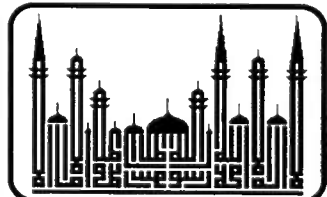


بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Perspectives



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Editorial

Although the second Islamic Millennium is still 80 years away, Muslims in North America are feeling the hype of the approaching third Western Millennium. The rapid convergence of computing, communication and information technologies, should provide us with unprecedented opportunities in the field of *distributed collaborative Islamic education and da'awa*. The new technology can connect the most knowledgeable Muslims with the learners at various Islamic centers and schools in North America. It can enable better and much more access to the treasure of Islamic knowledge, and help to continuously engage students as active participants (instead of being passive receivers of information), and involve parents in the education of their children. Learners can work at individual workstations located in their Islamic center, school, or home. When group interaction is required they can work together with distributed workstations which all access common tools and information. And when complex visualization and group interaction are called for (e.g., *Tawaf* around the *Ka'aba*, or *Sa'ay* between the mountains of *Al-Safa* and *Al-Marwa*), they can use immersive virtual environment (rented for a limited period of time by a National organization). Learners and instructors can participate in live, virtual, and constructive operations. Learners can access training materials, and expert scholars from different locations around the world.

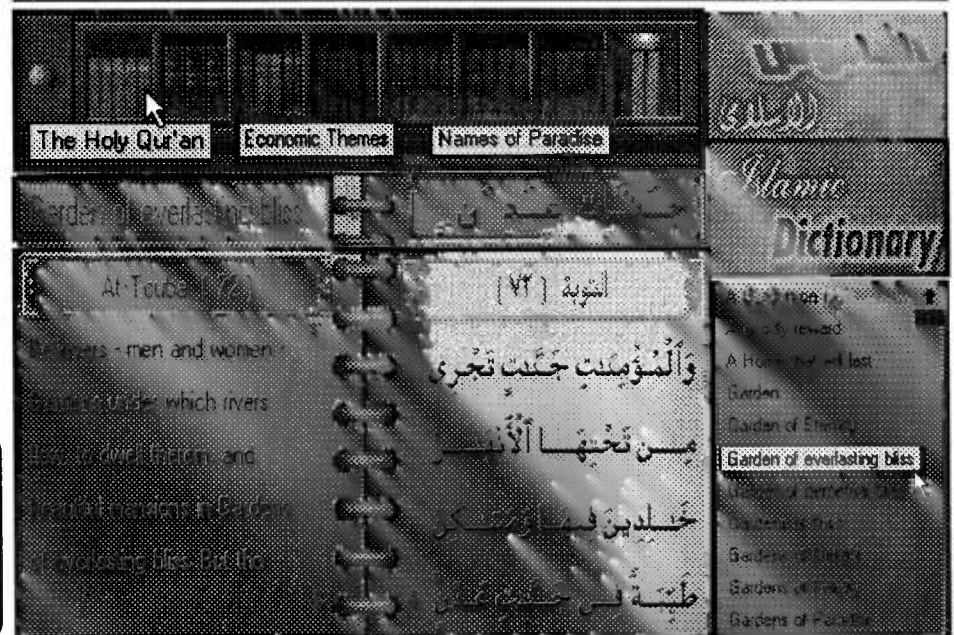
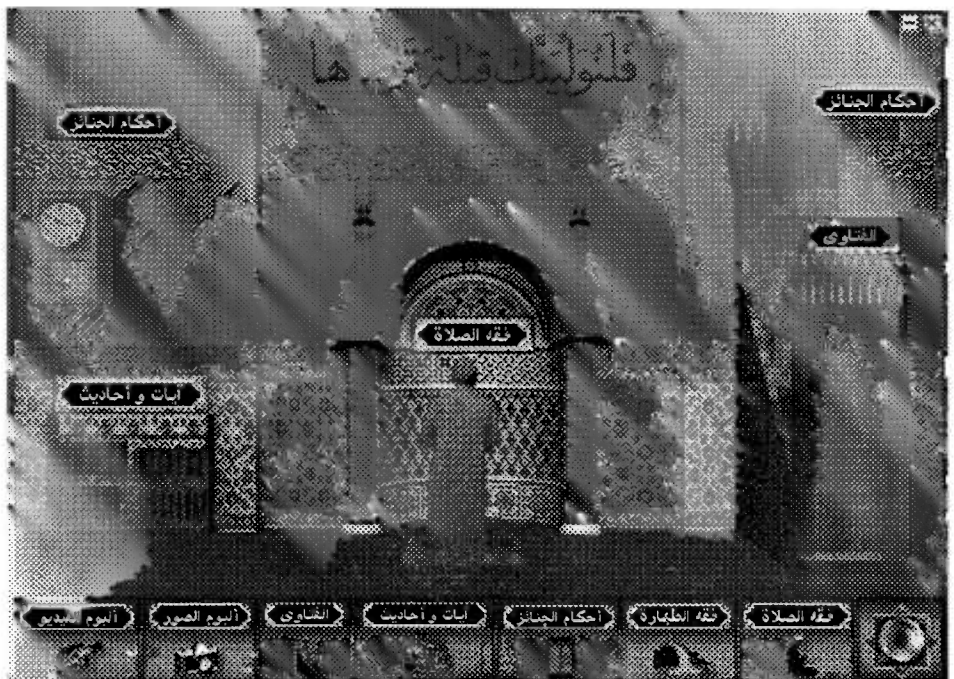
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New Multimedia Software on Islam

