

# PERMA Model of Positive Psychology in the Light of Qur'an and Sunnah: An Analytical Study

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## Abstract

Positive emotions have an obvious connection to wellbeing of individual as well as societies. Having the ability to be optimistic and view the past, present, and future in a positive perspective is the essence of positive emotions. Gratitude and hope are the positive views of life, which help in getting along and moving on through the highs and lows of life. Focusing on the lows, increase the chances of developing depression, therefore, one should find positivity in every situation. The mindset that helps a person to thrive is that adversities do occur, but they are for the better.

This article examines the Islamic narrative of the positive emotions of gratitude and hope, in light of the life of the most perfect human that ever lived and the Book that was revealed upon him.

## Key Words

Fredrickson

Gratitude

Hope

Islamic narrative

Perfect human

Positive Emotions

Wellbeing

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## The Positive Emotions of Gratitude and Hope: The Islamic Narrative

### Introduction

Positive emotions are brief experiences, which feel good in the present and increase the chances that one will feel good in the future also. They seem to be fundamental constituents in the formula of living a good life. Understanding these

positive emotions is the core objective of the science of Positive Psychology.<sup>1</sup>

Barbara Fredrickson, the proponent of the broaden and build theory of positive emotions suggests that Positive emotions have been found to (a) help resilient people find positive meaning in difficult life circumstances (b) buffer against

<sup>1</sup> Froh, J.J., Positive Emotions, "Encyclopedia Of Positive Psychology", (Wiley and Blackwell: 2009), 711-716.

depressive symptoms and fuel post crisis growth; and (c) help people effectively recover from stress both in daily life and during bereavement.<sup>2</sup> According to Dr. Martin Seligman, the chief proponent of the wellbeing theory, being able to focus on positive emotions is more than just smiling; rather it is the ability to be optimistic and view the past, present, and future in a positive perspective.<sup>3</sup>

Fredrickson has chosen ten major positive emotions, which she believes have the most effect in individual and societal lives namely joy, gratitude, serenity, hope, interest, pride, awe, inspiration, amusement, and love.

Two of the major positive emotions, i.e. gratitude and hope shall be addressed in this article, and their possible corresponding terms from the Qur'an and Sunnah will be elucidated upon.

### Literature Review

There are a vast number of books written on different positive emotions. Some addressing just one emotion such as forgiveness, others focusing on a cluster or a group of positive emotions.

In *Discover The Real Power Of Positivity*<sup>4</sup> Dr. Barbara Fredrickson, the chief proponent of the ten major positive emotions gives some practical tips to create an environment for a happy and energetic life. She gives the broaden and build theory of positive emotions, which suggests that positive emotions broaden the horizons of life and turn people into high achievers.

*Flourish*<sup>5</sup> and *Authentic Happiness*<sup>6</sup> by Martin E.P. Seligman discuss Dr. Seligman's work on optimism, motivation, and character to determine how to make life more productive. *To Forgive Is Human: How to Put Your Past in the*

<sup>2</sup> Tugade, M. M., & Fredrickson, B. L. "Resilient Individuals Use Positive Emotions To Bounce Back From Negative Emotional Experiences", *Journal Of Personality And Social Psychology*, 86(2), (2004).

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Fredrickson, B. "*Discover The Real Power Of Positivity*", (New York: Penguin Random House, 2009).

<sup>5</sup> Seligman, "*Flourish*".

<sup>6</sup> Seligman, M. "*Authentic Happiness*", (New York: Free Press: 2002).

*Past*<sup>7</sup> stresses on the role of forgiveness in mending broken relationships. This complete book on forgiveness gives tips on how to move ahead positively and constructively. *Understanding Emotions*<sup>8</sup> contains material on the key role of emotions in all aspects of life, including psychological disorders and wellbeing.

*Thanks! How Practicing Gratitude Can Make You Happier*<sup>9</sup> by Robert Emmons examines gratitude as being the crucial component of happiness and how to put this powerful emotion into practice. Allan Carr's *Positive Psychology: The Science of Happiness and Human Strengths*<sup>10</sup> is an excellent introduction to positive psychology and positive emotions..

On the Islamic side, In *Dealing With Worries & Stress*,<sup>11</sup> by Sheikh Muhammad bin Saleh al Munajjid states that this life is inherently filled with suffering, worries and stress, which people have to put up with. This book gives the spiritual perspective of positivity.

