

2.The Approach Of Muslim Religious Scholars

Contrary to the Western scholars of religious studies, who emphasize the non-epistemic function of religion and turn to religion as a necessity, most Muslim thinkers base the necessity of religion on its epistemic function, complementing man's epistemic shortcomings.

Even though, Muslim scholars focus their arguments on its epistemic aspect. A general definition of Divine religions share similar themes and regard religion as belief in God, and practical instructions proportionate to this belief. [1](#)

On the same basis, Divinely inspired religion may be defined as a collection of statements regarding beings (including theology, anthropology, and cosmology, irrespective of this world and the world to come) and instructions leading to man's guidance and perfection.

If religious teachings be true and conform to reality, religion will be regarded as true, and practicing them will enjoy adequate validity; otherwise, it will be untrue. Religious instructions result from either the intellect or Divine revelation, and they necessitate beliefs and specific physical and mental practices.

Religious scholars of Islamic studies discuss the necessity of the Divine appointment of prophets and their missions. Their arguments may be categorized as follows.

[2.1 The Social Need For Law](#)

“The philosophers’ proof” emphasizes man's social character, the social need for law, and man's incapability to legislate and enforce laws. The complete exposition of the proof is found in Avicenna's works, but chronologically, Farabi precedes him in dealing with the issue.

[Farabi's Exposition](#)

According to Farabi's (260–339/873–950) philosophical system, the creation of man requires a collective and social life, whereas man lacks adequate capabilities to legislate and enforce the laws required to

establish and maintain the Utopian social order.²

The legislation and enforcement of law can be achieved through various methods. For instance, social hierarchies and relationships in “the city of necessities” and “the city of veneration,”³ are two models of social life, based on the thoughts of the citizens, but the establishment of Utopia can only result from the acceptance and application of Divine revelation.

Farabi defines Utopia as: “the city in which the true objective of coexisting is to collaborate in the affairs which make the achievement and actualization of man’s happiness possible.”⁴ Thus he describes the ruler of this city: “as a man regarded by the ancients as the king and ruler, and deserves to be the receiver of Divine revelation, since it is realized when [man possessing merit and endeavor] achieves such an exalted state.

Attaining such a station becomes possible when there exists no intermediary between the passive and active intellect, and the passive intellect joins the active one. Then, the latter bestows this power to the former, through which man perceives truths and recognizes actions, and it becomes conducive towards the happiness and good fortune of all.”⁵

Thus, God reveals truths to such a man through the active intellect. According to this viewpoint, Divine revelation is considered to be a kind of bestowal from the active intellect to the passive intellect.

Avicenna’s Exposition

In the theology section of his *Shifa’*, Avicenna (370–438/980–1074) presents a complete exposition of this argument, preceded by the following preliminary statements:

- Man is sociable and inclines toward coexistence.
- Man’s civic characteristics distinguish him from animals.
- Individual life cannot manage all human affairs, nor adequately meet its needs.
- Optimal living conditions require the collaboration of groups of men, which can be fulfilled only through coexistence.
- Collaboration requires interaction, and interaction, in turn, needs law and administration of justice.
- This needs a justice–promoting law–maker.
- Since man loves himself (self–love), he strives to attain his demands and acquire further benefits.
- This does not work harmoniously in society and entails chaos. Therefore, unrestrained individual desires have to be controlled.

- Law and order must prevail so that the rights and duties of individuals may be specified.
- Such an individual is considered humane, and at the same time, enjoys the privilege of performing miracles, so that people may emulate him.
- The need of such a man for man's survival is greater than the eyebrows on one's face.
- It is impossible that Divine Providence demands such a social environment, but does not necessitate the existence of a man to meet it.
- The Creator of existence, the All-Competent, Wise Being, who has met all the needs of mankind in the system of creation is certainly aware of the necessity of such a superior legislator and justice-promoter, and provides one.
- As a result, the Divine appointment of prophets to their missions is a necessity.⁶

Arguments of a similar nature may be found in the works of a number of Muslim philosophers, e.g. Shaykh Shihab al-Din al-Suhrawardi (549– 587),⁷ Sadr al-Din al-Shirazi,⁸ Fayd al-Kashani,⁹ 'Allama Tabataba'i. To save space and avoid repetition, it would suffice to mention 'Allama Tabataba'i's view, which is more complete.