Two multimedia programs have been released by **Harf Information Technology Co.** in Egypt. The programs can be obtained from **Digitek International Inc., 7631 Leesburg Pike, Suite B, Falls Church, Va 22043, Tel.(800) 33-SAKHR.** The first program is in Arabic and is entitled *Fiqh Al-Salah* (Jurisprudence of prayers). It provides information about *fiqh* of purification, prayers and funerals; religious rulings, as well as supporting Qur'anic verses and Prophetic traditions. The second program is entitled *Islamic Dictionary*. (Continued on page 6)



Reflections

Dr. Ahmed K. Noor

Sabr

الصبر

Sabr is one of the important qualities that a true believer must acquire. The word *sabr* and its derivatives have been mentioned 103 times in the Qur'an, as well as in many sayings of the Prophet (PBUH). In this article an attempt is made to discuss the meaning and implications of *sabr*, the importance of having *sabr*, and the rewards for those who have *sabr*.

Meaning and implications of Sabr

The Arabic word *sabr* comes from the verb *صَبَرَ* *sabara* which means to bind, tie, fetter or shackle. So *sabr* is the thing that binds and ties down uncontrolled passions, that weaken the dignified and respectable Islamic personality, if they are not subdued. *Sabr* is frequently translated as patience, perseverance, tolerance, steadfastness and endurance, but actually it means more than that. The Qur'an uses *sabr* to express the fortitude, moral strength, firmness of purpose and decision, determination, moral discipline and self control which enable a person to proceed with patience and courage in the face of afflictions, privations and temptations, on the way he/she chooses in accordance with the dictates of his/her conscience.

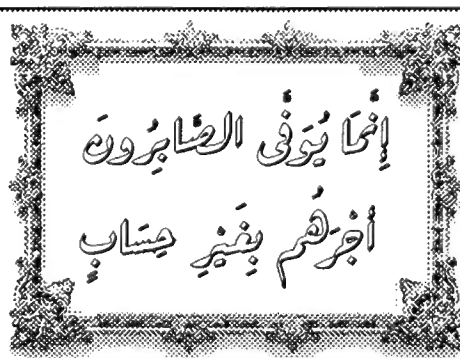
Sabr is the quality which goes hand in hand with sincere *Iman* (or faith). The Prophet (PBUH) was asked: *What is Iman?* He replied: *Sabr and magnanimity.*

سئل رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم : ما الإيمان؟ قال : الصبر والسماحة .

