

GLIMPSES FROM THE LIFE OF PROPHET AYUB

Rating:

Description: Events from the life of Prophet Ayub that teach us valuable lessons as applicable today as they were in Ayub's lifetime.

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Objective:

- To examine several events in the life of Prophet Ayub and discuss them in relation to what advice we can take and apply to our own lives as Muslims in the 21st century.

Arabic Terms:

- Ayub* - the Arabic word for Job.
- Sabr* - patience and it comes from a root word meaning to stop, detain, or refrain.
- Shaytan* - sometimes spelled *Shaitan* or *Shaytaan*. It is the word used in Islam and the Arabic language to denote the devil or Satan, the personification of evil.
- Jinn* - A creation of Allah that was created before humankind from smokeless flame. They are referred to at times as spirit beings, banshees, poltergeists, phantoms and so forth.

The lives of all the Prophets of Allah are filled with lessons. Some lessons are as applicable today as they were in the era in which they were experienced. The Prophets came with lessons to be learned and understood, messages, and laws. Sometimes the laws changed to accommodate a particular time and place but the main message that they conveyed was the same.

They instructed their peoples to worship God alone, and not associate anything or anyone in worship with Him. The stories of the lives of the prophets emphasize this basic doctrine of Islam that God is One.



The story of Prophet Ayub is a little different from the others that we know. Through his story, we are able to view humankind's struggle on a more personal level. Allah does not tell us about Job's methods of preaching or how his people reacted to his warnings and admonitions. God does not tell us about the fate of Ayub's people. Instead, He

tells us about Ayub's *sabr*. He (the Almighty) praises Job by saying, **"Truly! We found him patient. How excellent a slave! Verily, he was ever oft returning in repentance to Us!" (Quran 38:44)**

Lesson 1

To have *sabr*

At this point you are probably thinking that all the Prophets we have discussed so far in this series of lessons have demonstrated *sabr* and of course you would be correct. It is one of the most important lessons to learn and to practice. However Allah, the Most-Wise uses Prophet Ayub's story to touch on some areas that otherwise might be overlooked in the study of the Prophets of Allah and their patience. Ayub's story is one of *sabr*, no doubt about that, however not patience for minutes, hours, or even days. Prophet Ayub was patient for years, literally, with not even the smallest break. The scholars differ about just how many years but it seems that seven is the minimum number of years. Prophet Ayub bore all difficulties with patience. To learn more about Prophet Ayub's suffering and unwavering patience, please see:

<http://www.islamreligion.com/articles/2721/>

Lesson 2

Is our sincerity and worship of Allah dependent upon His blessings on us?

Happiness and afflictions are both tests from Allah. We face trials and we experience triumphs. If we remember Allah in our times of triumph, will we still worship with sincerity when we are faced with loss or suffering. This is just what *Shaytan* intends to find out when he suggests that Allah removes Ayub's blessings of wealth, health and family. Job was committed to daily prayer and would frequently thank Allah for blessings He had bestowed on him but *Shaytan* was convinced that Ayub would turn away from his Lord when he was faced with intense suffering, illness and distress. Allah knew his faithful slave would never turn away from his faith so He allowed *Shaytan* to afflict Ayub with many calamities one after the other.

Allah makes it very clear that children and wealth are merely adornments of this brief life and that He will test us through our love for them.

Wealth and children are the attractions of this worldly life, but lasting good works have a better reward with your Lord and give better grounds for hope. (Quran 18:46)

He can take the adornments of life away from us as easily as He can provide them for us, thus we should never rely on this worldly life, or feel secure. In the story of Ayub, Allah teaches us that worldly treasures are ultimately worthless; so never allow the

adornments of this material life to take over your heart nor lose sight of what is important. Do not give preference to the material realm and put aside your worship and reverence to your Creator.

Lesson 3

Nothing happens without the Will of Allah.

Allah used the life of Prophet Ayub to teach *Shaytan* a lesson. It is a lesson that we too can take benefit from. The lesson is that Allah is the controller of all affairs. Human beings, *Jinn* or *Shaytan* can plot, or simply make plans, but none of them will come to fruition without the permission of Allah. When you read a more complete story of Prophet Ayub you will notice that *Shaytan* knew this and sought permission to test Prophet Ayub.

Prophet Ayub understood that whatever calamities befell him, they were happening with the permission of Allah. He also had complete trust in the Mercy of Allah knowing that if he loved and trusted Allah even more in the times of tribulation he would be rewarded beyond measure.

“Verily! Distress has seized me and You are the Most Merciful of all those who show mercy.” So We answered his call, and we removed the distress that was on him, and We restored his family to him (that he had lost), and the like thereof along with them as a mercy from Ourselves and a Reminder for all who worship Us. (Quran 21:83-84)

The story of Ayub and the lessons we can derive from it should be a constant reminder for us all. When we complain and whine about the small things that annoy us and turn molehills into mountains of despair, we should think of the unwavering faith and trust demonstrated by Prophet Ayub. *Shaytan* will play with our minds, emotions and weaknesses but our refuge is only with Allah, who will reward us for our patience and perseverance. Although we know that our real reward is in the Hereafter, Allah does what He wills and may also reward us in this world.

The traditions of Prophet Muhammad contain a post script to the story of Prophet Ayub. *“Once while Prophet Ayub was taking a bath in a naked state suddenly a great number of gold locusts started falling upon him and he started collecting them in his clothes. His Lord called him, ‘O Ayub! Didn’t I make you rich enough to dispense with what you see now?’ Ayub said, ‘Yes, O Lord! But I cannot dispense with Your Blessings’”*^[1]

Although Allah showered countless blessings onto Prophet Ayub, he did not ignore or take for granted any blessings because he knew that there might come a time when Allah for reasons known only to Him might withhold his blessings.

None of us can afford to shun the blessings of our Lord, or take them for granted, thus let us remember that Allah does what He wills and gives us only what is ultimately good for us.

Footnotes:

[1]

Saheeh Al-Bukhari

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