

Imaan is Patience and Gratitude

By Shaykh ul-Islaam Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah



Translated by
Abbas Abu Yahya



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**Taken from the book:
Tools for the Patient & Provisions for the Thankful**

By

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All praise belongs to Allaah, Lord of all the worlds. May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, upon his family, his Companions and all those who follow his guidance until the Day of Judgment.

Imaan is of two halves; half is patience (*Sabr*) and half is being thankful (*Shukr*).

More than one from amongst the *Salaf* said: 'Patience is half of *Imaan*.'

Abdullaah bin Masood – *radhi Allaahu 'anhu* – said: "*Imaan* is of two halves: half is patience and half is gratitude."

This is why Allaah – *Subhanahu* – combines patience and being thankful in His saying: <<*Truly, in this there are signs for every patient, thankful person.*>>¹

As Allaah has mentioned in the verses of soorah Ha Mim 'Ain Seen Qaaf 33, and soorah Saba 19, and in soorah Luqman 31. Indeed there are considerations which have been mentioned for these classifications of patience and gratitude:

The First Consideration:

That *Imaan* is a definition for all sayings, actions and intentions. And this is broken down into two divisions – performing righteous actions and leaving prohibitions.

So performing an action is obedience to Allaah and that is the reality of *Shukr*. Leaving a prohibition is being patient in keeping away from sins, and all of the *Deen* is about these two aspects: doing that what you have been commanded to do, and leaving what you have been commanded to leave.

The Second Consideration:

That *Imaan* is built upon two pillars: *Yaqeen* (certainty), and *Sabr* (patience). They are two pillars that are mentioned in His *Ta'ala*'s saying:

<<*And We made from among them (Children of Israel), leaders, giving guidance under Our Command, when they were patient and used to believe with certainty in Our Ayaat*>>²

So with *Yaqeen*, the reality of commands and prohibitions is known, and the reality of reward and punishment is also known. With patience commands are carried out, and patience also stops a person from doing that which he has been prohibited from. He will not achieve true faith in fulfilling commands and keeping away from prohibitions, knowing these commands and prohibitions are from Allaah, nor will he achieve true faith of reward and punishment, except with *Yaqeen* (certainty).

It is not possible for the slave to remain steadfast upon carrying out commands, and stopping oneself from prohibitions except with patience, therefore patience becomes half of *Imaan*, and the second half of *Imaan* is being thankful, by carrying out what he has been commanded with, and leaving that which he has been prohibited from.

¹ Ibrahim 14:5

² Soorat as-Sajdah 24

The Third Consideration:

Imaan is sayings and actions. Sayings of the heart, and sayings of the tongue. Actions of the heart, and actions of the limbs.

The explanation of this is: whoever knows Allaah with his heart, and does not affirm it with his tongue then he cannot be a believer.

As Allaah said concerning the people of Pharaoh:

<< And they belied the Ayaat, wrongfully and arrogantly, though they themselves were convinced thereof [i.e. those (Ayaat) are from Allaah] >>³

And like wise, Allaah said concerning the people of 'Aad and the people of Saalih :

<<And 'Aad and Thamûd (people)! And indeed (their destruction) is clearly apparent to you from their (ruined) dwellings. Shaytan made their deeds fair seeming to them, and turned them away from the Right Path, though they were intelligent. >>⁴

And Musa said to Pharaoh:

<<Musa said: "Verily, you know that these signs have been sent down by none but the Lord of the heavens and the earth as clear evidences.>>⁵

So these people achieved the sayings of the heart: which are *al-Ma'rifah* (knowing) and *'ilm* (knowledge), but despite this they were not regarded as believers. Also, the person who says with his tongue that which is not in his heart is not regarded as a believer, but rather he is regarded as being from the hypocrites.

Also, the one who knows with his heart and affirms it with his tongue is not regarded as a believer with just that, until he performs actions of the heart from love and hate, friendship and hostility; so he loves for Allaah and His Messenger, and he has loyalty to the *Aawliyah* (friends) of Allaah and he shows enmity to the enemies of Allaah, and he submits his heart to Allaah Alone. Submitting oneself to following His Messenger and obedience to Him (Allaah), and adhering to His *Shari'ah* externally and internally, and if he does this, it is not sufficient for him to have complete *Imaan* until he does that what he has been commanded with.