A Muslim who has *sabr* maintains his/her consciousness of Allah and

his/her emotional balance at all times. He/she keeps striving in the way of Allah no matter how difficult or how easy his/her life may become. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

ومن يصبر يُصْبِرُهُ اللهُ وما أعطى أحد من عطاء خير وأوسع من الصبر . (حديث شريف)



"Those who have sabr will truly receive a reward without measure!"
(Qur'an 39:10)

He who shows sabr, Allah will grant him power to edure with sabr; and none is blessed with an endowment better and greater than sabr.

Sabr is a resolution. The believer is firmly and adamantly resolved in his/her heart and soul that his/her life and death are for Allah, Lord of all the worlds. There is no turning back, no second thoughts.

Sabr of Allah on the misdeeds of His servants

One of the beautiful names of Allah is *Al-Saboor* (the Longanimous). Allah exercises extreme *sabr* with His ungrateful, disobedient and sinful servants. It is His mercy, clemency and forbearance that He is giving these

culprits respite for a period of time, in order to give them opportunity to repent and amend.

وَلَوْ يُؤَاخِذُ اللهُ النَّاسَ بِظُلْمِهِمْ مَا تَرَكَ عَلَيْنَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ وَلَكِنْ يُؤَخِّرُهُمْ إِلَى أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى فَإِذَا جَاءَ أَجْلُهُمْ لَا يَسْتَأْخِرُونَ سَاعَةً وَلَا يَسْتَقْدِمُونَ .

(سورة النحل - آية ٦١)

"If Allah were to punish people for their wrong-doing, He would not leave, on the (earth), a single living creature: but He gives them respite for a stated term: when their term expires, they would not be able to delay (the punishment) for a single hour, just as they would not be able to anticipate it (for a single hour)." (Qur'an 16:61)

Sabr of the Prophets

The Prophets and messengers, including Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), went on enduring with *sabr* and ceaseless struggle the opposition, persecution, resistance and indifference of their people for years. Allah made several references to this fact in the Qur'an, for example,

فَاصْبِرْ كَمَا صَبَرَ أُولُو الْعَزْمِ مِنَ الرُّسُلِ (سورة الأحقاف - من آية ٣٥)

"Therefore endure with sabr, O Prophet, as did (all) messengers of firm resolution."

(Qur'an 46:35)

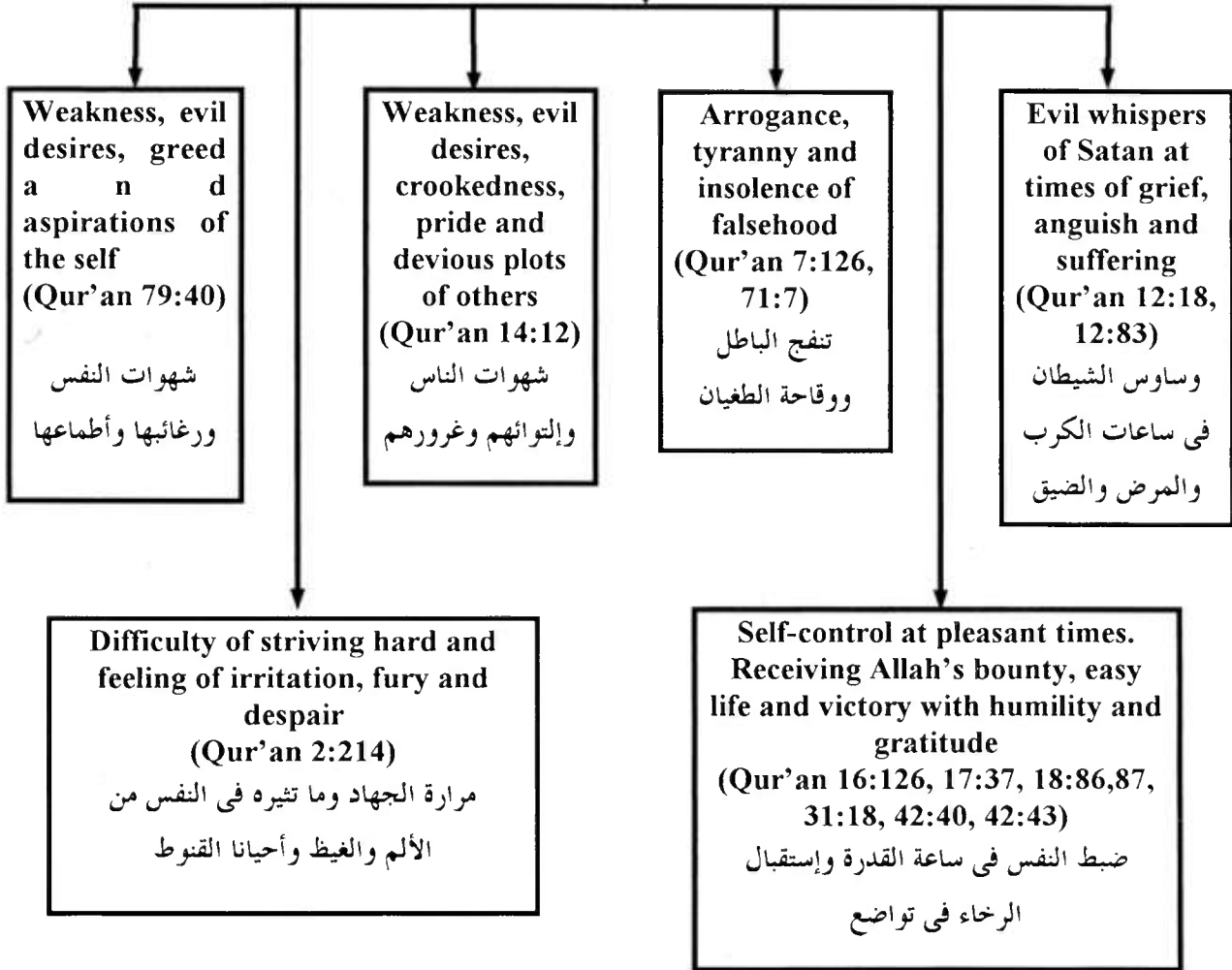
وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِدْرِيسَ وَذَا الْكِفْلِ كُلٌّ مِنَ الصَّابِرِينَ .