'Allama Tabataba'i's Exposition

'Allama Tabataba'i further strengthened the philosophers' argument in a way that avoided all the earlier criticism. An outline of his viewpoint follows:

- The system of creation is such that it necessitates each and every being, including man, to receive guidance of the way towards its real perfection.
- Man loves himself, so he employs all potential resources available, which force him to form societies.
- Employment of all possible resources leads to social differences.
- The system of creation necessitates the elimination of such differences to enable man to attain perfection.
- Man's epistemic means per se may not enact appropriate laws for attaining material and spiritual happiness or dispelling differences.
- Man necessarily requires another source to discover and make laws.
- The other kind of awareness is only the Divine revelation specific to prophets.

Conclusion: It is necessary that God sends down revelation to solve differences in human societies and pave the way for man's material and spiritual perfection.¹⁰

Evaluation

A number of Muslim scholars have criticized the philosophers' arguments. We will mention two of them and two critiques:

1. The first critique, which challenges the necessity of prophetic missions, is the possibility of the establishment of social order without recourse to religion.

Nasir al-Din al-Tusi, in his commentary on Avicenna's *al-Isharat wa 'l-Tanbihat*, states: "In case the social system seeks to attain worldly and otherworldly benefits, it requires Divine revelation, but the establishment of social order and avoidance of chaos may also be attained through a kind of non-revelatory legislation.

Therefore, despite Avicenna's viewpoint, men may establish organization in their societies without recourse to Divine revelation. [11](#)

Abu Hamid al-Ghazzali (450–505/1058–1111) also regards Avicenna's exposition as a mundane interpretation of religion. He maintains that one of the causes of people's feeble beliefs regarding religion is the philosophers' interpretation, according to which, the grounds and results of the Divine prophetic missions are to protect people from engagement in clashes, conflicts, and indulgence in concupiscent passions. [12](#)

Ibn Khuldun (734–780/1333–1378) accepts this critique and substantiates it by referring to a number of instances of social life which, despite the lack of religion, are enjoying an organized control over society. Referring to his contemporaries, he states that the people of the Book and followers of prophets, are limited in number and merely constitute the minority, compared to the rest of the inhabitants of the world whose governments administer the affairs of the states.

They enjoy social systems, which have created positive impressions. Therefore, establishment of society and removal of clashes between its members is not only attainable through the Divine prophetic missions. [13](#)

The last question can be answered thus: pieces of evidence can be found in the philosophers' argument which indicate the necessity of Divine revelation for certain requirements beyond mundane affairs. For instance, in discussing the necessity of prophetic missions, Avicenna emphasizes mundane elements and social life based on justice.

However, his remarks in the *Ilahiyyat al-Shifa'*, section 10, chapter 1, and many statements concerning intellectual happiness and pleasure, denote that prophets had two objectives: firstly, guiding people toward spiritual happiness through believing in God, the Day of Judgment, and virtues; and secondly, guiding them towards legislating just laws and religion. Both are necessary to achieve the two forms of happiness.

Besides social order, Sadr al-Din al-Shirazi considers the need for Divine revelation as the guiding principle for mankind toward paradise in both worlds. According to him, “God does not even neglect causing the growth of eyebrows, how could He deprive His servants of a mercy bestowed upon creatures, indicated by prophets, who also serve as men’s guides toward paradise in both worlds?”¹⁴ He also considers religious law as a means of indicating the path toward God, and considers the affairs reminding men of the world to come as obligatory.¹⁵

In his exposition, Allama Tabataba’i emphasizes the necessity of guiding man towards his own perfection, which lies beyond mundane happiness. Besides, in many of his works, he emphasizes a comprehensive outlook regarding Divine revelation and states: “in legislating religious law, not only has man’s perfection been considered, but man’s true existence.

