



Translation Assessment of Three English Translations of Words of Patience in some Selected Verses

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1. The Notion of Patience

Etymologically, the word patience is derived from the Latin root "pati-" which symbolizes "to suffer" (Skeat, 1993:335). From the religious point of view, as Fowler (1999:1) asserts, the virtue of patience is widely common in Old and New Testaments. In Old Testament, patience means "slow to anger" and in New Testament it signifies "perseverance in the face of difficulty".

Easwaran (2010:25-6) defines patience as "a self-mastery, the capacity to hold on and remain loving in a difficult situation when every atom of your being wants to turn and run." In a broader line, ابن القيم (2008:15-6) remarks that patience means accepting all kinds of hardship.

1.1 Synonyms of Patience

With slight differences, Fowler (1999:1) and Park (2003: 3-6) outline that the word patience can be used synonymously with the following word:

- a. Stoicism - "to bear something"
- b. Fatalism - "to put up with something"
- c. Passivism - "to roll with something"
- d. Escapism - "to move away from something"
- e. Isolationism - "to shut something out"
- f. Humanism - "to deal with something"
- g. bear "to accept something unpleasant"
- h. endurance "to bear (pain, suffering, etc.) patiently."

i. tolerate " to have the willing to bear something"

1.2 Categories of Patience

ابن القيم (2008:54-8) describes patience as being one of the following:

- 1- Obligatory patience (wâjib)
- 2- Encouraged patience (mundûb)
- 3- Forbidden patience (mahdhûr)
- 4- Disliked patience (makrûh)
- 5- Permissible patience (mubâh)

1.3 Contexts of Patience

According to Fowler (1999:2), patience is obligatory in the following situation:

1. Patient with people – it happens when someone treated unfairly.

Eph. 4:2 - "conduct yourselves with patience, showing forbearance to one another in love"

Thess. 5:14 - "be patient with all men"

2. Patient in trials- it occurs when one feels that he is unsupported or unappreciated by others.

James 1:3 - "the testing of your faith produces endurance"

3. Patient with one's self – in this case is patience is regarded as an urgent necessary to abide weaknesses.

1.4 Types of Patience

Either physical or psychological, المنجد (2009:14) states that types of patience are as follows:

1. Physical patience by choice, such as doing hard labour willingly.

2. Physical patience without choice, such as patiently bearing illness, beatings and extremes of heat and cold.

3. Psychological patience by choice, such as refraining from things which common sense says wrong.

4. Psychological patience without choice, such as patiently bearing an enforced separation from one whom you love.

1.5 Evaluating the Renditions of Words of Patience in some Selected Verses

1. صبر

تُفْلِحُونَ) لَعَلَّكُمْ اللَّهُ وَاتَّقُوا وَرَابِطُوا وَصَابِرُوا (يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اصْبِرُوا

(ال عمران: 200)

[Shakir 3:200] O you who believe! Be patient and excel in patience and remain steadfast, and be careful of (your duty to) Allah, that you may be successful.

[Yusufali 3:200] O ye who believe! Persevere in patience and constancy; vie in such perseverance; strengthen each other; and fear Allah; that ye may prosper.

[Pickthal 3:200] O ye who believe! Endure, outdo all others in endurance, be ready, and observe your duty to Allah, in order that ye may succeed.

Without complaining, صبر demonstrates the feeling of preserving calmness at times of grief and stress (Farid.2006:467). Skillfully, Shakir captures the sense of having a peace of mind. Being very effective in reflecting the intensity of such a word, Shakir reveals his expertise in his translation. On the other hand, none of the two other renditions have given the appropriate equivalent nor they preserve the sense of self-control. What is more, Pickthal inaccurately renders the word صبر into endure. Actually, there is a difference between patience and endurance. The word patience is stronger than endurance in engraving the state of facing one's difficulty calmly. Such deficiency, in Pickthal's rendition, displays the translator's unawareness of that difference.

2. طاق

(وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ فَمَنْ تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَهُ وَأَنْ تَصُومُوا خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ) (البقرة 184)

[Shakir 2:184] For a certain number of days; but whoever among you is sick or on a journey, then (he shall fast) a (like) number of other days; and those who are not able to do it may effect a redemption by feeding a poor man; so whoever does good spontaneously it is better for him; and that you fast is better for you if you know.

