



IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE BENEFICIENT THE MERCIFUL

Patience and Sacrifice - Necessities for Spiritual Growth!

for

Nigerian Canadian Muslims Congregation, Calgary

A Presentation

By

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Agenda

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Introduction

In the name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful. All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of all the worlds. May Allah bestow His peace and blessings upon His Servant and Messenger Muhammad (S.A.W) and upon all his family and Companions. Ameen

I WANT YOU TO IMAGINE SOMETHING, PLEASE!



- ▶ Imagine a husband telling his wife to get dressed because they're going out.
- ▶ She obeys and follows.
- ▶ They get in the car.
- ▶ He drives far away... until they reach the middle of literally nowhere; a completely deserted area with absolutely nothing around.
- ▶ The husband then asks his wife to step out of the car with their baby.
- ▶ She asks him why.
- ▶ He doesn't respond.
- ▶ She gets out.



- ▶ He takes off!
- ▶ She runs after him with the baby asking why he is doing that. He tells her that he is fulfilling a religious duty; God inspired him to do that!
- ▶ Let's allow this to sink in for a moment...
- ▶ This is not a hypothetical scenario, a bed time story or a legend.



- ▶ This is– more or less– what happened to our forefather, Prophet Ibrahim (peace and blessings upon him) and his wife Hajar (may Allah be pleased with her).



- ▶ We all know the story to a certain extent. But maybe we do not stop to contemplate on how this is relevant to us today; how it's relevant to dealing with our own problems and our own hardships.
- ▶ This story actually responds to some major spiritual, emotional, psychological, and even existential quests of many people.



- ▶ “Why me? Why is this happening to me? What did I do? Why do believers have to suffer while those who’re less religious have everything they want? What’s the point? Where is the wisdom? Where is the mercy?”



- ▶ So many questions go through people's minds when they're facing a difficulty.
- ▶ But Allah doesn't leave our quests unanswered. He sent us messages, He sent us Messengers and He sent us those who go through what we go through (or even worse) so that we learn, grow, remain steadfast and keep moving gracefully towards Him until we meet Him!



- ▶ “There was certainly in their stories a lesson for those of understanding. Never was the Qur’an a narration invented, but a confirmation of what was before it and a detailed explanation of all things and guidance and mercy for a people who believe.” (Qur’an 12:111)



- ▶ Now let's go back to Hajar's story and slowly think about a few points.
- ▶ Prophet Ibrahim took Hajar and their baby to a valley that was completely deserted. He was inspired to take them there, then leave. As he was leaving, Hajar went after him and kept asking why he is doing that. When he didn't respond, she got the message! She asked him, "Has Allah commanded you to do so?" He said: "Yes."
- ▶ She said: "Then He will not neglect us." [Al Bukhari]
- ▶ This is such a heavy statement.... "He will not neglect us"!



- ▶ This woman doesn't have anywhere to go. Her husband –who is supposed to take care of her– left her. She doesn't have enough food or drink. Her child will soon start crying desperately, beyond what any mother could bear. She doesn't know what will happen to them or how this will be resolved or if they'll remain in that place indefinitely...



- ▶ Truth be told, many people in her place would have started doubting Allah Himself. They would have said: “why would this hardship be placed on us; the good believers? The disbelievers are comfortable in their homes, and we’re the ones suffering! Why is this happening? How is this fair? Where is the mercy?”
- ▶ But Hajar didn’t do that. She asked whether what happened was the decree of Allah, because if it was, then there is definitely goodness in there. Why? Because Allah’s Name is The Most Merciful and whatever He does is essentially merciful even if it doesn’t look like it to us immediately. His Name is The All-Wise and whatever He does has wisdom even if we fail to see that immediately.



- ▶ This is the message in this ayah: “...and despair not of relief from Allah. Indeed, no one despairs of relief from Allah except the disbelieving people.” (Qur’an 12: 87)



- ▶ Why is giving up linked to disbelief? Because giving up and losing hope essentially mean we don't truly know or believe in Allah's Names and Attributes. We don't believe that He is The Provider, The Protector, The All-Wise, The Source of Peace, The Giver of Peace, Relief and Victory....
- ▶ That's an essential point to remember as soon as one is hit with a hardship...Remembering to trust Allah, have good expectations of Him, knowing that His relief will definitely come, even if it seems impossible at the moment.



- ▶ The second lesson to take heed of is in what happened to Hajar next.
- ▶ You know, it is easy to utter words of belief, but acting upon them is something else.
- ▶ When Hajar was faced with this seemingly inexplicable hardship, she immediately said “Allah will not neglect us.”
- ▶ But did the hardship immediately go away when she said that? Not at all.



- ▶ She “talked the talk”, but she literally had to “walk the walk.”
- ▶ The food and drink she had eventually ran out and her baby started crying desperately. She could have started doubting the relief of Allah then. But she didn’t.



- ▶ She started taking the means, walking to a mountain hoping to find anything or anyone there. But there was nothing. She could have doubted the relief of Allah then. But she didn't.
- ▶ She walked again to the other mountain seeking help, seeking anything to save her and her child. But there was nothing. And she really could have doubted Allah then. But she didn't.



