

Three Keys to Success

Adapted from Hafiz ibn al-Qayyim's *al-Wabil al-Sayyib*

By Muaz Billoo

Success in this temporal world and the eternal world of the hereafter lies in three things:

1. **Gratitude** in times of ease.
2. **Sabr** (loosely translated as patience) in times of difficulty.
3. **Repentance** after sin.

These are the keys to eternal prosperity. Irrespective of the situation we found ourselves in, we can always remain engaged in one of the aforementioned situations.

1. When blessed by Allah ﷻ, we have to express **gratitude**, which is comprised of three key elements:
 - a. Acknowledging the blessing from the bottom of our hearts.
 - b. To express its being a blessing on our tongues e.g. by saying *Alhamdulillah*.
 - c. To utilize the blessing in a way pleasing to Allah ﷻ e.g. giving charity.

If one does these three things, then he has displayed gratitude to his Lord, while still being deficient as we can never truly praise Allah ﷻ as He deserves to be praised.

2. When faced with difficult times, we have to express **Sabr**. Sabr comprises of three key elements as well:
 - a. Controlling the nafs (animalistic desires) from developing hatred for what was decreed by Allah ﷻ.
 - b. Restricting the tongue from complaining about what was decreed by Allah ﷻ.
 - c. Restricting the limbs from engaging in the disobedience of Allah ﷻ, such as by controlling one's anger.

If one practices Sabr with its key ingredients as mentioned above, then this time of difficulty will be a means of ease for him in the hereafter.

3. When we catch ourselves wasting time, indulging in our desires and lusts, not worshipping Allah ﷻ appropriately, then we must **seek forgiveness** from Allah ﷻ. When Allah ﷻ intends good for someone, He opens the doors of repentance for him. Repentance also has three key ingredients:
 - a. Stopping oneself from the sin.
 - b. Remorse over the sin.
 - c. Intending to never return to that sin.

Thus, the servant of Allah can always find himself acquiring the pleasure of Allah if he keeps these three things in mind. May Allah ﷻ make us from His beloved servants.