[Yusufali 2:184] (Fasting) for a fixed number of days; but if any of you is ill, or on a journey, the prescribed number (Should be made up) from days later. For those who can do it (With hardship), is a ransom, the feeding of one that is indigent. But he that will give more, of his own free will,- it is better for him. And it is better for you that ye fast, if ye only knew.

[Pickthal 2:184] (Fast) a certain number of days; and (for) him who is sick among you, or on a journey, (the same) number of other days; and for those who can afford it there is a ransom: the feeding of a man in need - but whoso doeth good of his own accord, it is better for him: and that ye fast is better for you if ye did but know.

According to Faird (2006:532), طاق entails doing something with great difficulty. Being inaccurate, Shakir and Pickthal have converted the meaning of طاق completely. They translate the word طاق into who are not able to do it and who can afford it, respectively. Ali, on the other hand, is the only one who renders the word طاق properly. Hoping to convey the meaning intended, he paraphrases it using with hardship between two brackets. With a patient spirit, he reveals how difficult and hard the act of fasting for a specific persons is.

3. حمل

(رَبَّنَا وَلَا تُحَمِّلْنَا مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِ وَاعْفُ عَنَّا وَابْرِحْ لَنَا وَأَرْحَمْنَا أَنْتَ مَوْلَانَا فَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ)
(البقرة 286)

[Shakir 2:286] Allah does not impose upon any soul a duty but to the extent of its ability; for it is (the benefit of) what it has earned and upon it (the evil of) what it has wrought: Our Lord! do not punish us if we forget or make a mistake; Our Lord! do not lay on us a burden as Thou didst lay on those before us, Our Lord do not impose upon us that which we have not the strength to bear; and pardon us and grant us protection and have mercy on us, Thou art our Patron, so help us against the unbelieving people.

[Yusufali 2:286] On no soul doth Allah Place a burden greater than it can bear. It gets every good that it earns, and it suffers every ill that it earns. (Pray:) "Our Lord! Condemn us not if we forget or fall into error; our Lord! Lay not on us a burden Like that which Thou didst lay on those before us; Our Lord! Lay not on us a burden greater than we have strength to bear. Blot out our sins, and grant us forgiveness. Have mercy on us. Thou art our Protector; Help us against those who stand against faith."

[Pickthal 2:286] Allah tasketh not a soul beyond its scope. For it (is only) that which it hath earned, and against it (only) that which it hath deserved. Our Lord! Condemn us not if we forget, or miss the mark! Our Lord! Lay not on us such a burden as thou didst lay on those before us! Our Lord! Impose not on us that which we have not the strength to bear! Pardon us, absolve us and have mercy on us, Thou, our Protector, and give us victory over the disbelieving folk.

Farid (2006: 204) remarks that حمل is the condition of being physically and psychologically able to control one's self. To cultivate one's spirituality to the most exalted position, حمل demonstrates the fact that patience is not a natural born talent. It demands exerting all possible ways so as to be an instinctive feature of one's behaviour. Rendering it literally, all translators fail to translate the word حمل into English. This is due to the fact that all translators rely heavily on the shallow meaning of this word regardless of its spiritual and psychological atmosphere. What is more, they paraphrase the word in order to attain its ultimate significance. Actually, the subtlety of this word of patience has been completely absorbed.

4. شق

(قَالَ إِنِّي أُرِيدُ أَنْ أُكْحِكَ إِحْدَى ابْنَتَيَّ هَاتَيْنِ عَلَى أَنْ تَأْجُرَنِي ثَمَانِي حَجَجٍ فَإِنْ أَتَمَمْتَ عَشْرًا فَمِنْ عِنْدِكَ وَمَا أُرِيدُ أَنْ أَمُشِقَ عَلَيْكَ سَنَجْدُنِي إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ) (القصص 27)

[Shakir 28:27] He said: I desire to marry one of these two daughters of mine to you on condition that you should serve me for eight years; but if you complete ten, it will be of your own free will, and I do not wish to be hard to you; if Allah please, you will find me one of the good.

[Yusufali 28:27] He said: "I intend to wed one of these my daughters to thee, on condition that thou serve me for eight years; but if thou complete ten years, it will be (grace) from thee. But I intend not to place thee under a difficulty: thou wilt find me, indeed, if Allah wills, one of the righteous."