The objective of religion is man’s material, spiritual, worldly and otherworldly perfection. Religion aims at improving society, and educating individuals at the physical and intellectual level.”¹⁶

If philosophers try to expound the social order leading to the guidance of mankind, they are right, but if they aim only at social organization on the material level, it can be attained with the help of the intellect. In other words, recognition of laws regarding social life depends upon the advantages which we intend to achieve by establishing a society.

The aforementioned argumentation needs to prove that since sufficient grounds for clashes of interest do not exist nor complicated relationships predominate in primitive societies, it is not necessary to send down Divine revelation to such societies. Everyone has the opportunity to make use of abounding natural resources, and solutions can easily be found for the clashes of interest.

It is however, believed that no society, irrespective of primitiveness, is needless of laws. But, the need for laws, originating from an authority beyond mankind, for small and primitive societies is not so obvious. If we regard the philosophers’ arguments concerning prophetic missions as a means of achieving objectives beyond worldly order, the second problem will also be solved.

The philosophers’ argument does not expect Divine revelation to descend for all individuals and all social issues, but restricts it to those which lie beyond human intellection. On the other hand, a large number of the Qur’anic verses refer to the judgments of human intellect.

Therefore, this argument may not adequately justify the Divine revelation of such verses.¹⁷

The above argument seems to focus on the shortcoming of human intellection, whereas, man’s inclination toward guidance necessitates sending down Divine revelation. The fact is that motivating man to act is more important than granting perception, because it can not be achieved without faith and Divine revelation.

For instance, a large number of smokers admit that smoking cigarettes is harmful, but they do not quit it.

Man enjoys the inclination (sentiments, feelings, passions) aspect besides the epistemic aspect. Man's strong inclination leads him to proceed toward an object perceived by him. Divine revelation infuses man with energy and drives him to proceed toward his objective.¹⁸

2.2 Knowing God Or Science, And Proceeding On The Path

Toward God

Mystics regard Divine revelation as necessary for knowing God and treading the path toward Him. In this approach, the purpose of human existence is to tread the path toward Almighty God. They need a guide who receives Divine revelation from God, teaches them the required Divine knowledge, familiarizes them with existential truths, gains and losses, accrued and incurred on the path, and guides them toward their destination.¹⁹

Sayyid Haydar Amuli, the distinguished eighth/fourteenth century mystic, states: "by Divine prophetic mission, mystics mean imparting Divine truths, i.e. knowing the Essence of God Almighty and his Names, Attributes, and Decrees."²⁰ Imam Khomeini, who was a leader, a mystic, and a wayfarer treading the Divine path, regarded the main purpose of Divine revelation and prophetic mission as making God known to mankind: "Prophets aimed at knowing God. They actually tried to know God."²¹

Evaluation

Mystics obviously considered the role of Divine revelation in knowing God and treading the path toward Him as their final goal and regarded knowledge as intellectual as well as divinely inspired. According to them, the attainment of such knowledge does not conflict with the teachings which finally lead man to that goal.

People like Imam Khomeini extend the realm of religion to administration of justice and legislation of the religious system; but, if one restricts the need for Divine revelation to knowing God as their first, rather than final goal, it will require deliberation.

2.3 Assignment Of Duties Leads To Human Perfection

Contrary to Ash'arite theologians, Shiite and Mu'tazilite theologians emphasize the rule of intellectual good and evil, as well as the rule of Grace, in order to prove the necessity of sending down Divine revelation. This line of argument is stated differently in theological works, but share the following premises:

The first premise: The Divine assignment of duties for men, as His servants, has intellectual goodness, since it includes expediencies, without which intellectual goodness is not produced. Such assignment of duties leads to human perfection. Theologians call this "Goodness of duty." On the other hand, imparting religious duties by God is His favor bestowed upon his servants.²²

The second premise: As required by the rule of Grace, it behoves God to bestow mercy upon His servants and take the required steps for their perfection.

Consequently, it behoves God to legislate religious laws and impart them to man or to assign His servants to perform good deeds and quit inappropriate ones. Since it is necessary to expound the duties to His servants, the existence of an intermediary is required to send down Divine revelation to men.[23](#)

Evaluation

A number of ambiguities in the argument, cast it into doubt. The argument is based upon the acceptance of the rule of Grace, whereas, the reason for the rule and its necessity, on the part of God, are open to question.