So these four *Arkaan* (pillars) are the *Arkaan* of *Imaan* upon which *Imaan* is built, and it is: going back to knowledge and action, and abstaining from that which is prohibited, which is also regarded as action. Both knowledge and action cannot be achieved except with patience, so *Imaan* becomes two halves: one of which is patience, and the other which is the result of this patience, is knowledge and action.

³ Sooratul Naml 14

⁴ Sooratul 'Ankaboot 38

⁵ Sooratul Israa' 102

The Fourth Consideration:

The soul has two forces: a driving force, and a restraining force, and the soul is always going back and forth between the rules of these two forces; driven towards that which it loves, and abstaining from that which it dislikes. The whole of the *Deen* is based upon, motivating oneself and abstaining. Motivation towards obedience, and abstention from sinning against Allaah. It is not possible to achieve any of these except by patience.

The Fifth Consideration:

The whole of the *Deen* is Hope and Fear, so the believer is one who has hope and fear. Allaah *Ta'ala* said: << *Verily, they used to hasten on to do good deeds, and they used to call on us in hope and in fear*>>⁶

And in the supplication at the time of going to sleep, which Bukhari narrated in his '*Saheeh*': 'O Allaah, indeed I have submitted my self to You, and directed my face towards You, and entrusted my matters to You.'

So you will never find a believer except that he is one who has hope and fear. Hope and fear are not established except on the stalk of patience, so fear encourages him to be patient and hope steers him towards being thankful.

The Sixth Consideration:

That everything that a slave is exposed to in this world, does not exclude that which will benefit him in this world and in the Hereafter, or that which will harm him in this world and in the Hereafter, or that which will benefit him in one of these two places, and harm him in the other. The noblest types of actions that a person performs are those that benefit him in the Hereafter, and he leaves the other world and leaves that which will harm him in it, and this is the reality of *Imaan*. Hence the action that benefits him is *Shukr* (thankfulness), and leaving that which harms him is patience.

The Seventh Consideration:

That a slave cannot separate himself from an action that he performs, nor a prohibition that he leaves, and destiny overtakes him. He has an obligation of three things, patience and thankfulness. So fulfilling that which you have been commanded to do is *Shukr* (thankfulness) and leaving prohibitions and being patient with your destiny, is patience.

The Eighth Consideration:

Indeed the slave consists of two aspects which call him: an invitation that calls him to the *Duniya* and its worldly desires and delights. And an invitation that calls him to Allaah and the Hereafter, and that which has been prepared in it for the *Aawliyah* of Allaah from amongst its everlasting blessings.

So the rebel of worldly passions and desires is *Sabr*, and that which responds to Allaah and the Hereafter is *Shukr*.

⁶ Sooratul Anbiyaa' 90

The Ninth Consideration:

The *Deen* revolves around two fundamental principles: determination and perseverance. These are two principles which are mentioned in the hadeeth which has been narrated by Ahmad and an-Nisae on the authority of the Prophet – *sallAllaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam* - “O Allaah verily I ask of You perseverance in my affairs, and determination in conduct.”⁷

The foundation of *Shukr* is the correctness of resolve, and the foundation of *Sabr* is the force of perseverance, so when a slave is supported with determination and perseverance, then he has indeed been supported with assistance and capability.

The Tenth Consideration:

Indeed the *Deen* is built upon two foundations: Truth and Patience, and both are mentioned in the saying of Allaah *Ta‘ala*:

*<< And they advise one another to the truth, and recommend one another with patience. >>*⁸

So what is required of the slave is to do actions truthfully within himself, and to implement them amongst the people.

And this is the reality of *Shukr*, which is not possible for the slave unless he is patient upon it, and in doing that *Sabr* becomes half of *Imaan*.

And Allaah - *Subhanahu Ta‘ala* - Knows Best.

All Praise belongs to Allaah, may His peace and blessings be upon our final Prophet Muhammad, his family, his companions and all those who follow his guidance.

⁷ As-Saheehah 3228 – Shaykh Albaani

⁸ Sooratul Asr 3