[Pickthal 28:27] He said: Lo! I fain would marry thee to one of these two daughters of mine on condition that thou hirest thyself to me for (the term of) eight pilgrimages. Then if thou completest ten it will be of thine own accord, for I would not make it hard for thee. Allah willing, thou wilt find me of the righteous.

Farid (2006:447) states that شق is an intense word of patience. Exceeding the limits, it necessitates being patient at times of stress. To certain extent, Ali keeps pace with the general meaning of the word شق in his translation, but he fails to express its intensity. Shakir's and Pickthal's translations, on the other hand, are far from the original meaning. In their translation, they exhibit the way of behaving with people. Having the meaning of patience and strength, all the three translators are imprecise to reproduce similar word which is as intense as شق is. An attempt has been made to stick as close to the length of the original and yet in English the word turns out to be longer and occupies an extended meaning.

5. كلف

(لا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا مَا آتَاهَا سَيَجْعَلُ اللَّهُ بَعْدَ عُسْرٍ يُسْرًا) (الطلاق 7)

[Shakir 65:7] Let him who has abundance spend out of his abundance and whoever has his means of subsistence straitened to him, let him spend out of that which Allah has given him; Allah does not lay on any soul a burden except to the extent to which He has granted it; Allah brings about ease after difficulty.

[Yusufali 65:7] Let the man of means spend according to his means: and the man whose resources are restricted, let him spend according to what Allah has given him. Allah puts no burden on any person beyond what He has given him. After a difficulty, Allah will soon grant relief.

[Pickthal 65:7] Let him who hath abundance spend of his abundance, and he whose provision is measured, let him spend of that which Allah hath given him. Allah asketh naught of any soul save that which He hath given it. Allah will vouchsafe, after hardship, ease.

As a burden on one's back, **كُفِّ** is to be satisfied with one's fortune (Farid, 2006: 724). With regard to its renditions, **كُفِّ** has been successfully translated by all translators. This can be ascribed to the existence of such meaning in English. The only defect in their translations of this word is that they all paraphrase the word so that they lack to achieve economy which is the cornerstone of English. Besides, the aesthetic touch of such a word has been mischief or, in fact, lost.

6. نظر

(وَإِنِّي مُرْسِلَةٌ إِلَيْهِمْ بِهَدِيَّةٍ فَنَظِرَةٌ بِمَ يَرْجِعُ الْمُرْسَلُونَ) (يونس:35)

[Shakir 27:35] And surely I am going to send a present to them, and shall wait to see what (answer) do the messengers bring back.

[Yusufali 27:35] "But I am going to send him a present, and (wait) to see with what (answer) return (my) ambassadors."

[Pickthal 27:35] But lo! I am going to send a present unto them, and to see with what (answer) the messengers return.

Looking forward expectedly, **نظر** is another word of patience that requires being awaited for something to happen (Al-Shirazi, 2004:Vol.10/218). The translations above lose sight with the appropriate lexical item that indicates such a sense. Shakir's and Ali's inconsistencies, in their translation of the word **نظر** as wait to see and (wait) to see, respectively, show that they are not acquainted with the semantic meaning of the word **نظر** in Arabic. Obviously, they rest their renditions of this verse on the interpretation of the Holy Quran. Unfortunately, both translations have failed to keep pace with the aesthetic value of such an Arabic word in English. Being unable to capture the intended meaning which lurks beyond the surface one, the phrase *to see* has been chosen haphazardly by Pickthal.

7. حلم

(فَبَشِّرْهُنَّ أَهَ بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ هُنَّ حَامِلَاتٌ بِلِباسِهِنَّ حِمْلَهُنَّ وَكُنَّ يَئِسْنَ مِنَ الْمَشْرِقِ عِندَ الْبَيْتِ كِذِّبَتْ بِنُوحٍ إِذْ أَوْفَىٰ أَهْلَهُ بِوَعْدِهِ لِيُجِيبَ لَكُمْ مِنْهُ نَبَأَ الْبَيْتِ عِندَ الْمَقْدِسِ إِنَّكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ لَمَكِينُونَ) (الصافات: 101)

[Shakir 37:101] So We gave him the good news of a boy, possessing forbearance.