*Islam: A Psychology of Ease or Difficulty?*<sup>12</sup> by Abdel Rahman Mussa discusses the Positive emotions practiced by the Prophets in the most adverse situations, which in turn lead to the success of their mission. *Psychology From the Islamic Perspective*<sup>13</sup> by Dr. Ayesha Utz is an effort to expound upon the conceptualization of human psychology based upon the Qur'an and Sunnah.

<sup>7</sup> McCullough, Sandage, Worthington, "*To Forgive Is Human: How To Put Your Past In The Past*", (New York: InterVarsity Press, 1997).

<sup>8</sup> Keltner, Oatley, Jenkins "*Understanding Emotions*", (New York: Wiley-Blackwell, 2006).

<sup>9</sup> Emmons, R. "*Thanks! How Practicing Gratitude Can Make You Happier*", (New York: Mariner Books, 2008).

<sup>10</sup> Carr, A., "*Positive Psychology: The Science of Happiness And Human Strengths*", (Oxford: Routledge, 2011).

<sup>11</sup> Munajjid, S. "*Dealing With Worries & Stress*", (U.K.: Dar as Sunnah: 2003).

<sup>12</sup> Mussa, A. "*Islam: A Psychology Of Ease Or Difficulty?*", (California: Smashwords, 2012).

<sup>13</sup> Utz, A. "*Psychology From The Islamic Perspective*", (Jeddah: IIPH, 2011).

### 1.1. Gratitude: Western Perspective

According to Fredrickson gratitude emerges when people acknowledge another person as the source of their unexpected good fortune. Joy turns into gratitude, for example, when awareness of one's own good fortune is combined with admiration for another person for thoughtfully going out of their way to create that good fortune.<sup>14</sup> The long-lasting resources, which grow when people practice gratitude, are new skills for expressing kindness and care to others.<sup>15</sup>

### 1.2. The Islamic Narrative of Gratitude: شكر

Now we shall take a look at the corresponding Islamic term of *Shukr*, and the immeasurable treasures that lie in it.

#### Dictionary Meaning

**Shukr:** *Ash Sahkūr* (الشكور) is one of the Names of Allah تعالى سبحانه, which means that He تعالى appreciates little efforts that are done to please Him alone, carrying no other intentions or vested interests. He تعالى overlooks many of the slave's mistakes and does not let the good deeds go waste; rather He تعالى multiplies the reward such that one good deed is multiplied ten times or seven hundred times or innumerable times.<sup>16</sup>

Acknowledgement of favor; Praise for the benefactor and announcing it. *Shakaratiid dābbah* (شكرت الدابة) refers to the animal that is content even on little fodder. *Shakiratis sahab* (شكرت السحاب) means the clouds that are filled with vapors.<sup>17</sup>

*Shukr* (شكر) is also derived from *كشّر*, which means to open, to declare. It is opposite of *Kufr* (كفر), which means to forget or conceal the blessing. *Ain shukra* (عين شكرًا) means eyes filled with tears. Hence giving the meaning being filled up with gratefulness for the Benefactor.

*Shukr* (شكر) is of three types: *Shukr Qalbi* (شكر قلبي), to be grateful from the heart, *Shukr Lisani* (شكر لساني), to praise the Benefactor with the tongue and *Shukr bil Jawarih* (شكر بالجوارح), to use the blessing for the purpose that it has been given.<sup>18</sup>

Allāh تعالى سبحانه uses the word *shukr* (شكر) and its derivatives in more than forty places in the Qur'an. Only some of them will be mentioned here in order to gain a clear and in depth understanding of this trait and to grasp the extent to which Allāh تعالى سبحانه wants mankind to develop this character strength.