Besides, the establishment of the dimensions of the problem of intellectual good and evil, and distinguishing practical problems from theoretical ones is a vast topic in philosophy and theology. Of course, it does not denote falsity of the theologians' premises, but it reveals successive meanderings, which may be preferably replaced by another method for proving the necessity of Divine revelation.[24](#)

2.4 Recognition Of The Path Toward Perfection

A number of thinkers have expounded the necessity of sending down Divine revelation on man's need to perceive the path toward perfection. For instance, Ayatollah Mesbah Yazdi employs three premises to expound his argumentation:

1. The purpose of creating man is to tread the path toward perfection by performing acts voluntarily, which can only be achieved through free choice. In other words, man is created to obtain the capacity to receive and enjoy the bounties which are meant to perfect men through prayer and obedience of His commands. God Almighty wishes to make man attain perfection.

However, this can only be attained by performing voluntary acts, so he enjoys free choice. Naturally, one of the paths leads to adversity and chastisement, indirectly subject to Divine will.

2. Besides possessing the capacity of performing acts, paving the way to perform different acts, and develop an inclination toward such acts, man needs to make a distinction between good and evil, decent and indecent acts. He can freely choose his way toward perfection by recognizing his goal, the way to achieve it, apprised of its vicissitudes and precipices.

Therefore, Divine will necessitates man's capacity of employing the required means to recognize them; otherwise, he would be like someone who invites a guest to his house, but does not inform him of its location nor directions to reach it. It is obvious that such conduct would be unwise and it would defeat the purpose. This premise requires no further explanations or details.

3. Man's perception, arising from the collaboration of the senses and the intellect, plays a major role in meeting the demands of his life, but is not sufficient to recognize the true path toward perfection in all individual and social, material and spiritual, worldly and otherworldly dimensions. If there exists no other alternative to satisfy such needs, the Divine purpose of creating man cannot be achieved.

The three premises lead to the conclusion that Divine wisdom necessitates that God provides man with another way, beyond sense and intellect, to recognize an all-embracing way toward perfection, so that men may benefit from it. This way is the Divine revelation put at the prophets' disposal. They enjoy it directly and others benefit from it through them as intermediaries and obtain the required means to attain final happiness.[25](#)

Similar argumentations have been provided by other thinkers, such as Ayatollah Ja'far Sobhani and Ahmad Amin.[26](#)

Evaluation

Three points are to be considered concerning this argument:

The former argument, proving the necessity of assigning prophetic missions, merely necessitates the exposition of the ordinances unintelligible to human intellect, whereas the Holy Qur'an includes many verses intelligible to human intellect, but the aforementioned argument fails to prove them.[27](#)

In the first premise, this argument takes for granted the existence of God and states perfection as the goal of man's creation. For the same reason, the aforementioned thinkers' expositions on the necessity of Divine revelation present arguments proving the existence of God and His attributes. but it would be better to prove the necessity of referring to a source other than God, so that it may sound more acceptable to someone who does not profess any religion; after that, it would be better to explain the necessity of sending down Divine revelation.

2.5 Select Exposition – Granting Insight And Incentive Toward Perfection

To better expound the necessity of sending down Divine revelation and to refer to it, it would be better to pave the way for eliminating the shortcomings of the intellect and volition on the way to attain perfection. Divine revelation assists us in recognizing the path toward guidance and reinforces the motives of attaining it. Further explanation follows below.

Man, The Multi-Dimensional Being

Man's existence is complicated. A number of its aspects have been studied in philosophical, psychological, and anthropological works. To recognize man's intricacies, it would be worthwhile to

consider the cognitive, emotional, social, ethical aspects and their consequences, which form an individual's character. Man's different existential aspects are inter-related. Men often neglect their own existential intricacies and inadvertently waste away their great existential capacities.