(سورة الأنبياء - آية ٨٥)

"And (the same blessing was bestowed upon) Ismael, Idris and Zul-Kifl,

Aspects of *Sabr* - مجالات الصبر

Sabr on - الصبر على



- *Sabr* is one of the characteristics of Prophets and messengers through which the person reaches his/her goals.
- The effect of *sabr* is to make the person, at both pleasant and unpleasant times, in contact with Allah, submit to His will and power, accept what He decrees for him/her with tranquillity, reverence and humility.

* الصبر خلق الأنبياء والمرسلين وبه يدرك الإنسان غايته ويحقق آماله

* تأثير الصبر - البقاء فى السراء والضراء على صلة بالله

والإستسلام لقدرته ورد الأمر إليه كله فى طمأنينة وثقة وخشوع

because they practiced *sabr*.”

(Qur'an 21:85)

إِنَّا وَجَدْنَاهُ صَابِرًا نَعْمَ الْعَبْدُ
إِنَّهُ أَوَّابٌ .

(سورة ص - من آية ٤٤)

“Truly We found him (Ayub-Job) full of *sabr*, how excellent is the servant ever did he turn (to Us).”

(Qur'an 38:44)

The Prophet (PBUH) said that the prophets receive more tests with affliction (from Allah) as they receive more rewards (from Him).

إنا معشر الأنبياء ، يضاعف لنا
البلاء كما يضاعف لنا الأجر .

(حديث شريف)

Command of *Sabr*

In one of the earliest Qur'anic revelations, Allah commanded the Prophet (PBUH) with *sabr*:

وَلِرَبِّكَ فَاصْبِرْ .

(سورة المدثر - آية ٧)

“And have *sabr* for the sake of your Lord.”

(Qur'an 74:7)

Allah calls the believers (as he called the Prophet- PBUH) to take *sabr* to heart and to be unmoved by all deceptions, lies, hypocrisy and unbelief that surrounds them:

وَاصْبِرْ وَمَا صَبْرُكَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ وَلَا
تَخْزَنْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا تَكُ فِي ضَيْقٍ
مِّمَّا يَمْكُرُونَ .