Ibn al Qayyim writes, "Allāh has placed *shukr* along with Iman, thus stating that Allāh تعالى سبحانه has no desire of punishing people provided that they are grateful and have faith in their hearts. Similarly, Allāh bestows His special favors upon those who are grateful. And Allāh تعالى سبحانه has divided people into two categories: *Shakūr* (شكور) (grateful) and *Kafūr* (كفور) (ungrateful). Ingratitude and the ungrateful are the most disliked in the Sight of Allāh تعالى سبحانه and gratitude and the grateful are the most beloved to Allāh تعالى سبحانه.<sup>19</sup>

So what should man be grateful for? Allāh and His Messenger have not left us in the dark. Rather the Qur'an and Hadith contain several occasions when we should be grateful to Allāh. Such depth in discerning Allāh's blessings could not have been possible without the Benefactor's guidance. Some of the occasions of gratitude are mentioned below:

- **Gratitude for Being Forgiven**

Allāh تعالى سبحانه forgives the gravest of sins and this truly is an occasion to be grateful to Him. He تعالى سبحانه even forgave the Bani Israīl, when they started worshipping the cow after all the favours that Allāh تعالى سبحانه had bestowed upon them.<sup>20</sup>

- **Gratitude for the Food on the Planet**

Allāh تعالى سبحانه prompts mankind to be grateful for the lawful and pleasant food that He

<sup>14</sup> Algoe, S. B. "Find, Remind, And Bind: The Functions Of Gratitude In Everyday Relationships", *Social And Personality Psychology Compass*, 6(6), (2012), 455-469

<sup>15</sup> Barbara L.F., "Positive Emotions Broaden And Build, *Advances In Experimental Social Psychology*", Vol. 47, (2013), 1-53

<sup>16</sup> Sa'di, A.R., "*Sharh Ash Shāfiya Al Kāfiya*", (Jeddah: Majma' al Fiqh al Islami, 2001), 125-126.

<sup>17</sup> Ibn Manzūr, "*Lisan al Arab*", 6/112.

<sup>18</sup> Isphahani, R., "*Mufradat al Qur'an*", 578.

<sup>19</sup> Ibn al Qayyim, "*Iddatus Sabirīn wa Zakhīratush Shakirīn*", (Jeddah: Majma' al Fiqh al Islami), 118-121.

<sup>20</sup> Al Baqarah, 2: 52.

has provided them with.<sup>21</sup> Mankind should realize that it is Allāh سبحانه و تعالی who grown all the kinds of food on this planet and that they have no part in its creation. This realization will make them all the more grateful; if it is not for Allāh, all living beings would have starved to death.

- **Gratitude Upon Being Victorious**

Victory can never be attained without the help of Allah سبحانه و تعالی, therefore be grateful to Him. Muslims have been time again reminded of this fact in the Qur'an.<sup>22</sup>

- **Gratitude For Security And Homeland**

Having a piece of land that gives you citizenship rights is a great blessing of Allah سبحانه و تعالی. There are people in the world even today who don't have civic rights or citizenship of any country; therefore, one must not take a secure homeland for granted. Allah سبحانه و تعالی mentions this blessing as His Benefaction in the Qur'an when He سبحانه و تعالی reminded the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and his companions of the days when they had lost all civic rights in Makkah, and were oppressed; and then Allāh blessed them with Madinah as a secure homeland, therefore they must be grateful to Him.<sup>23</sup>

- **Gratitude for Sweet And Clean Water**

If all the water on this planet was to turn salty, or all rainfall was to become acidic, or if all the rivers were to dry up, does mankind have the power to turn it into fresh and sweet water? The truth is that man does not have the power to do so despite all the material advancement. Nor can he bring down rainfall from the clouds if Allāh does not will, therefore, be grateful for all the thirst quenching clean and pure water.<sup>24</sup>

- **Gratitude for the perfect anatomy**

The miraculous functioning of all the body parts call for immense gratitude from man. Allāh سبحانه و تعالی frequently mentions three body parts, as they are the major faculties that help people in living a full life: hearing, vision, and the hearts.<sup>25</sup>

- **Gratitude for the creation of oceans and seas**

From which you gain fresh meat, gemstones, and fresh pearls. Also if it were not for the seas, travelling through the earth would become very limited.<sup>26</sup>

- **Gratitude for the power over domestic animals:**

Despite their power, they are subjected to mankind for slaughtering and eating.<sup>27</sup> And they are subservient to man for riding despite their enormous size and great strength.