They do not spend the required time to know their capacities, let alone perfect themselves through accurate perception. Man is not limited to his material dimension, but possesses a spiritual dimension or self. Considering this point may assist us in further clarifying his intricacy.[28](#)

Capacity For Perfection

Each of these dimensions can be perfected. Man is able to perfect his physical dimension, make use of and strengthen his physical capacities, take part in weight lifting, racing, wrestling and the like competitions and win prizes. Similarly, man can benefit from spiritual perfection. The reinforcement of physical capacities may not be regarded as the *only* merits specific to man, as men and animals share this feature.

Many animals are physically stronger than man. No matter how hard man endeavors at all times to practice weight lifting, boxing and the like sports, he cannot confront a number of wild animals. Man's true perfection lies in more exalted virtues, i.e. the human specific dimensions, which distinguish him from animals.

By the adverb *only* and the fact that attaining physical perfection may be *only* considered as his specific privilege, we mean that if physical perfection be employed for further perfection of the individual or the Islamic society, it can also attain a more exalted value.

Discussions on philosophical anthropology and practical philosophy reveal that man has different dimensions, and his spiritual dimension is of a higher station, because true perfection lies in spiritual perfection and finally, in closeness to God, rather than in the development of material dimensions.

Desire To Achieve Perfection

All men are interested in themselves, and consequently, they are interested in attaining enjoyment, abstaining from pains, and achieving perfection. Interest in oneself lies within everybody and it is not specific to a certain people, nation, or period. It was the same in the remote past and it is the same in modern times.

Even those who commit suicide do so in order to free themselves from the pain and grief of this life. They think that by taking their own lives, they will liberate themselves from physical pain.

Seek To Recognize The Path Toward Perfection

Since man is fond of himself and his happiness, he seeks to find the path toward perfection and

performs acts which guide him in this direction. Consequently, the history of human thought reveals that men have always been interested in self-discovery, because they find it a prelude to the recognition of their own perfection.

Possess Intellect And Free Choice

Man possesses intellect and free choice. Intellect here, means the capacity to perceive generalities as well as the logical capability to achieve different epistemic goals. It is the source of theoretical sciences. This capacity is man-specific and in sharp contrast with animal features. Men possess different levels of intellect.²⁹ On the other hand, man enjoys free choice. Two points are to be taken into consideration in this respect:

The term free choice does not mean absolute free choice, i.e. free choice is *relative* and different from *power*. Preliminary practice by the individual himself for acts deemed to be beyond human capacity lead to his success or failure to perform further acts. For instance, one is not physically fit to lift a one-hundred kilogram weight without prior exercises, and failure can be due to previous optional acts.

Man's incapacity to perform certain acts is, however, not always due to his former inappropriate choices, but it may be the consequence of non-voluntary, genetic, environmental, physical, and psychological factors. Individuals may be divested of free choice in some instances, but it originates, in many instances, from their previous optional practices.

Man, many times, performs certain acts voluntarily, which play a major role in the positive or negative formation of his character. Based on his own decisions, man keeps moulding his soul at all times. No one can decide not to perform any act and preserve his soul. Such a decision is also an act carried out by free choice.

As long as man is alive, he is obliged to perform innumerable acts, like thinking, walking, eating, sleeping, moving, choosing jobs, talking with others, and through each and every act he moulds his character and soul. His optional acts of today play a major role in divesting him of his free choice tomorrow.

If he has an appropriate plan of action, he will shape his character and future positively; otherwise, he will ruin and misguide himself. Such a course begins in early childhood, particularly adolescence, and continues incessantly till the last moment of life

Possessor Of Contradictory Passions

Man possesses various, contradictory passions and feelings. His material and momentary passions often confront elevated inclinations which make choosing the path to perfection harder for him. Concupiscence can easily trample man's conscience and inherent nature.

Man's Epistemic And Psychological Shortcomings On The Path To Guidance

Despite his relative efficiency in meeting material needs, man's epistemic capacities, including his outward senses and the intellect, are not adequate to find the true path to happiness. Man has to identify various variants on his way and make plans accordingly to achieve his material goals.

His guidance toward perfection is in need of a coherent plan based on a thorough awareness of all the material and spiritual, individual and social, worldly and otherworldly variants; but the outward senses and the intellect lack the adequate capacity to perceive such issues.

