj Al Balagah', and 'Dawaat' of Al Rawandy –

'He^{-asws} said: 'One who magnifies the small difficulties, Allah^{-azwj} will Afflict him with its big ones'.⁹

21- كَنْزُ الْكَرَاجِكِيِّ، رُوِيَ عَنِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ص أَنَّهُ قَالَ: الصَّبْرُ سِتْرٌ مِنَ الْكُرُوبِ وَ عَوْنٌ عَلَى الْخُطُوبِ.

(The book) 'Kanz' of Al Karajaky' –

'It is reported from Rasool-Allah^{-saww} having said: 'The patience is a veil (shield) from the sorrows and a support upon the distress'.¹⁰

وَ قَالَ ص الصَّبْرُ صَبْرَانِ صَبْرٌ عِنْدَ الْبَلَاءِ وَ أَفْضَلُ مِنْهُ الصَّبْرُ عِنْدَ الْمَحَارِمِ.

And he^{-saww} said: 'The patience is two (types of) patience – patience upon the affliction, and better than it is the patience from the Prohibitions'.¹¹

وَ قَالَ أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ع مِنْ كُنُوزِ الْإِيمَانِ الصَّبْرُ عَلَى الْمَصَابِ.

And Amir Al-Momineen^{-asws}: 'From the treasures of Eman is the Patience upon the calamities'.¹²

وَ قَالَ ع الصَّبْرُ مِنَ الْإِيمَانِ بِمَنْزِلَةِ الرَّأْسِ مِنَ الْجَسَدِ وَ لَا إِيمَانَ لِمَنْ لَا صَبْرَ لَهُ.

And he^{-asws} said: 'The patience from the Eman is as the status of the head from the body, and there is no Eman for the one having no patience for him'.¹³

وَ قَالَ ع اطْرَحْ عَنكَ الْهُمُومَ بِعَزَائِمِ الصَّبْرِ وَ حُسْنِ الْيَقِينِ.

⁷ Bihar Al-Anwaar V 78 – The Book Cleanliness – Ch 18 H 17 g (Chapters on Funerals)

⁸ Bihar Al-Anwaar V 78 – The Book Cleanliness – Ch 18 H 18 b (Chapters on Funerals)

⁹ Bihar Al-Anwaar V 78 – The Book Cleanliness – Ch 18 H 20 (Chapters on Funerals)

¹⁰ Bihar Al-Anwaar V 78 – The Book Cleanliness – Ch 18 H 21 a (Chapters on Funerals)

¹¹ Bihar Al-Anwaar V 78 – The Book Cleanliness – Ch 18 H 21 b (Chapters on Funerals)

¹² Bihar Al-Anwaar V 78 – The Book Cleanliness – Ch 18 H 21 c (Chapters on Funerals)

¹³ Bihar Al-Anwaar V 78 – The Book Cleanliness – Ch 18 H 21 d (Chapters on Funerals)

And he^{-asws} said: 'Drop the worries away from you by the determined patience and good certainty'.¹⁴

وَقَالَ ع مَنْ صَبَرَ سَاعَةً حُمِدَ سَاعَاتٍ.

And he^{-asws} said: 'One who is patient for an hour, would be praised for hours'.¹⁵

وَقَالَ ع الصَّبْرُ عَلَى ثَلَاثَةِ أَوْجُهٍ صَبْرٌ عَلَى الْمُعْصِيَةِ وَ صَبْرٌ عَلَى الْمُصِيبَةِ وَ صَبْرٌ عَلَى الطَّاعَةِ.

And he^{-asws} said: 'The patience is based upon three aspects – patience upon (from) the disobedience, and patience upon the calamity, and patience upon the obedience'.¹⁶

وَقَالَ ع مَنْ جَعَلَ لَهُ الصَّبْرَ وَالْيَأْمَ لَمْ يَكُنْ يَحْدَثُ مُبَالِيًا.

And he^{-asws} said: 'One who makes the patience a guardian for him, would not care about an unfortunate incident'.¹⁷

وَعَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ قَالَ: كُنْتُ عِنْدَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ص فَقَالَ يَا غُلَامُ أَوْ يَا غُلَيْمُ أَلَا أُعَلِّمُكَ كَلِمَاتٍ يَنْفَعُكَ اللَّهُ بِهِنَّ

And from Ibn Abbas who said,

'I was in the presence of Rasool-Allah^{-saww}. He^{-saww} said: 'O slave!' (or said: 'O boy!') – 'Shall I^{-saww} teach you phrases Allah^{-azwj} will Cause you to benefit by these?'