- **Gratitude for receiving absolute kingdom**

Allāh states the example of Prophet Sulayman, when he heard an ant telling her fellow ants to get into their anthill to save themselves from the king and his horses, he humbled himself in front of Allāh and prayed to him to count him among His righteous servants.<sup>28</sup>

Similarly, when Sulayman عليه السلام saw the power vested in one of his courtiers, that he brought the throne of the queen of Sheba within the blink of an eye, he said, this is all from the blessings of my Lord so that He may see if I am grateful or not.<sup>29</sup>

- **Gratitude for day and night**

It is only Allāh سبحانه و تعالی who has made this planet habitable. The coming of day and night is one of the major favours of Allāh upon mankind so that they may rest during the night and earn livelihood during the day.<sup>30</sup>

- **Gratitude for the Blowing Winds**

Winds are a powerful creation of Allāh, which bring the rain, and also facilitate the sailing of the ships on the seas.<sup>31</sup>

- **Gratitude for Ease in Commandments**

Allāh سبحانه و تعالی is All Merciful and creates ease for His servants whenever it becomes difficult for them to carry out the commandments. For example, fasting is obligatory, however if someone is sick or is travelling he can miss in those days and then fast later on.<sup>32</sup>

Hence humans are indebted to Allāh for one single breath that they inhale, of one morsel of

<sup>21</sup> Al Baqarah, 2: 172.

<sup>22</sup> Aal e Imran, 3: 123.

<sup>23</sup> Al Anfāl, 8: 26.

<sup>24</sup> Al Waqiah, 56: 70.

<sup>25</sup> Al Mominūn, 23: 78.

<sup>26</sup> An Nahl, 16: 14.

<sup>27</sup> Al Hajj, 22: 36.

<sup>28</sup> An Naml, 27: 19.

<sup>29</sup> An Naml, 27: 40.

<sup>30</sup> Al Qasas, 28: 73.

<sup>31</sup> Ar Rūm, 30: 46.

<sup>32</sup> Al Baqarah, 2: 185.

food that they eat, and all that they consume from the universe even for their basic survival. Allāh rightfully says in the Qur'an that if you were to count the blessings of Allāh, you would not be able to.<sup>33</sup>

### • Gratitude For livelihood on earth

Gratefulness is incumbent upon mankind for the variety of the livelihood that Allāh سبحانه و تعالیٰ has provided on the planet for life to go on.<sup>34</sup>

These are just a few examples of occasions of being grateful. The fact of the matter is that if we try to enumerate the blessings of Allāh سبحانه و تعالیٰ, we would not be able to do so. Therefore being grateful is a state in which a believer should spend his days and nights.

### ❖ The Benefits of Gratitude

The Question arises: why should we be so grateful? The answer lies again in the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah. Some of the magnanimous benefits derived from gratitude are listed below:

### • The Biggest Beneficiary is the Person Himself

*“And whoever is grateful is grateful for (the benefit of) himself.”*<sup>35</sup>

Allāh سبحانه و تعالیٰ does not need gratefulness from us, rather it is the mankind who benefits abundantly by practicing this positive emotion.

### • Gratitude Diverts Punishment

Allāh سبحانه و تعالیٰ is free of all needs, He is All Independent, He is in no need of gratitude from His slaves nor is He سبحانه و تعالیٰ keen on punishing people.

However, He سبحانه و تعالیٰ has connected the diversion of punishment with gratitude from the people.<sup>36</sup>

The major resource accrued by being grateful for all the above bounties and more, is that the grateful person becomes aware of the Greatness of Allāh سبحانه و تعالیٰ by observing his

surroundings, becomes humble towards the Benefactor, and readily obeys Him.<sup>37</sup>

This Verse speaks of a person who when embarks on a sea journey, is more disposed to danger and is hopeful of a safe voyage, therefore these two traits are mentioned in this Verse specifically.<sup>38</sup> The Arabic words used are *Sabbār* (صَبَّار) and *Shakūr*, (شَكُور) superlatives of patience and gratitude, and only these character strengths, the very patient and very grateful can have the knowledge of Allāh's سبحانه و تعالیٰ Greatness, and witness it in the vast sea.<sup>39</sup>

When Allāh helps a person or a nation from where they did not expect, it is the patient and the grateful who are able to discern the greatness of Allāh's help and learn from the great landmarks of history.<sup>40</sup>

To derive lessons from history, to understand the reasons for the trials that befell them and the blessings they were bestowed upon, and develop patience as well as gratitude on that what befalls him, is only possible when a person is *Sabbār* (صَبَّار) and *Shakūr* (شَكُور).<sup>41</sup> These Verses thus give the sciences of anthropology and archaeology a whole new dimension; they become a means of connecting with Allāh سبحانه و تعالیٰ.