Man cannot independently employ his psychological capacities to tread the path toward perfection and guidance. His struggle against the tempest of contradictory inclinations and passions divest him of the capacity to act upon the dictates of the intellect and conscience, and as a consequence, he is easily victimized by his bestial self.

Theology

Man requires other means to recognize the true path to perfection and obtain the capacity to proceed toward it. Almighty God does not abandon man, divested of the means of guidance, in the dark. He has created man as a choosing, wise, and perfection-seeking creature in possession of contradictory inclinations. It would be unwise and in contradiction with Divine attributes if He did not pave his way,.

Conclusion

We may conclude that Divine revelation is necessary, as the impossibility to receive it by everyone necessitates the Divine appointment of prophets to their missions.[30](#)

The summary of the eight premises are as follows:

Man is an intricate being with the capacity to attain perfection. Attaining perfection requires epistemic and psychological means.

The Intellect, experience, and conscience lack the adequate capacities of recognition and motivation.

We are in need of some other means, but our lack of preparation for the required preliminaries to achieve this goal is inconsistent with Divine wisdom.

We may conclude that sending down Divine revelation is, therefore, necessary.

From among the eight premises, the first seven premises prove the necessity of referring to a source, higher than the ordinary epistemic sources, and act upon the guidance of that higher source. The addition of the last premise reveals the necessity of sending down Divine revelation.

If one, in the case of necessity to have access to Divine revelation, claims that he is solely attached to

worldly joys and recognizes them as the only form of perfection, we can say that man is a perfectionist, but can tread the wrong path in the process of searching the true one. It is impossible to specify true perfection without taking standards into consideration.

A child or a young adult may say that he considers playing, watching movies, amusing himself, and quitting studying to be various forms of perfection. Could we admit that his perfection lies in performing such acts? To recognize perfection, one should know the truth of mankind. Philosophical anthropology reveals that man's soul is his privilege and lasting truth, and his body is a means of rendering service to the soul.

Since the sizes of shoes and books are not considered to be man's privilege nor his true perfection, his material and fleeting joys are not considered to be so either. Man's true perfection is his spiritual perfection, not his material joys. God is the only truly perfect Being. Consequently, the human soul's true perfection lies in proceeding toward Him.³¹

On the basis of the above premises, referring to Divine revelation is logically necessary. In case man desires to attain virtues and his epistemic and motivating means are not adequate to achieve this goal, it will be analogically necessary to refer to Divine revelation to know the approaches to perfection and make use of them in one's life.

1. Muhammad Taqi Mesbah Yazdi, *Amuzesh-e 'Aqa'ed* ["teaching beliefs"], vol. 1, p. 28; Muhammad Hosayn Tabataba'i, *al-Mizan*, vol. 15, p. 8; 'Abd Allah Javadi, *Shari'at dar A'ine-ye Ma'refat* ["Religious law as reflected in the mirror of knowledge"], p. 157.

2. Abu Nasr Muhammad Farabi, *Andishe-ha-ye Ahl-e Madine-ye fadele* ["thoughts of the people of Utopia"], Dr. Sayyed Ja'far Sajjadi, p. 251-252.

3. According to Farabi, the inhabitants of the city of necessities (*madine-ye zaruriyye*) merely pursue meeting their material requirements, including clothes, residence, marriage and cooperation with an aim to achieve such facilities. The goal of the inhabitants of the city of veneration (*madine-ye karamiyye*) is to achieve recognition and veneration among other nations. (cf. Khvaja Nasir al-Din al-Tusi, *Akhlaq-e Naseri* ["Nasirean Ethics"], p. 245-247; Faruq Sa'd, *Ma'a'l-Farabi wa'l-Mudun al-Fadila* ["With Farabi and Utopias"], pp. 62-65).

4. *Ibid.* p. 255.

5. Abu Nasr Farabi, *Siyasat-e madaniyye* ["Statecraft"], translated and annotated by Hasan Malekshahi, p. 205.

6. Ibn Sina, *Elahiyat-e Shifa'* [The Theology section of *al-Shifa'*], treatise 10, chapter 2, pp. 441-442. The summary of the discussion may also be found in *al-Isharat wa'l-Tanbihat*, pp. 371-375 in a section of *namat* 9.

