



## Jane Austen & A Lesson in Patience

*O Q. Rauf, Pause for Thought on the Breakfast Show (6<sup>th</sup> August 2025)*

A few weeks ago – on 18<sup>th</sup> July to be precise – I found myself along with a couple of friends, looking up at the sun-drenched doorway of Jane Austen’s home in Chawton, on the very anniversary day of her death: the 250<sup>th</sup> year anniversary to be even more precise.

Laying aside the fact that I suddenly realised wearing a dress-up bonnet, and enthusiastically acting out our favourite *Pride and Prejudice* passages is how my friends and I roll these days, the day also brought with it so much more than just Jane’s own story.

As I weaved my way in and out of the rooms where one of the greatest female geniuses of literary history roamed, mused and penned her masterpieces – no matter the obstacles in her way, I also began to weave my way in and out of other people’s stories too.

Such as the story of the woman who had flown in all the way from Japan, just so she could make her dream of wearing a Regency dress to traverse the home of her literary heroine, come true.

Or that of the husband gifting his wife of fifty years her lifelong wish of having a full-blown Jane Austen weekend – or in his words, ‘every man’s worst nightmare. But hey! We do what we do for love.’

Or the woman who stood in line with me at the gift shop with tears in her eyes at finally having made it across the Atlantic – after thirty years of working and saving – to the hallowed grounds of Jane’s world.

Everywhere I looked, were stories of love, striving – and patience, leading to this one spot on earth, to pay homage to a soul and pen long past.

In other words, a literary pilgrimage, of the highest order.

Sabr – the Arabic word for patience – is mentioned no less than ninety times in the Qu’ran.

So precious is this virtue, and so great is God’s recognition of our struggle against *impatience* – *nafaad-as-sabr*.

In a world of binge-watching, endless dopamine hits via endless phone scrolling, instant gratification, instant deliveries, instant email responses, the souls I encountered at Jane’s house were a reminder of what the fruit of true patience yields.

It is joy: of a kind that can only be felt when it has been earned through *sabr*.

Or as Jane puts it in *Sense and Sensibility*, “Know your own happiness! You want nothing but patience - or [to] give it a more fascinating name, call it hope.”