



# Undesirable Effects of Procrastination from The Perspective of Islamic Narrations

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## ABSTRACT

**Objective:** One of the harmful acts in the society is procrastination and the majority of the society are struggling with it and its regular recurrence can turn to addiction. **Methodology:** The addicted person procrastinates unwittingly and thus loses the opportunities; due to the importance of this issue and the intensive efforts being put on this issue by Islam, there are various interpretations in Islamic narrations regarding avoiding procrastination and taking the opportunities on the spot. **Results:** This descriptive writing states that with regard to Islamic narrations it can be seen that procrastination has several unfavorable effects such as negligence in remembering God and resurrection, annihilation, regret, physical and mental problems. **Conclusion:** This disease can be rooted out by taking the opportunities, avoiding sloth and laxity, thinking about the repercussion of every action and self-assessment.

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## 1. Introduction

Procrastination is one of the disastrous diseases, we are suffering from and we are not even aware of (Chowdhury et al., 1970). Most of the time we sit on our hands for opportunities to arrive but the fact is they have to be taken. Having procrastination as your chief trait would lead to live an absurd life. One who suffers from it would wait for an appropriate opportunity to arrive but it never does so; opportunities come one after another and he does not take them and his life come to an end with no substantial work worth of mentioning (Chambers & Herbert, 2014).

Procrastination is a problem that could possibly reside in one's very existence and thus, affects one's behavior, thoughts and tendencies. This problem can only be solved by studying its roots and providing remedial solutions to it (Harmony & Bonab, 2010).

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## 2. Materials and methods

### *2.1 The concept of the words*

The most significant aspect in elaborating this discussion is the recognition of its words and their concepts. In this article, while studying and explaining the word procrastination, other major words addressed in the narrations of this article are considered as well (Raeisi & Asgari, 2014):

### *2.2 Procrastination*

Procrastination literally means to delay, drag one's foot or play for time. It also means postponing doing something and putting it off till tomorrow.

### *2.3 laxity*

The linguistic and idiomatic meanings for this term are identical and it means: leaving doing something on purpose or due to negligence, or it means Abandonment, giving up, restraint in the work, hesitation, negligence, or "giving away, and neglect" (Rosman & Hanapi, 2017).

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#### 2.4 Sloth

This word's definition is somewhat similar to what we mentioned for laxity and it means laziness, idleness and not working.

#### 2.5 Negligence

Negligence means "carelessness, ignorance, and lack of attention to something" and also means "inattention" and "forgetfulness oblivion unawareness, not remembering".

#### 2.6 Taking the opportunities

Taking the opportunities in Farsi is an infinitive, and it means: one who used the opportunity given in a proper way, it clearly means taking advantage of the chances we face with in life.

**Idiomatic meaning of procrastination:** in respect with what have been mentioned procrastination is sheer act of postponement while you can do something today but you delay till tomorrow (Razak, 2016). Sometimes humans think they have plenty of opportunities ahead and life would bring them more opportunities, so they postpone doing their tasks for tomorrow. This procrastination can be seen in both materialistic and spiritual aspects of humans' lives.

### 3. Discussion and results

#### 3.1 The effects of procrastination

Many internal and external factors make us delay our work. One of the most important internal factors is negligence, self-indulgence in comfort and convenience, laziness and lack of decisiveness in work; and the most important external factors can be Satan's thoughts and temptations, entertaining factors, and mechanical life (Alsehail, 2014).

According to psychologists, procrastination has several severe problems such as internal horror, anxiety, inner fears, lack of self-control and depression. These problems have some symptoms including fatigue, severe pain, insomnia and hypertension and stomach ulcers.

Irrespective of internal or external factors that procrastination can trigger, it affects humans in a strange way and our Imams have warned us against its effects. This article attempts to address some of the destructive effects of procrastination:

##### 3.1.1 Negligence in remembering God and resurrection

Procrastination deter one from carrying on one's materialistic works and it can do the same in immaterial issues like remembering God, death and resurrection.

In this regard, Imam Sadeq says: realize the rest of your life lying ahead of you and don't say tomorrow is another day because those who lived before perished due to two things; first living in a dream world and sticking to that and second procrastinating till the time they died and God's anger took them suddenly when they were in negligence (Hussain, 2017).

##### 3.1.2 Falling in the abyss of sins

One of the worst effects of procrastination is committing sins and then adopting a habit of committing sins. Imam Hossein while warning us against this fact says: procrastination defeated him so that he compromised with life and made friends with sins and prohibitions.

##### 3.1.3 Annihilation

One of the deadliest aspects of procrastination that no one pays any heed to is "annihilation". Regarding this deadly effect, Imam Baqer says: beware of procrastination because it is a sea wherein one can be drawn unknowingly (Ebrahimi et al., 2016).