7. Shihab al-Din al-Suhrawardi, *Majmu'a-ye Musanafat-e Shaykh-e Ishraq* ["Collection of the works of Shaykh-e Ishraq"], ed. Henri Corbin, vol. 1, pp. 95-96.

8. Mulla Sadra, *al-Shawahid al-Rububiyya*, ed. Sayyed Jalal al-Din Ashtiyani, pp. 359-360.

9. Al-Mulla Muhsin Kashani, *'Ilm al-Yaqin fi Usul al-Din*, vol. 1, pp. 448-449.

10. Muhammad Husayn Tabataba'i, *al-Mizan fi Tafsir al-Qur'an*, vol. 2, pp. 130-150; *Shi'a dar Islam* [Shi'ism in Islam], pp. 80-83.

11. Ibn Sina, *al-Isharat wa'l-Tanbihat*, annotated by Nasir al-Din al-Tusi and Fakhr al-Din al-Razi, vol. 3, pp. 373-374.

12. Abu Hamid al-Ghazzali, *Shakk va Shenakht (al-Munqid min al-Dalal)* ["Deliverance from Error"], translated [into Persian] by Sadeq A'ine-vand, pp. 56-57.

13. Ibn Khaldun, *Muqadimma*, pp. 43-44.

14. Sadr al-Din al-Shirazi, *al-Shawahid al-Rububiyya*, pp. 359-360.

[15.](#) Ibid.

[16.](#) Muhammad Husayn Tabataba'i, *al-Mizan fi Tafsir al-Qur'an*, vol. 2, pp. 133, 147–149, 156.

[17.](#) Question: In their argumentation, philosophers endeavored to prove the necessity of sending down Divine revelation rather than proving that good guidance depended upon the intellect; though elsewhere, they mention that good guidance was regarded as one of the advantages of the prophetic mission.

Answer: The above problem admits that the necessity of sending down Divine revelation is merely restricted to what lies beyond human understanding, but sending down Divine revelation in other instances is not required though appropriate, and advantageous. Regarding the difference between the necessity of Divine revelation and its advantage, the philosophers' argument does not prove the necessity of Divine revelation as guidance. At most, the intellect considers it to be good. Besides, philosophers did not mention the necessity of guidance in intelligible areas.

[18.](#) Question: While proving the necessity of prophetic missions, why did philosophers not intend to comprehensively state the functions of Divine revelation, or incorporate them in their discussion?

Answer: The philosophers did not mention all the functions of Divine revelation, but restricted their proofs to the epistemic necessity and failed to address the other proofs.

[19.](#) Cf. 'Abd al-Razzaq al-Lahiji, *Goziye-ye Gohar-e Morad*, ed. Samad Movahhed, pp. 254–255. Mulla Sadra regards the development of self to be of four stations: 1. Journey from creatures toward God. 2. Journey from the Truth (haqq) toward the Truth. 3. Journey from the Truth toward the creatures. 4. Journey from the creatures toward the creatures through the creatures. (Mulla Sadra, *al-Asfar al-Arba'a*, vol. 1, p. 13).

[20.](#) Sayyid Haydar Amuli, *Jami' al-Asrar wa Manba' al-Anwar*, p. 379.

[21.](#) Imam Khomeyni, *Sahifa-ye Nur*, vol. 7, p. 250.

[22.](#) Theologians employ the term Grace (*lutf*) in the sense of what makes the servant nearer to obedience and makes him far from committing sins. A number of theologians have divided "favor" into two kinds: *lutf muhassal* and *lutf muqarrab*. *Lutf muhassal* is what causes man to fulfill his assigned duties voluntarily, i.e. obey God and abstain from committing sins. *Lutf muqarrab* is what causes man to approximate the fulfillment of duties, i.e. pave the way for obedience. Imparting the assigned duties is considered as *lutf*, because it causes the duty bound to obey God through his own will (*lutf muhassal*) or at least approximate its fulfillment and the way be paved for him (*lutf muqarrab*). In either case, imparting the assignment of duties may lead to human perfection (see: 'Allama Hilli, *Kashf al-Murad*, pp. 350–351). A number of theologians, e.g. Ayatollah Subhani identify *muhassal* and *muqarrab* *lutf*s and regard their differences as abstract concepts (see: Muhammad Taqi Subhani, *Risala fi 'l-Tahsin wa 'l-Taqqih al-'Aqliyyin*, p. 91).