### • Gratitude Increases Blessings

In Surah Ibrahim, Allāh سبحانه و تعالیٰ has clearly linked the increase of blessings with gratefulness.<sup>42</sup>

Furthermore, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

*“It is only Allāh سبحانه و تعالیٰ who is capable of granting this exceptional benefit. No power on earth other than Him can give that which He intends to stop and no power can stop a certain blessing if He wants to give.”*<sup>43</sup>

### • Gratitude Is a Form Of Worship

<sup>37</sup> Luqman, 31: 31.

<sup>38</sup> Ibn Ashūr, “*Tafsir Al-Tahrir Wal-Tanwir*”, (Tunisia: Al Dar al Tunisia lin Nashr, 1984) 21/190.

<sup>39</sup> Al Baqāi, “*Nazm Al-Durar Fi Tanasub Al-Ayi Wa Al-Suwar*”, (Beirut: Al Maktaba al Ilmiyya, 1980), 15/206.

<sup>40</sup> Ibrahim, 14: 5.

<sup>41</sup> Ibn Taymiyyah, “*Majmu' al Fatawa*”, 4/107.

<sup>42</sup> Ibrahim, 14: 7.

<sup>43</sup> Sahih Bukhari, *Kitab al Salah*: 844.

<sup>33</sup> An Nahl, 16:18.

<sup>34</sup> Al A'rāf, 7: 10.

<sup>35</sup> Luqman, 31: 12.

<sup>36</sup> An Nisa, 4: 147.

Abu Huraira a narrated that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

“The one who eats and is grateful, is equal to a patient fasting person.”<sup>44</sup>

### ❖ Gratitude Does Not Always Go with Unexpected, Huge Favors

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is reported to have said:

“Whoever is not grateful for a little, he cannot be grateful for a lot, and whoever is not grateful to the people, is not grateful to Allāh, and expressing the blessings of Allāh is gratitude, and leaving them is ingratitude, and unity is mercy, while disunity is punishment.”<sup>45</sup>

### ❖ The Prophetic Ways of Expressing Gratitude

#### 1. Tahajjud: تَهَجُّدٌ

“Ziyad ʿ reported that he heard Mugheerāʿ saying, indeed the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would stand in prayer or would pray salah (صَلَاةٌ) until his feet- or legs- would become swollen. He was asked about it and he replied: ‘Should I not be a grateful slave?’<sup>46</sup>

#### 2. Sajdah of Shukr: سَجْدَةُ الشُّكْرِ

Abu Bakrah ʿ reported about the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم:

“Whenever anything good came to him (pleasing him) or he was given good news, he prostrated himself in gratitude to Allāh.”<sup>47</sup>

#### 3. Being Grateful For The People In One’s Life

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم passed by a group of women and warned them against being ungrateful to their husbands. Then he explained to them, that sometimes it so happens that you are delayed in getting married, and then Allāh blesses you with a husband, and grants you children and then you get annoyed at something and say ungratefully that I have never received any goodness from you.<sup>48</sup>

It is also reported that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said: “He who does not thank the people is not thankful to Allah.”<sup>49</sup>

This is a teaching that we tend to forget, and try to wipe out the favors of others, which breeds resentment and negativity in the hearts of other people.

#### 4. Fasting

When the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم arrived at Madinah, he observed that the Jews fasted on the tenth of Muharram. Upon asking he was told that they fasted due in order to express their gratitude to Allāh for freeing them from the tyranny of the Pharaoh on this day. So the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that we have more right over Musa than the Jews, therefore we shall fast on the ninth and tenth on the coming year if Allāh wills.<sup>50</sup> Thus *shukr* is one of the basic principles in Islam in order to stay positive and attain the worldly as well as the benefits of the Hereafter. We come to end of the discussion of gratitude with the following Hadith:

“A believer’s ways are wondrous in the sense that he receives goodness in every matter; and this is the case with none others but the believers. If he receives goodness and he is grateful, it is again good for him. And if a calamity befalls him and he is patient, he still reaps goodness from it.”<sup>51</sup>

This Hadith carries the most positive message: *shukr* and *sabr* are the two keys to the door of wellbeing. There is no other way of acknowledging the innumerable bounties of Allah other than *shukr*. A grateful person wins the Love of Allah تعالى سبحانه و تعالى as well as the people around him as he is not jealous of anyone and always wants the best for them also.