(سورة النحل - آية ١٢٧)

“And have *sabr*. For your *sabr* is but with the help from Allah; nor grieve over them: and distress not yourself because of their plots.”

(Qur'an 16:127)

The believers who strive hard in the cause of Allah should never be shaken by those who are deceived by the life of this world and are ignorant of the truth.

فَاصْبِرْ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَلَا
يَسْتَخَفُّنَكَ الَّذِينَ لَا يُوقِنُونَ .

(سورة الروم - آية ٦٠)

“So have *sabr*: for verily the promise of Allah is true: nor let those excite you, who have (themselves) no certainty of faith.

(Qur'an 30:60)

Effect of *Sabr*

The conviction that Allah is the ultimate reality becomes so strong in the heart and mind of the believer مؤمن who has *sabr* that it becomes the whole outward and inward self. This is when the belief becomes a dynamic and unshakable force. Allah describes some of those attributes of *sabr*, when He tells us of the tests He is to send upon us, to try our faith.

أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا
يَأْتِكُمْ مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ
مَسْتَهْمُهُمُ الْبِئْسَاءُ وَالضَّرَّاءُ وَزُلْزَلُوا
حَتَّى يَقُولَ الرَّسُولُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
مَعَهُ مَتَى نَصُرُ اللَّهُ أَلَا إِنَّ نَصْرَ اللَّهِ
قَرِيبٌ . (سورة البقرة - آية ٢١٤)

“Or do you think that you will enter paradise without each tests as came to those who passed away before you. They encountered suffering and such adversity, and were so shaken that even the Prophet and those of faith with him cried: when (will come) the help and victory of Allah? Ah! Verily the help of Allah is (always) near!”

(Qur'an 2:214)

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ
وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ
وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَ الثَّمَرَاتِ وَبَشِّرِ
الصَّابِرِينَ . الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ
مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ
رَاجِعُونَ .

(سورة البقرة - آيات ١٥٥ ، ١٥٦)

“And surely, We shall test you with something of fear and hunger, of loss of wealth and lives and crops, but give good tidings to those who have *sabr*, who say when struck by misfortune: indeed we belong to Allah and unto

Him is our final return”.

(Qur'an 2:155,156)

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ حَتَّى نَعْلَمَ
الْمُجَاهِدِينَ مِنْكُمْ وَالصَّابِرِينَ
وَنَبْلُوَا أَخْبَارَكُمْ .

(سورة محمد - آية ٣١)

“And surely, We shall try you till We test those among you who strive hard (for the cause of Allah) and those who have *sabr*; and We shall try your reported (mettle).”

(Qur'an 47:31)

Some aspects of *sabr* are listed on page 3.

Sabr in Good Times

Sabr does not just apply to times of hardship, it also applies to times when living becomes easy and soft, when people are blessed with wealth, prosperity, and ease.. And this particular type of *sabr* applies to many of us here with fine houses, apartments, cars, jobs and material goods. the Qur'an tells us that even if wealth and prosperity are great blessings, they are also great trials of faith at the same time. We are warned against becoming proud, lazy, vain and idle - which many times happen to those who are blessed with ease of life.

وَلَئِنْ أَذَقْنَاهُ نِعْمَاءَ بَعْدَ ضَرَاءٍ
مَسَّتْهُ لَيَقُولَنَّ ذَهَبَ السَّيِّئَاتُ
عَنِّي إِنَّهُ لَفَرِحَ فَخُورٌ . إِلَّا الَّذِينَ
صَبَرُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أُولَئِكَ
لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَأَجْرٌ كَبِيرٌ .

(سورة هود - آيات ١٠ ، ١١)

“And if We cause him to taste of great blessings after some misfortune which befallen him, he says: Ills have departed from me. Lo he becomes exultant and boastful, except for those who have *sabr* and do good works. Theirs will be forgiveness and a great reward.”

(Qur'an 11:10,11)

Yet of all human personalities, it is that of the Muslim believer, with his/her *sabr* and *Iman*, which is most contented and stable in life. The happiness of the human beings is in large part a function of his being satisfied with what Allah

decrees for him, no matter how rewarding or how trying.

