12380 - Belief in Al-Qada wal Qadar (Divine will and decree)

the question

What is the status of sabr (patience) in Islam? What should the Muslim bear with patience?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Belief in Al-Qada wal Qadar (Divine will and decree) is one of the pillars of faith. The Muslim's faith is not complete unless he knows that whatever befalls him could not have missed him, and whatever misses him could not have befallen him. Everything is subject to the will and decree of Allah, as Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

"Verily, We have created all things with Qadar (Divine Preordainments of all things before their creation as written in the Book of Decrees Al Lawh Al Mahfooz). [Al-Qamar 54:49]

The position of patience in relation to faith is like that of the head in relation to the body. Patience is a noble attribute with good consequences. Those who are patient will have an unlimited reward, as Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

"Only those who are patient shall receive their reward in full, without reckoning" [Al-Zumar 39:10]

All the disasters and tribulations that happen on earth, or happen to the individual, or to his wealth or family, etc., were known to Allah before they happened, He has written them in al-Lawh al-Mahfooz (the Preserved Tablet) as He says (interpretation of the meaning):

"No calamity befalls on the earth or in yourselves but it is inscribed in the Book of Decrees (Al Lawh Al Mahfooz) before We bring it into existence. Verily, that is easy for Allah" [Al-Hadeed 57:22]

No matter what disasters befall a person, it is good for him, whether he knows that or not, because Allah does not decree anything but it is good, as He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Say: ‘Nothing shall ever happen to us except what Allah has ordained for us. He is our Mawlaa (Lord, Helper and Protector).’ And in Allah let the believers put their trust”[Al-Tawbah 9:51]

Every disaster that happens, happens by Allah’s leave. If He had not willed it, it would not have happened, but Allah permitted it to happen and decreed it, and so it happened. Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“No calamity befalls, but by the Leave [i.e. Decision and Qadar (Divine Preordainments)] of Allah, and whosoever believes in Allah, He guides his heart [to the true Faith with certainty, i.e. what has befallen him was already written for him by Allah from the Qadar (Divine Preordainments)]. And Allah is the All-Knower of everything”[Al-Taghaabun 64:11]

Once a person knows that all calamities happen by the will and decree of Allah, then he has to believe and submit and be patient. The reward for patience is Paradise, as Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And their recompense shall be Paradise, and silken garments, because they were patient”[Al-Insaan 76:12]

The call to Allah (da’wah) is a great mission, and the one who undertakes it is exposed to a great deal of harm and calamities. Hence Allah enjoined patience upon His Messenger and other Prophets:

“Therefore be patient (O Muhammad) as did the Messengers of strong will” [Al-Ahqaaf 46:35 – interpretation of the meaning]

Allah has guided the believers, if some matter worries them or some calamity befalls them to seek help with patience and prayer, so that Allah will relieve their distress and give them a way out:

“O you who believe! Seek help in patience and As-Salaah (the prayer). Truly, Allah is with As-

Saabiroon (the patient)”

[Al-Baqarah 2:153 – interpretation of the meaning]

The believer must bear with patience that which Allah has decreed, and be patient in obeying Allah, and be patient in keeping away from sin. Whoever is patient, Allah will give him an immeasurable reward on the Day of Resurrection, as Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Only those who are patient shall receive their reward in full, without reckoning” [Al-Zumar 39:10]

The believer in particular is rewarded in both good times and bad. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “How wonderful is the affair of the believer, for all his affairs are good, and that is for no one except the believer. If something good happens to him, he gives thanks, and that is good for him, and if something bad happens to him, he bears it with patience and that is good for him.” (Narrated by Muslim, no. 2999)

Allah has taught us what we should say when calamity strikes, and has stated that those who are patient will have an honourable position with their Lord. Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“… but give glad tidings to As Saabiroon (the patient).

Who, when afflicted with calamity, say: ‘Truly, to Allah we belong and truly, to Him we shall return’”[Al-Baqarah 2:155-156]