#### 1.3. Hope: The Western Perspective

According to Fredrickson’s research, wherein most positive emotions arise in circumstances appraised as safe, hope arises in dire circumstances in which people fear the worst yet yearn for better.<sup>52</sup> People feel hope, for instance, in grim situations in which they can envision a chance that

<sup>44</sup> Sunan Ibn Majah, *Kitab as Siyām*: 1764.

<sup>45</sup> Musnad Ahmad: 18449.

<sup>46</sup> Sahih Bukhari, *Kitab Al Tahajjud*: 1130.

<sup>47</sup> Sunan Abu Dawood, *Kitab Al Jihad*: 2774.

<sup>48</sup> Bukhari, *Adab Al Mufrad*: 1048.

<sup>49</sup> Sunan Abu Dawood, *Kitab al Adab*: 4811.

<sup>50</sup> Sahih Muslim, *Kitab al Sawm*: 1130.

<sup>51</sup> Sahih Muslim, *Kitab al Raqa'iq*: 2999.

<sup>52</sup> Lazarus, R. S. “*Emotion And Adaptation*”, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 59.

times might change for the better. The durable resources it builds include optimism and resilience to adversity.<sup>53</sup>

#### 1.4. Hope: *Rajā*: (رجا) : The Islamic Narrative

Technically *Rajā* (رجاء) refers to the heart longing and hoping to attain what it longs for in the future. It also refers to the hope, which dispels bleakness; it is also said that hope and fear go together.<sup>54</sup> *Rajā* has been used in the Qur'an on six occasions: as fear, hope, expecting reward, to delay the matter, confined to sides, to leave or to delay.<sup>55</sup>

The foundation of *Rajā* is servitude of Allāh سبحانه و تعالی, and adhering to His Names *Al Barr* (البر)(the source of all goodness) and *Al Mohsin* (المحسن)(the one who beautifies and enriches) as hope is basically attached to these two Attributes. The strength of ones hope is according to the strength of ones connection with Allāh سبحانه و تعالی through His Names and Attributes<sup>56</sup>

- **Three Levels of Hope**

Allāh سبحانه و تعالی has addressed this emotion of human Psychology in many ways in the Qur'an. Scholars have pointed out three levels of hope. First is to hope for Allāh's سبحانه و تعالی Mercy and continue obeying Him and leaving off that which He has forbidden. This level is known as *al rajā al mahmūd*, (الرجاء المحمود) (praiseworthy hope). The second level is having hope in Allāh سبحانه و تعالی's Mercy while continuing on the path of sins and transgression. This level is considered to be the level of *ghurūr* (غرور) i.e. the person is deceiving himself. The third level of hope is that a person becomes completely heedless of Allāh سبحانه و تعالی and feels secure from His wrath. This type of hope is *harām* Imam al Karkhi said<sup>57</sup> (حرام) that if you don't obey Allāh سبحانه و تعالی then hoping for His Mercy is foolishness and will only

result in humiliation.<sup>58</sup> Therefore, the optimum level of hope is that which is mixed with fear.

- **Hope and Fear**

The emotion of fear goes hand in hand with hope. People, who lose hope in acceptance of their prayers become pessimistic about the future, become depressed and sometimes resort to suicide. The etiquette of *dua* (دعاء) mentioned in the Qur'an in the following Verse balances between unrealistic hope and despair:

“...And invoke Him with fear and hope”<sup>59</sup>

Fear of having displeased Him and hope from His unending Mercy keep a person balanced in actions.

- **Strive**

Another characteristic of hope is that it urges a person to strive for what he is hoping for, whereas despair brings lethargy and procrastination.<sup>60</sup> The Prophet Ya'qūb ُ in the darkest period of his life, when three of his sons were missing, told his sons to go and look for their lost brothers, and he warned them against losing hope as it is the characteristic of the disbelievers.<sup>61</sup>

- **Hope for forgiveness**

Allāh سبحانه و تعالی arouses hope of forgiveness in the hearts of people, because if they do not have hope of being forgiven they will keep treading on the paths of sins and wrongdoing. They will despair and will become hopeless thinking that their sins have become too many and their shortcomings have piled up so they might as well carry on doing wrong and enjoy this life at least.<sup>62</sup> Allāh سبحانه و تعالی declares magnanimously in the Qur'an that even the most tyrant oppressor should not despair of His Mercy; He سبحانه و تعالی

<sup>53</sup> Fredrickson, 1-53.

