

Wait for a better future

By Maulana Wahiduddin Khan

One of the important teachings of Islam is *sabr*, that is, patience. Patience is the key to all success. In the chapter entitled Al-Baqarah (The Heifer), the Quran has this to say: "You who believe, seek help through patience and prayer; surely, God is with the people of patience" (2:153).

Sabr, or patience, is neither a passive attitude nor any kind of inaction. According to the Quran, *sabr*, or patience, is superior action. When things are not to your liking, being patient is the equivalent of waiting for a better situation to materialise. When an unwanted situation arises and you refrain from reaction, you are simply allowing things to take their natural course. So patience is like a strategy. One could even call it a master strategy.

Our social sphere has many different elements, many of which, of their own, can lead to positive results, so if you take some abrupt action, you are not allowing time for such

elements to come to your support. But when you keep your patience, it means that you are allowing all natural factors to contribute to your success. For example, if you find yourself in the darkness of night and you start crying about this darkness, you will be wasting your energy, for this kind of crying is not going to yield any positive result. But if you simply adopt the policy of waiting, then very soon morning will come and the whole atmosphere will brighten.

Being patient does not mean not taking any action. It means planning your strategy, assessing your resources and taking into consideration the relevant natural factors. That is right planning. In this world, planning takes care of 50% of the task, while natural factors take care of the other 50%. They are like the two wheels of the bicycle which revolve in perfect unison to carry the cyclist to his destination.

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