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- ▶ She went back again, and again, and again between those two mountains.... And she could have given up completely at any moment, she could have fallen in despair and anger and rebellion... But she didn't!



- ▶ Until...
- ▶ “She saw an angel at the place of Zamzam, digging the earth with his heel (wing), till water flowed out from that place. She started to make something like of a basin around it, using her hands in this way and began to fill her water-skin with water with her hands, and the water was flowing out until she had scooped some of it....
- ▶ “Then she drank (water) and suckled her child. The angel said to her: ‘Do not be afraid of being neglected, for this is the site on which the House of Allah will be built by this boy and his father, and Allah will never let neglected His people.’ [Al Bukhari]



- ▶ Remember those words:
- ▶ “Do not be afraid of being neglected...Allah will never neglect His people!”
- ▶ This woman faced her difficulty saying “Allah will not neglect us”; she experienced physical struggle, emotional struggle, psychological, spiritual and even existential struggle... She could have doubted the words of faith she uttered at the beginning. But she remained steadfast. The relief eventually came with an angel repeating her same words “Allah will never neglect His people”.
- ▶ This is a live embodiment of this hadith



- ▶ The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, “Allah the Exalted says: ‘I am as my slave expects me to be” [Al-Bukhari and Muslim].
- ▶ She had good expectations of Allah. Allah didn’t only meet her expectations, but He has given her beyond what she would have imagined or prayed for.



- ▶ The place that was deserted became the honorable location of the House of Allah Himself where millions upon millions of people will gravitate towards year after year until the end of time.
- ▶ The little water she was looking for, turned out to be a well that brought life to the entire area; a purified, blessed source of water that doesn't run out until the end of time.



- ▶ The moments of faith, patience and hard work she experienced became a fundamental part of a faith followed by billions of people.
- ▶ She initiated the ritual of sa'ee (walking) between Safa and Marwa, without which our Hajj and Umrah won't be complete. A pillar of Islam won't be complete without following this woman. This is not merely in the physical sense of walking between Safa and Marwa, but also in the spiritual sense of trusting Allah in the severest of moments, continuing to pursue Him and have hope in Him despite everything that we may be facing...



- ▶ Many of us go to Hajj and Umrah, perform those acts but hardly reflect on the meaning; we hardly reflect on how this is relevant to us, our own hardships, trials and tribulations.
- ▶ But THIS is a foundation of our deen. Faith is not just a word. It is not a fleeting moment of spiritual excitement. Faith is much deeper, much heavier and much more worthwhile than anything we can experience in this life. This is what we were created for.



- ▶ It is essential to remember the message: We will continue to trust Allah, pursue Him and remain on His path no matter how difficult/sad/dull/gloomy/impossible our situations may seem... we will continue to seek Allah.

And He will always support His believers!

- ▶ “Indeed, We will support Our messengers and those who believe during the life of this world and on the Day when the witnesses will stand” (Qur’an 40: 51)



- ▶ Those who are patient and follow the path of the Prophets that Allah taught us, they will surely learn the wisdom, get rewarded beyond their expectations and create an incomparably deep bond with their Creator that they will take with them for eternity in Jannah when they're near Him—because that's the place of those who are truly, genuinely and wholeheartedly faithful!



- ▶ “Unquestionably, [for] the allies of Allah there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve. Those who believed and were fearing of Allah. For them are good tidings in the worldly life and in the Hereafter. No change is there in the words of Allah. That is what the great attainment is” (Qur’an 10: 62–64)



- ▶ You know, we send peace and blessings upon Prophet Ibrahim and the family of Prophet Ibrahim every day in tashahud in every prayer... But it is essential to remember who we're sending prayers to, and why Allah made their remembrance part of our daily worship and connection with Him...



Few lessons Hajar taught us about dealing with hardships?

- ▶ 1– Good perception of Allah. Good perception of Allah. Good perception of Allah!
- ▶ 2– True faith through words AND action.
- ▶ 3– Patience. It might take time. It might take effort. But it will get resolved...
- ▶ 4– Working hard and taking the means are important acts to keep us going. The actual solution might come from where we never expected, and it might be bigger and better than what we imagined or prayed for.



- ▶ “For indeed, with hardship [will be] ease. Indeed, with hardship [will be] ease.” (Qur’an 94: 5–6)
- ▶ This is just food for thought...
- ▶ ‘O Allah, send prayers upon Muhammad and upon the family of Muhammad, as You sent prayers upon Ibrahim and the family of Ibrahim, You are indeed Worthy of Praise, Full of Glory. O Allah, bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad as You blessed Ibrahim and the family of Ibrahim, You are indeed Worthy of Praise, Full of Glory’.

Conclusion



Glory be to Allah (A.W.J), the most honorable beyond any human comprehension, peace be on the apostle and thanks be Allah (A.W.J) the Lord of the worlds.



ASSALAM ALAYKUM



QUESTIONS!