<sup>54</sup> Ibn Manzūr, “*Lisan al Arab*”, 14/309.

<sup>55</sup> Ferozabadi, “*Basair Zawit Tamyeez*”, (KSA: Al Majlis al A'la, 1996), 3/50.

<sup>56</sup> Ibn al Qayyim, “*Madārij al Salikeen*” (Cairo: Dar al Hadith, 2018), 1/43-44.

<sup>57</sup> Ibn al Jazzi, “*Al Tasheel Li Ulum Al Tanzeel*”, ed. Muhammad Abdul Mun'im (Cairo: Dar al Kutub al Haditha, n.d.), 1/361.

<sup>58</sup> Ibn Al Jawzi, “*Minhaj Al Qasideen*”, (Lahore: Idara Ma'arif e Islami, 2008), 438.

<sup>59</sup> Al A'rāf, 7: 56.

<sup>60</sup> Sa'di, A.R., “*Ta'seer Alkareem Alrahman Fi Tafseer Kalam Al Mannan*”, 404.

<sup>61</sup> Yusuf, 12: 87.

<sup>62</sup> Sa'di, A.R., “*Ta'seer Alkareem Alrahman Fi Tafseer Kalam Al Mannan*”, 706.

will forgive all sins if people return to Him in repentance.<sup>63</sup>

- **Hope for Rewards**

The hope for the tremendous rewards that Allāh تعالى و سبحانه has promised encourages the believer to perform good deeds and consoles him for depriving himself of the worldly pleasures hoping for the rewards and delights of the Hereafter, the greatest of which will be the Pleasure of Allāh تعالى و سبحانه and seeing His Face.<sup>64</sup>

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that Allāh و سبحانه تعالى says:

*"I am with My servant just as the way he thinks of Me."*<sup>65</sup>

Imam Nawwawi says that scholars have said that this hadith is about having good hopes from Allāh تعالى و سبحانه. If a person hopes that Allāh تعالى و سبحانه will forgive him, then Allāh تعالى و سبحانه will do so.<sup>66</sup>

Ibn Abi Jamra says in *Faiz Al Qadīr* (فيض القدير) that this Hadith means to have hope of acceptance of supplications when one supplicates to Allāh تعالى و سبحانه, hope of acceptance of repentance when one repents, hope for forgiveness when one seeks forgiveness from Allāh تعالى و سبحانه and hope of acceptance of all good deeds that one does for the sake of Allāh تعالى و سبحانه. The biggest of sins is that you despair of the Mercy of Allāh تعالى و سبحانه and do not have good hopes from Him.<sup>67</sup>

Jabir bin Abdullah ّ reported: I heard the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying three days before his death:

*"Let none of you die unless he has good expectations from Allāh".*<sup>68</sup>

Hope thus is a salient positive emotion, which channelizes a person from pessimism to optimism, from grief to joy and from helplessness to the power of prayer.

**Conclusion:** We may conclude that Fredrickson's work is remarkable in pointing out how positive emotions affect our lives and broaden our horizons. She deserves due credit for her research. However, when it comes to tangible examples, her research lacks in providing any. Studying the Islamic narrative actually broadens the thinking and provides newer avenues and tangents of feeling grateful and hopeful in life. Thus eliminating discontentment and dejection even in the harshest phases of life

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<sup>63</sup> Al Zumar, 39: 53.

<sup>64</sup> Utz, A., "*Psychology From The Islamic Perspective*", (Riyadh: International Islamic Publishing House, 2011), 161.

<sup>65</sup> Sahih Muslim, Kitab Al Dhikri Wad Dua Wat Tawbah Wal Istighfar: 2675.

<sup>66</sup> Nawwawi, Abu Zakariyya, "*Sharh Sahih Muslim*", (Beirut: Dar al Ma'rifah: 1997), 17/3.

<sup>67</sup> Manavi, M.A.R., "*Faiz Al Qadeer Sharh Jami' Al Saghir*" (Cairo: Dar al Hadith, 2010), 273.

<sup>68</sup> Sahih Muslim, Kitab Al Jannah Was Sifati Naimuha wa Ahluha: 2877.



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