



## Synopsis of Friday Sermon

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IONA  
REPENTANCE  
REVITALIZATION OF FAITH  
RENEWAL OF COVENANT

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

### Synopsis of the Friday Sermon delivered by Ameer Mustapha Elturk on June 29, 2012 The Qur'anic Concept of Virtue (Part 5)

Today's khutba is the fifth and concluding one in the series of khutbas that have focused on the discussion of *ayat al-Birr*. As we know, this *ayah* combines and enumerates beliefs and acts of righteousness and obedience of real virtuous and righteous believers. The topic under discussion today is about another quality, which righteous believers possess, and that is their patience and endurance in times of calamities, hardships, adversities, conflicts and dangers. *Ayat al-Birr* describes them as those “*who are steadfast in misfortune, adversity, and times of conflict (and war)*” (*al-Baqarah, 2:177*).

Incidentally, let us remind ourselves that the fourth and last condition of success and salvation mentioned in Surat al-‘Asr is supporting each other with patience (*sabr*). “*(I swear) by the time that man is surely in a state of loss, except for those who believe, do good deeds, support one another with the truth, and support one another with patience and perseverance*” (*al-‘Asr, 103:1-3*).

Literally, the Arabic word *sabr* means to hold or to tie. According to the Qur'an and the Sunnah, the term *sabr* refers to the effort made to control and defend one's slippery self against what is temperamentally unpleasing. *Sabr*, therefore, means and includes patience, perseverance, endurance, fortitude, forbearance, and self-control.

Scholars have divided patience into three categories: (1) patience in obeying Allah (SWT) (*sabr 'ala al-ta'a*), (2) patience in abstaining from the forbidden (*sabr 'an al-ma'siyah*), and patience in the face of adversity (*sabr 'ala al-ibtala*). Islam provides a powerful psychological leverage in the form of patience to deal with adversities. Patience, therefore, has to be adopted by the believers as a way of life.

*Sabr 'ala al-ta'a* is the patience and endurance required to face the possible hardships of performing the various modes of worship like praying (*salah*) and fasting (*siyam*) because of changes of climatic conditions, changes in prayer timings, lack of amenities and facilities, fasting for long hours, cutting on sleep and so on. The obligatory rituals of worship have to be carried out patiently and persistently, no matter how difficult they may apparently appear to be.

*Sabr 'an al-ma'siyah* means to control oneself by refraining from anything that is unlawful (*haram*), despite the craving one may have for it. A constant inward struggle is required to keep oneself away from committing a sin.

*Sabr 'ala al-ibtala* means exercising patience in face of hardships and adversities. Bearing afflictions, trials, and tribulations with patience, perseverance, and steadfastness are also among the essential parts of real virtue and piety. We are all subjected to various tests in this life. “*We shall certainly test you with fear and hunger, and loss of property, lives, and crops. And give good news [O Prophet] to those who are steadfast*” (*al-*

*Baqarah, 2:155*). Qualities of fortitude and forbearance are required while facing adversities such as fear, hardship of hunger, loss of life, loss of wealth, situations of conflicts, and so on. Patience is required in each one of these situations. Believers are asked to seek Allah's help through patience and prayers. "O you who believe, seek help through patience and prayer, for God is with the patient" (*al-Baqarah, 2:153*). Such believers are the ones who say that they belong to God and to Him they will return. They are the ones who are blessed, who qualify for Allah's mercy, and who are guided. "The ones who, when afflicted with adversity, they Say: "We are to God and to Him we will return. Those are the people who will have blessings and mercy from their Lord; they are the ones who are guided." (*al-Baqarah, 2:156-157*). The true righteous believers also believe, understand, and rely on the divine comforting words, "So truly where there is hardship there is also ease; truly where there is hardship there is also ease" (*al-Inshirah, 94:5-6*).

Patience and restraint are especially required while facing oppression, repression, and injustices that may even culminate in extreme forms of physical and mental torture. This is categorized as *sabr 'ala al-iza'*. Our beloved Prophet (SAW) himself is a shining example of patience. He displayed utmost patience and perseverance in the face of countless adversities that he encountered during his arduous prophetic mission. The Prophet (SAW) while being a model of patience also inculcated this noble quality in his companions.

The noble companions of the Prophet (SAW) were persecuted, both verbally and physically, for declaring and preaching the truth of *tawhid*. Their intense and deep rooted faith (*iman*) made them withstand all forms of persecution, hardship and torture meted out to them by the arch enemies of Islam including Abu Jahal and the Prophet's own uncle Abu Lahab. Bilal, Mus'ab ibn Umair, Ammar, and Yasir (RAA) among other companions of the Prophet (SAW) were brutally tortured and some of them were actually slaughtered. Sumaiyah (RA), Ammar's mother, was killed by Abu Jahl with his spear. Thus she became the first woman to be martyred in the history of Islam. Yasir, the father of Ammar, died because of repeated torture. The Prophet (SAW) would pass by them and say, "Keep patience O family of Yassir, for paradise is your destination." The noble Prophet himself was subjected to verbal abuse and constant harassment and many intrigues and murderous plots were hatched against him.

The Prophet's comforting words exhorting his companions to have patience and fortitude in the face of such trials and tribulations had a healing effect on their wounds. They paid heed to the Prophet's words and followed the divine command, "O you who believe, be steadfast, vie in patience with one another; strengthen each other; and always be mindful of God, so that you may prosper" (*Aal 'Imran, 3:200*). Thus the companions of the Prophet (SAW) were successful because they fulfilled the prerequisite and criterion of success outlined in Surat al-'Asr. They had intense faith, the inevitable result of which was doing good deeds. They stood up for the truth, and in doing so, they were persecuted. They endured all persecution with utmost resignation while enjoining one another with patience and perseverance.

In contemporary times, Muslims are being subjected to all kinds of racial profiling, scrutiny, and entrapment. They are being harassed at airports and borders, and at times, even jailed and tortured. Reportedly, after 9-11, the Federal agencies have interrogated about 700 thousand Muslims, but have not found any of them to be even remotely connected to the events leading to 9-11. As a consequence of the West's conflict with Islam and Muslims, Muslims are being subjected to physical and psychological torture, and this calls for a display of exemplary patience on their part. On the other hand, Muslims cannot also remain silent and passive. They have to struggle to change the conditions by making an effort to bring about a just order. They need to stand up against anti-sharia and anti-Islamic voices and movements. Struggle (*jihad*) and patience (*sabr*) go hand in hand. We are told to do *jihad bil-Qur'an*. "So do not give in to the disbelievers: strive hard against them with this Qur'an" (*al-Furqan, 25:52*). We are also reminded not to be complacent but rather struggle in Allah's cause while remaining steadfast. "Did you think you would enter the Garden without God first proving which of you would struggle for His cause and remain steadfast?" (*Aal 'Imran, 3:142*).

After elaborating what real virtue is, *Ayat al-Birr* concludes by highlighting the principal quality of the people possessing real virtue, righteousness, and piety. *“Those are the people who are true. They are the people who have taqwa.”*

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