عجبا لأمر المؤمن . إن أمره كله خير ، وليس ذاك لأحد إلا للمؤمن ، إن أصابته سراء شكر فكان خيرا له ، وإن أصابته ضراء صبر فكان خيرا له .

(رواه مسلم)

It is remarkable that everything turns out well for the believer while that applies only to the believer. If happiness befalls him, he gives thanks to Allah and it will turn out well for him. If misfortune befalls him, he shows sabr and again it will turn out well for him.

(Prophetic Wisdom)

Rewards for Sabr

Allah has promised many rewards for those who have sabr, including

- Allah will be with them (support, protect and guide them).

وَاللَّهُ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ .

(سورة البقرة - من آية ٢٤٩)

"Allah is with those who have sabr."

(Qur'an 2:249)

إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ .

(سورة الأنفال - من آية ٤٦)

"For Allah is with those who have sabr."

(Qur'an 8:46)

- Blessings and bounties without measure (see the center of page 2), and rewards according to the best of their deeds.

وَلَسَنَجْزِيَنَّ الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا أَجْرَهُمْ

بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ .

(سورة النحل - من آية ٩٦)

"And We will certainly bestow, on those who have sabr, their reward according to best of their actions."

(Qur'an 16:96)

The Prophet (PBUH) said:

وأعلم أن في الصبر على ما تكره خيرا كثيرا ، وأن النصر مع الصبر ، وأن الفرج مع الكرب ، وأن مع العسر يسرا .

(حديث شريف)

And know that in your sabr on what you dislike is a great deal of good; victory comes with sabr; comfort comes after grief; and with every hardship there is relief.

- Forgiveness from Allah

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَأَجْرٌ كَبِيرٌ .

(سورة هود - آية ١١)

"Not so do those who show sabr, and work righteousness; for them is forgiveness (of sins) and great reward."

(Qur'an 11:11)

ما يزال البلاء بالمؤمن والمؤمنة ،

في نفسه وولده وماله ، حتى

يلقى الله وما عليه خطيئة .

(حديث شريف)

The believers, male and female, will continue to be tested with affliction in themselves, their children, their wealth until they meet Allah with all their sins wiped out.

- Gardens of eternity and high mansions in paradise.

وَالَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا ابْتِغَاءَ وَجْهِ رَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنْفَقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ سِرًّا وَعَلَانِيَةً وَيَذَرُونَ

بِالْحَسَنَةِ السَّيِّئَةَ أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ عُقْبَى الدَّارِ . جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ يَدْخُلُونَهَا وَمَنْ صَلَحَ مِنْ آبَائِهِمْ وَأَزْوَاجِهِمْ وَذُرِّيَّاتِهِمْ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ

يَدْخُلُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ كُلِّ بَابٍ .

(سورة الرعد - آيات ٢٢ ، ٢٣)

"Those who have sabr, seeking the Countenance of their Lord; establish regular prayers; spend, out of (the gifts) We have bestowed for their sustenance, secretly and openly; and turn off evil with good: for such there is the final attainment of the (Eternal) home, gardens of perpetual bliss: they shall enter there, as well as the righteous among their fathers, their spouses and their offspring, and angels shall enter unto them from every gate."

(Qur'an 13:22,23)

إن الله قال : إذا ابتليت عبدي

بحبيبتيه (يريد بعينييه) فصبر

عوضته منهما الجنة .

(حديث قدسي)

Allah said: When I test my servant by taking his/her eyesight, and he/she perseveres with sabr, I compensate him/her with paradise. (Hadith Qudsi)

Duty of Muslims

It is the duty of Muslims to teach sabr to each other, by word and by example, to strengthen each other in sabr, and to strive with each other in the practice of sabr. In the infinitely meaningful Surah 103 (the time)

سورة about which Imam Al-Shafi' said if the people only considered this Surah well, it alone would suffice for their guidance, Allah says:

وَالْعَصْرِ . إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي

خُسْرٍ . إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا

الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ

وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ .

(سورة العصر - آيات ١ ، ٢ ، ٣)

"By the token of time (through the ages). Verily human beings are in a state of loss, except those who believe and do righteous deeds, and who direct each other to the truth and who direct each other to sabr."

