130499 - What Is Tawakkul?

the question

There was a discussion about the issue of putting one’s trust in Allah (tawakkul) and taking measures; the trust of some of the righteous is like that of Maryam, to whom summer fruits used to come in the winter and vice versa without her taking any measures; rather she focused completely on worship. Please advise us about that, may Allah bless you.

Summary of answer

Tawakkul in Islam means depending on Allah and believing that He is the One Who causes measures to be effective; His decree comes to pass; He has decreed all things, counted them out and ordained them. Part of putting one’s trust in Allah is taking appropriate measures and striving to do so.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Shaykh `Abd Al-Aziz ibn Baz (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

What is Tawakkul?

“Putting one’s trust (Tawakkul) in Allah involves two things:

1. Depending on Allah and believing that He is the One Who causes measures to be effective; His decree comes to pass; He has decreed all things, counted them out and ordained them, may He be glorified and exalted.
2. Taking appropriate measures ; putting one’s trust in Allah does not mean refraining from taking measures ; rather part of putting one’s trust in Allah is taking appropriate measures

and striving to do so. The one who refrains from doing so has gone against the laws and decree of Allah. Allah has commanded us to take appropriate measures and He encourages us to do so; He commanded His Messenger (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) to do that.

Is it permissible to refrain from taking appropriate measures in Islam?

So it is not permissible for the believer to refrain from taking appropriate measures; in fact he is not truly putting his trust in Allah unless he takes appropriate measures. Hence it is prescribed to get married in order to have a child, and it is enjoined to have intercourse.

If someone were to say: I shall not get married and I shall wait to have a child without getting married, he would be regarded as insane; this is not the way of those who are wise and rational.

Similarly, he should not sit in his house or in the mosque seeking charity and waiting for provision to come to him; rather he should strive hard and work to seek to earn lawful provision.

Why did Allah tell Mary to shake a palm tree?

Maryam (may Allah have mercy on her) did not forgo taking measures. Allah said to her (interpretation of the meaning): “And shake the trunk of the date-palm towards you, it will let fall fresh ripe-dates upon you.” [Maryam 19:25]

So she shook the palm tree and took appropriate measures until the dates fell. Her action is not contrary to taking measures and the fact that she found provision with her and that Allah honoured her and gave her some provision does not indicate that she refrained from taking appropriate measures; rather she devoted herself to worship and also took appropriate measures.

If Allah bestows upon some of His close friends some miracles (karamat), this is by His grace and bounty, but that does not indicate that we should forgo taking appropriate measures . It is proven that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “Strive to do that which will benefit you and seek the help of Allah, and do not feel helpless.” (Narrated by Muslim, 2664)

And Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning): “You (Alone) we worship, and You (Alone) we ask for help (for each and every thing).” [Al-Fatihah 1:5]

And Allah knows best.