[23.](#) See: Nasir al-Din al-Tusi, *Kashf al-Murad fi Sharh Tajrid al-'I'tiqad*, with the commentary of 'Allama Hilli, 'Abu 'l-Hasan Sha'rani, pp. 375–377; Shaykh Mufid, *Musannafat al-Shaykh al-Mufid*, vol. 10, pp. 34–46; Muhammad b. al-Hasan al-Tusi, *al-Iqtisad, al-Hadi ila Tariq al-Rashad*, pp. 78–80.

[24.](#) Muhammad Taqi Mesbah, *Rahnama-shenasi*, pp. 26–27.

[25.](#) Muhammad Taqi Mesbah, *Amuzesh-e 'Aqa'ed*, pp. 177–178; also see his other work: *Rahnama-shenasi*, pp. 27–36; *Rah va Rahnama-shenasi*, pp. 10–19.

[26.](#) Ahmad Amin, *al-Kamil fi 'l-Islam*, vol. 1, p. 166. Ayatollah Sobhani provides the same as one of the arguments necessitating prophethood. (Ja'far Sobhani, *al-Ilahiyyat 'la Huda 'l-Kitab wa 'l-Sunna wa 'l-'Aql*, vol. 3, pp. 31–37; *Muhadarat fi 'l-Ilahiyyat*, abridged by 'Ali Rabbani Gulpayigani, pp. 355–358).

[27.](#) For further details see the third problem concerning the philosophers' argument.

[28.](#) Plausible arguments, e.g. character stability, indivisibility, not being place-bound and experimental evidence, e.g. communication with spirits, true dreams, and telepathy reveal the spirituality of the human soul, see: Hasanzadeh Amuli, Hasan, 'Uyun Masa'l al-Nafs, pp. 389–400; Rajabi, *Ensan-shenasi*, pp. 109–112; Ibn Sina, *al-Isharat wa 'l-Tanbihat*, vol. 2, pp. 292–296.

[29.](#) Ghazzali, *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, vol. 1, pp. 104–106; Sadr al-Din al-Shirazi, *Sharh-e Usul-e Kafi*, vol. 1, pp. 222–229. In the traditions narrated on the authority of the infallible, at times, the intellect is defined as the means of worshipping God and arriving in paradise. ("al-'ql ma 'ubida bihi al-rahman wa 'ktusiba bihi 'l-jinan", Kulayni, *Kafi*, vol. 1, p. 11). It seems that in this definition, mention is made of the higher significance of the intellect. The highest act which may be performed through the capacity of perception is to worship the Creator of the world and get closer to God; but since we intend to prove

the principle of the necessity of referring to Divine revelation and religion, it would be better to ignore the religious definition of the intellect and turn to a concept which is shared by believers and non-believers.

[30.](#) 'Allama Tabataba'i presents another argument for the necessity of the prophetic mission, termed as the argument of wisdom, which differs, to some extent, from our exposition and it would be of use to mention it:

In case the existence of the Creator, Higher and more Sublime than all the creatures is proven, such a God never performs any unwise act. Since He is invisible, He ought to appoint messengers to guide mankind toward their Creator and instruct them about good and evil acts. Such commanders to good and prohibitors from evil are the Divinely appointed prophets who appear in societies with prophetic signs and their mission is confirmed by God through evidence and proofs such as raising the dead and curing the sick. (al-Mizan, vol. 2, p. 146; see: Mustafa Khalili, *Andishe-ha-ye Kalamiyeh 'Allama Tabataba'i*, pp. 296-298).

[31.](#) For a further detailed discussion see: Mujtaba Mesbah, *Bonyad-e Akhlaq*, pp. 237-242.

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