[Yusufali 37:101] So We gave him the good news of a boy ready to suffer and forbear.

[Pickthal 37:101] So We gave him tidings of a gentle son.

As the calmness of the deep ocean, some people are able to confront any kind of hardship without becoming annoyed. **حلم** is the highest degree of patience. الحسيني (1995:404) highlights that **حلم** is the ability to put down one's suffering and anger. Synonymously, Shakir and Ali endeavour to render **حلم** into English by making use of many lexical items. The same inaccuracy occurs in Pickthal's translation. Not only he fails to render the word but also the psychological characteristic of that word has been distorted.

8. ثبت

(الأنفال 45) ((أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا لَقِيتُمْ فِئَةً فَاثْبُتُوا وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ))

[Shakir 8:45] O you who believe! When you meet a party, then be firm, and remember Allah much, that you may be successful.

[Yusufali 8:45] O ye who believe! When ye meet a force, be firm, and call Allah in remembrance much (and often); that ye may prosper:

[Pickthal 8:45] O ye who believe! When ye meet an army, hold firm and think of Allah much, that ye may be successful.

Again, all the three translators render the word of patience **ثبت** inaccurately. Farid (2006:111) emphasizes that **ثبت** or to bear, as the researcher's translation, implies not only patience but strength of character in the midst of pain. It seems that all of them fail to conceive the precise meaning of the word **ثبت** which carries the meaning of accepting something unwillingly. So that they wrongly render the word **ثبت** into be firm and hold firm, respectively. The translations of this word of patience are actually lamented for loss of 'flavour' and 'charm' which the word indicates.

Conclusions

- 1- To satisfy the tourist's interest, translators should take the advantage of using accurate and attractive description.
- 2- Promoting one's translation, neutralization is a new process that can be employed.
- 3- The continuity of the translated texts may distort the meaning of the verse as a whole.
- 4- Aiming at preserving the intended meaning in the original text and being more accurate in their renditions, some translators resort to the technique of addition (i.e. supplementing extended words between brackets to display the proper meaning).
- 5- The expert knowledge of the translator and his background knowledge of the original language have played an important role in his translation.
- 6- Paraphrasing some words of patience does not produce the same effect as the original does. It may also be considered as a compensation for one's literal translation.
- 7- It is preferable to pay more attention to the translation of some emotive words. Receiving little or no attention, some translators fall in pitfalls.
- 8- Approximating words of patience in the original texts and revealing all shades of meaning necessitate having sufficient knowledge about the nature of the Holy Quran and the surrounding context of the verses under translation.
- 9 - Within the text framework, the translator's job is to penetrate into the depth of the Quranic language to bridge the gulf between the original text and the translation.

10- Owing to the fact that they do not stick to one style, there is a sense of inconsistency in the renditions of some translators. For example, both words of patience حمل and كلف have been rendered into lay on someone a burden by all of them. Such inaccurate translations can lead to confusion.

11- Preferably, the translators should dig out and exert all possible efforts to be successful in their tasks. Indulging themselves in the process of translation, the factor of economy has been marginalized by many translators.

12- It is evident that many translators lack the ability to depict the suitable equivalent of the word ثبت in English. This can be ascribed either to the absence of such a word in English or they loss proficiency.

13- To be fluctuated between two conditions, all the three translators, namely: Ali, Shakir and Pickthal, opt for being source- oriented sometimes, and target-oriented others.

14- Exerting great efforts, some words of patience, for example: صبر and حليم , demand having an emotive force to be translated.

15- It is preferable for any translator to be selective in his choice of words in order not to confuse his readers by using many lexical items. And thus the texts may be deprived of vividness and the beauty.

16- One of the most salient defects of Pickthal's translation is that he mingles between patience and endurance. The discrepancy between patience and endurance lies in fact that endurance lasts for a long time, while patience is a general term that encompasses all other words of patience. In other words, endurance is a long-term state.

17- It is concluded that some words of patience, for example: طاق and حلم , are compatible with inner feeling of tolerance, whereas, others, for example: حمل and شق , encompass internal as well as external feeling of patience .

18- It seems that lexical differences, between the two languages, are unbridgeable and they call for a number of `adjustments.

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