(Qur'an 103:1 to 3)

The Prophet (PBUH) said:



Continued from page 1 - Editorial

المؤمن الذي يخالط الناس
ويصبر على أذاهم ، أعظم أجرا
من الذي لا يخالط الناس ولا
يصبر على أذاهم .

(حديث شريف)

The believer who mixes with the people and endures with sabr their harm, receives more rewards (from Allah) than the one who does not mix with the people and does not endure their harm.

If we look at the life and history of our Prophet (PBUH), we can appreciate the value of the injunction of competing in the practice of *sabr*, and in strengthening each other in *sabr*.

يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اضْبِرُوا
وَصَابِرُوا وَرَابِطُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ .

(سورة آل عمران - آية ٢٠٠)

"O ye who believe, Persevere with sabr, compete with each other in the practice of sabr, strengthen each other and be conscious of Allah that perhaps you may be successful."

(Qur'an 3:200)

At times, when the Muslims were being seriously threatened and besieged in Medina, it was those believers who showed *sabr* in this situation, along with their beloved Prophet (PBUH), who were the true assets to the community. Each one multiplied his strength and *Iman* in these perilous situations. While those who, because of their hypocrisy or weak faith, began to spread misgivings, fears and rumors were a danger and detriment to the security of the community.

Al-Musaboroon المصابرون (those who endure with *sabr*) will have shortcomings, but because of their constancy, *Iman* and the remembrance of Allah, they will always return to their proper Islamic disposition and behavior.

I pray to Almighty Allah to open our hearts to what is right, and guide us to follow it, and to protect us from what is wrong, and to give us the strength to oppose it! Ameen ☐



New technology can also be effective in *da'awa* by connecting public libraries with the Islamic centers having rich Islamic information facilities.

Since the beginning of the mission of the Prophet (PBUH), a great emphasis has been placed on acquiring knowledge and education. Even the command of *Tawheed* (monotheism) came in the form:

فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ
لذَنبِكَ .

(سورة محمد - من آية ١٩)

"Know, therefore, that there is no god but Allah, and ask forgiveness for your fault."

(Qur'an 47:19)

Most of the Muslim communities in North America, despite acknowledging the importance of knowledge, are not devoting enough of their resources towards education. Only few of the full-time Islamic schools that started have been sustained by their communities, and fewer of those have been effective. So far, the national Muslim organizations have not been able to pool their resources and talents to enhance the effectiveness of education and *da'awa*.

The time is now ripe for the development of an *"Distributed learning environment"*, with few centralized high-end workstations (servers) which incorporate the most advanced multimedia, software and web-based facilities on Islam. Arrangements should be made to facilitate the connection of various Islamic centers and schools with those servers. The Islamic centers, in each

local area, should facilitate the connection of public libraries, and the local Muslims, with the workstations (servers) in the centers.

To realize these goals, there are barriers - and a legacy of resistance to change, involving funding of these projects, proper tools and training for instructors and learners - that need to be addressed before the power of technology can be translated into the power of knowledge for the more than ten million Muslims in North America. Until the distributed learning environment is developed, Muslims and non-Muslims can obtain free information about Islam from elaborate web sites on the Internet. One of the useful sites is that of Harf Information Technology (The URL address is <http://www.Al-Islam.com> - see the figure on the top of the page)

The foundation for Islamic knowledge is working with the Muslims in Hampton, Virginia to incorporate the advanced technologies in education and *da'awa* in their Islamic center.

We pray to Almighty Allah to give the leaders of the Muslim communities the wisdom and vision to deploy, adapt and develop the most advanced technologies for Islamic education and *da'awa*. Ameen ☐

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New Multimedia Software

It contains a compilation of Islamic terminologies in both Arabic and English . It also contains subject indices - Attributes of Allah, names of: Messengers, Qur'an, resurrection, paradise, hell and economic themes. ☐

Recipients of Zakah - Eight Categories (Qur'an 9:60)
مصارف الزكاة - ثمانية أصناف (سورة التوبة - آية ٦٠)

