



NEW MUSLIM
ACADEMY

Because God Loves You

How to Turn Pain into Hope



“Why me?”

When it hurts so bad, it can feel like punishment...

...like God's chosen to afflict us because of something we've done or haven't done.

And that leads us down a dangerous cycle of negativity and detachment from our Most Merciful, Most Loving God.

The truth is:

nobody loves you more than the One Who created you.

And the difficulty you're in is only a testament to that.

Here's how.



A Temporary World

Don't overthink the future. What you can't see ahead, God has already planned. Trust that what's ahead is not only good, but better.

There were times before this in your life, when things were very hard, then God brought you out of that and gave you a time of happiness.

There were things that you went through that changed you for the better, taught you something...purified you. When the test had accomplished that, God ended it.

"You may dislike something although it is good for you, or like something although it is bad for you: God knows and you do not." (2:216)

It's about trust in God. God has made everything temporary. Hard times and good times: life is in a constant state of motion. Sometimes we have to wade through the mud to get to the other side.

"So truly where there is hardship, there is also ease." (94:5)

Life is just a test. Sometimes things are hard, but you will find that hard times are followed by times of good. Wait for it. The help of God is coming.



God Tests Whom He Loves

The Messenger of God said, “If God intends good for someone, then he afflicts him with trials.”

“The most severely tested people are the prophets, then the next best, then the next best. A man will be tested in accordance with his level of commitment to God.”

Contrary to popular belief, God tests those He loves the most! Consider the lives of the Messengers of God: they were tested in every aspect of life.

The Messenger Muhammad was tested in every way possible throughout his whole life. He lost both his parents when he was just a child. He lost his next guardian, his grandfather, at the age of 8.

He grew up in poverty, started working in his early years to help his uncle, and as a shepherd he worked long hours for little pay.

He married his dear wife Khadeejah and had ease and peace with her for a time, but she also died, leaving him a widower with 4 daughters (his 2 sons had previously died as babies).



It might seem like God didn't love him, but we know that God was preparing him to be brave and reliant on God. If Messenger Muhammad hadn't gone through this kind of loss and hardship, he wouldn't have been ready to carry the banner of prophethood!

“Your Lord has not forsaken you, nor does He hate you, and the future will be better for you than the past; your Lord is sure to give you so much that you will be well satisfied.”
(93:3-5)

And the Messenger Job, what an example of gratefulness he was! He had it all: wealth, a loving wife, and large family, a fit and strong body...then God tested him by taking all of it away.

His wife stayed behind out of pity. She asked him one time, ‘Why don't you ask your Lord for relief?’, and he told her he had been given decades of great living, and was tested only for a little while. He felt shy to ask God to return even one of his blessings so soon after having enjoyed them.

That man was so grateful and consistent in his worship of God that the devil gave up on him!

It's a really backwards way of looking at tests when you think God doesn't love you when you are tested. It is the opposite!



In the Presence of God

“You who believe, seek help through steadfastness and prayer, for God is with the steadfast.” (2: 153)

What happens when you offer your ritual devotion? Do you come away from it relieved, and feeling at peace? Has it actually been a meeting with God for you?

If not, then you can make it like that. The above phrase from the Quran tells us to pray for help. When we want the help of God, we must ask for it and He will help us.

When you pray to God, whether it is supplication only or in the ritual devotion, pour your heart out to God. Make a connection. Make it count.

“...Truly it is in the remembrance of God that hearts find peace.” (13:28)

We’ve only got 5 short times a day to establish that connection, to seek that help from God. Our hearts will be at rest, and God tells us that He will be with us.

And that’s the best place to be.



A Purification Process

The Arabic word for 'test' is fitnah. This word is used in the Quran a lot of times to describe the challenges that are placed in front of us. But is that all it means?

This word is also used for the process of refining precious metals. What does that have to do with tests? One word: purification.

“Do people think they will be left alone after saying ‘We believe’ without being put to the test?” (29: 2)

Precious metals are purified through process of high heat and pressure which results in an amazing transformation.

Tested = purified.

Similarly, if you wish to remove dirt and dust from a rug, one way is to forcefully shake the rug. This is how tests raise our standard, make us stronger and purified.

In process of purification, we are rewarded for every big and small harm that we suffer:

The Messenger said, "No fatigue, nor disease, nor sorrow, nor sadness, nor hurt, nor distress befalls a Muslim, even if it were the prick he receives from a thorn, but that Allah expiates some of his sins for that."



The Journey of a Butterfly

Consider the journey of a butterfly. They don't come out of their eggs as beautiful flying creatures. They start as caterpillars, crawling around in the dirt.

Just like our tests in this life, the caterpillar moves through what it needs to do. It attaches itself to the underside of a leaf, covers itself up, and lives in darkness for a time.

And waits.

Does the caterpillar know why it's doing that? Does it think to itself, 'I'm just wasting my time. Why do I have to go through this?'

It's funny to think that a caterpillar would be miserable and hopeless in there, because we know how important that process is. It waits in there, and the process of metamorphosis transforms, and improves it.

When the butterfly comes out of its cocoon, and stretches its wings, it was all worth it in the end. That butterfly can fly places the caterpillar could never have imagined.

If God brings us to a test, He will bring us through it. We need to trust that the test will bring a welcomed change for the better.



Out of the Depths

When you're in the light, you may forget about the darkness. But you remember what it's like in the dark.

Darkness makes you appreciate light.

You can not appreciate the light if you never know darkness.

"He is Who sends blessings on you, as do His angels, that He may bring you out of the depths of Darkness into Light: and He is Full of Mercy to the Believers" (33:43).

It does not taint you having been in darkness; it makes you more aware of the falling back into it.

It makes you grateful that you're in the light.

Summary:

It's all good. For the believer.

“Amazing is the affair of the believer, verily all of his affair is good and this is not for no one except the believer. If something of good/happiness befalls him he is grateful and that is good for him. If something of harm befalls him he is patient and that is good for him” - Messenger Muhammad.

In the end, if we worship God, praise Him and ask for His help whether we are going through a hard time or a great time, we are blessed.

Being tested means God loves you and wants to purify you! And the struggle of the journey is rewarded beyond imagination.

Have hope in God's plan, and keep working to improve yourself.

If we relax and take a look around us, we can see the mercies and blessings of God all around us. We can remind ourselves that we have not been left alone.

“Truly, God's help is near.” (2:214)