##### 3.1.4 Confusion, perplexity and emptiness

Procrastinators feel empty and unworthy inside and insisting on procrastination will lead in confusion and perplexity. Imam Sadeq says: delaying repentance is being deceived and long-lasting procrastination brings about confusion (Mir et al., 2016).

##### 3.1.5 Loss of opportunities

Time is precious and if it is lost nothing can compensate for it and religious leaders have analogized it to fleeting clouds in the sky or lightning or wind. Imam Ali says: opportunities are passing by like fleeting clouds, so take the appropriate opportunities.

If one cannot perceive that life passes one by, he is prone to oblivion and negligence and without optimal use of his life he would die empty-handed and it is like he has been deceiving himself all his life (Naeem, 2013).

##### 3.1.6 Sorrow and sadness

Procrastination is followed by sorrow and sadness because it causes the loss of opportunities. Imam Ali while advising Imam Hassan says: take the opportunities before they pass you by and make you sad. Imam Ali also says: one who procrastinates is bound to be sad.

##### 3.1.7 Regret

Most of the procrastinators regret doing so.

Prophet Muhammad in his pieces of advice to Abu Dhar says: O Abu Dhar! Beware of procrastination! Because you live today and tomorrow you will not be here, if there were any tomorrow for you, live it like today, so if there were no tomorrow for you, you would not regret procrastinating your work today”.

In this regard Imam Ali commands: one who procrastinates will be bound to regret.

### ***3.1.8 Life in ruin***

Procrastination is a road to ruin one’s life, because during postponing the fleeting moments of our lives pass very fast without us being able to make any use of them.

In a piece of advice regarding the preciousness of life, Prophet Muhammad says to Abu Dhar: O Abu Dhar! Be greedier about your life rather than your wealth.

In this regard Imam Ali commands: loser is one who has wasted all his life and winner is one who has spent his life obeying God Almighty.

Imam sajjad says in Abu Hamza prayers: O God I have wasted my life living in dreams and procrastinating (Islam, 2017).

### ***3.1.9 Abjection and getting cast down***

According to Islamic teaching one who wastes his life procrastinating would be cast down and miserable in his life and afterlife.

When Imam Ali sends Malek Ashtar to Egypt for governing it, he also says in a letter to the Egyptians that: don’t you see that they violated your borders and invaded your cities and looted your possessions and triggered the outbreaks of fighting in your cities? God bless you if you migrate for Jihad, do not stay at home or you will become miserable and cast down. Indeed, the brother of war is awakening, one who sleeps his enemy will not.

In a part of his speech regarding disobedience and laziness of kufa in war, he says: Swear to God! You are not deceiving the people who deceived you with the fire of war. They captured your cities; you do not care; the enemy does not sleep; you are possessed by neglect and forgetfulness, swear to God! Failure is for those who stop helping each other.

### ***3.1.10 Poverty***

Procrastination causes us to earn less and thus after a while it can make us poor.

Imam Ali has commanded: when things were being paired up, laziness and inability were paired of together and from them was born poverty.

### ***3.1.11 Deprivation of blessings***

In long term, procrastination would deprive humans of the blessings they have in their life. Imam Ali regarding the negligence in saying prayers says: If people, when they saw the decay of blessings prayed wholeheartedly whatever they missed God would return to them and would correct every corrupted thing for them.

### ***3.1.12 Ruining one’s and the others’ rights***

One of the other effects of procrastination is ruining one’s and the others’ rights. Imam Ali says: one who surrenders to negligence and procrastination has ruined his and the others’ rights.

### ***3.1.13 Loss of people’s trust***

One of the orders of religion regarding procrastination is the prohibition of putting any trust in the lazy people, so Imam Ali says: "Do not rely on lazy people in your work”.

### ***3.1.14 Losing the hope of life and afterlife***

As Imam Sadiq says: "one who is lazy about his prayer and purity, there is no hope for his afterlife, and one who is lazy about his livelihood, there is no hope for his life in this world." Also, it is quoted from Imam Baqir that "Laziness harms one’s religion and world".

From what we have mentioned so far it can be indicated that procrastination does not also block one’s way to achieve his materialistic goals but also it deters him from his spiritual development and thinking about God, resurrection and death.

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## **4. Conclusion**

Procrastination is a fatal disease. It is one of the key satanic temptations that blocks the human’ way to develop spiritually and achieve God’s satisfaction. It leads in material and immaterial blockage and thus there would be no hope for happiness in this life or salvation in afterlife.

The fact is that we neglect all the blessings we are surrounded with and we are not aware of our conditions, time and place and so we do not know how to make the best use of them all.

According to Islamic narrations it can be said that procrastination includes a wide range of disastrous effects namely negligence in remembering God and resurrection, annihilation, regret, sorrow, ruined life and afterlife and mental and physical problems. Therefore, avoiding satanic temptations, self-appreciation and self-acknowledgement, sense of gratitude, punctuation, avoiding laziness and living in dreams and considering the repercussions of actions can help cure this disease.

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