فَقُلْتُ بَلَى

I said, 'Yes'.

فَقَالَ احْفَظِ اللَّهَ يَحْفَظْكَ احْفَظِ اللَّهَ بَحْدِهِ أَمَامَكَ تَعْرِفْ إِلَى اللَّهِ فِي الرَّحَاءِ يَغْرِفَكَ فِي الشِّدَّةِ إِذَا سَأَلْتَ فَاسْأَلِ اللَّهَ فَإِذَا اسْتَعْنَتْ فَاسْتَعِنْ بِاللَّهِ

He^{-saww} said: 'Guard (yourself for) Allah^{-azwj}, Allah^{-azwj} will Guard you. You will find Him^{-azwj} in front of you. Familiarise to Allah^{-azwj} during the prosperity, He^{-azwj} will Familiarise with you during the adversity. When you ask, then ask Allah^{-azwj}. When you seek assistance, seek Assistance with Allah^{-azwj}.

وَ اعْلَمْ أَنَّ فِي الصَّبْرِ عَلَى مَا نَكْرَهُ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا وَ أَنَّ النَّصْرَ مَعَ الصَّبْرِ وَ أَنَّ الْفَرْجَ مَعَ الْكُرْبِ وَ أَنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا.

And know that in the patience upon what we dislike, there is a lot of good, and the Help is with the patience, and the relief is with the distress, and with the difficulty, there is ease'.¹⁸

¹⁴ Bihar Al-Anwaar V 78 – The Book Cleanliness – Ch 18 H 21 e (Chapters on Funerals)

¹⁵ Bihar Al-Anwaar V 78 – The Book Cleanliness – Ch 18 H 21 f (Chapters on Funerals)

¹⁶ Bihar Al-Anwaar V 78 – The Book Cleanliness – Ch 18 H 21 g (Chapters on Funerals)

¹⁷ Bihar Al-Anwaar V 78 – The Book Cleanliness – Ch 18 H 21 h (Chapters on Funerals)

¹⁸ Bihar Al-Anwaar V 78 – The Book Cleanliness – Ch 18 H 22 / 17 (Chapters on Funerals)

المُسَكِّينُ عَنْ رُبْعِي بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَنِ الصَّادِقِ ع قَالَ: إِنَّ الصَّبْرَ وَالْبَلَاءَ يَسْتَبِقَانِ إِلَى الْمُؤْمِنِ فَيَأْتِيهِ الْبَلَاءُ وَهُوَ صَبُورٌ وَإِنَّ الْجُرْعَ وَالْبَلَاءَ يَسْتَبِقَانِ إِلَى الْكَافِرِ فَيَأْتِيهِ الْبَلَاءُ وَهُوَ جُرُوعٌ.

(The book) 'Al Musakkin' – from Rabie Bin Abdullah,

'From Al-Sadiq^{asws} having said: 'The patience and the affliction run to the Momin. The afflictions come to him, and he is patient; and the panic and the affliction run to the Kafir and he flees, and calamity comes upon him and he panics'.¹⁹

وَعَنِ النَّبِيِّ ص أَنَّهُ قَالَ فِي مَرَضِ مَوْتِهِ أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّمَا عَبْدٌ مِنْ أُمَّتِي أُصِيبَ بِمُصِيبَةٍ مِنْ بَعْدِي فَلْيَتَعَزَّ بِمُصِيبَتِهِ بِي عَنِ الْمُصِيبَةِ الَّتِي تُصِيبُهُ بَعْدِي فَإِنَّ أَحَدًا مِنْ أُمَّتِي لَنْ يُصَابَ بِمُصِيبَةٍ بَعْدِي أَشَدَّ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ مُصِيبَتِي.

And from the Prophet^{saww} having said during his^{saww} fatal illness: 'O you people! A servant from my^{saww} community is afflicted with a calamity from after me^{saww}, let him be consoled with his calamity with (having lost) me^{saww}, from the calamity which has afflicted him with others, for no one from my^{saww} community will ever be afflicted with a calamity (bereavement) after me^{saww}, severer upon him that my^{saww} calamity (bereavement).²⁰

¹⁹ Bihar Al-Anwaar V 78 – The Book Cleanliness – Ch 18 H 25 a (Chapters on Funerals)

²⁰ Bihar Al-Anwaar V 78 – The Book Cleanliness – Ch 18 H 26 f (Chapters on Funerals)