

Chapter 2: Prophethood

2.1. Prophethood

It is incumbent upon God that for the admonishment and guidance of human beings, He should appoint messengers and necessary commandments and laws should be provided to them.

Reason of this Matter

The purpose of creation of the human being is not only limited so that he should live in the world, utilize divine bounties and with thousands of efforts and endeavors, tolerance of different sorts of hardships; that he should complete the short and limited portion of his age and then die and disintegrate. If it is so then the creation of human beings and the world would be nonsense and void and the sacred threshold of God, the Wise, is glorified from undertaking nonsense and void acts. [1](#)

Instead the human being has been created with the intention of being higher and the most exalted one in the creation of existence. God has created human beings in order to learn distinctions and perfections of humanity in order to acquire the decency and worthiness that he should be able to achieve ranks, positions, and rewards in the hereafter.

Therefore a human being is needy for a complete program, commandments, and laws that one side should organize his worldly life and should prevent from transgressions and threats upon him through assuring his freedom, comfort, and rights. While on the other side should provide him the path of human perfection, straight path, honesty, and return to God and should teach his perfections and distinctions of his self, make him aware of evil conducts and deviated factors; but the short and limited faculty of reason of a human being is unable to create such complete commandments and provide to a nation because

Firstly: knowledge and information of human beings is limited and incomplete, it does not have sufficient information regarding different sort of needs of human beings, dimensions of good and evil, and how to encounter with limitations and laws.

To prove the correctness of this statement that human being from birth until, now has endeavored to create complete laws for the management of the society, plenty of hardships have been done in this path and a significant amount of budget has been spent but until now has not been able to obtain desired laws. Every day he passes a law but it does not take very long that he discovers its defects, and therefore either decides overall to void it or through ratification of a note tries to reform it.

Secondly: The motivation of self-interest and egotism of human legislatures never permits them to close their eyes from their own interest as well as the interest of their associates and to look at all human beings with the same scale, or to consider the interests and benefits of a general people. And whenever they decide to disregard their self-interests and prejudice and do it for the sake of pretending, eventually this stubborn nature dominates upon them and whether intentionally or unintentionally forces them to follow the path of their own selfish interests.

Thirdly: human legislatures are ignorant of spiritual perfections and virtues and do not have any information regarding spiritual life; they do not consider the prosperity of human beings except through the dimensions of material means; while the worldly life of a human being is not separate from his spiritual life and a very profound relation exists between them.

It is only the Creator of men and worlds Who encompasses all dimensions of good and bad for the human being and knows well the path of perfection and prohibition from dangers. He is able to provide commandments and laws which assure the prosperity of world as well as of the hereafter for a human being. It is because of this reason that we could say: A wise God never releases a human being in the valley of distress and ignorance; instead his infinite benevolence requires that through means of his appointed messengers from the race of human beings, to provide them required commandments and a program.

The messengers are distinguished appointed persons who are in a position to establish communications with the God of worlds and could receive realities; and could declare to the people accordingly, such type of communication is called a revelation that is unique and a special communication which is established between His messengers and God. A messenger through the means of esoteric eyes witnesses the realities of the world of existence, with his heart's ears hears words from the unseen and announces them to the people accordingly.

2.2. Conditions of Prophethood

A. Infallibility

The prophet must be infallible i.e. should have unseen power that should allow him not to commit sins and should remain immune from mistakes so that God's commandments that have been sent for guidance of the people without more or less should be provided to them. If the prophet himself commits sins and should act in opposition to his own words, his words would lose the essential credit and

worthiness.

If through his own deeds he makes his own words null and void and practically leads people towards sin and opposition of God's commandments and this matter cannot be contradicted, that propagation with deeds is more effective than the propagation of words. If the prophet happens to be negligent and makes mistakes, he would not be trusted and his words would become worthless.

B. Knowledge

The prophet should be knowledgeable about all commandments and laws, which are necessary for the prosperity of the world and hereafter of human beings. And he should not be ignorant about any topic which is necessary for the guidance and admonishment in order to be able to present them the real path of perfection and programs for the prosperity of human beings in a complete form; and could introduce the straight path of human prosperity – that is not more than one and among its components there exist very profound communications.

C. Miracles

The miracle is an outstanding act, which occurs through means of other than natural causes, and human powers are helpless in the creation of such an act. Since a prophet claims that which is opposite to the natural trend, he is able to communicate with the unseen worlds and the God of the worlds and could obtain knowledge and learning; and claims that he has an assignment from God to perform the task of guidance of the people, he should introduce commandments and laws of God, he must do something to prove his claim.

That should not be the normal tasks of human beings and their power should be helpless in producing a similar act, so that through this means he could prove his task of prophethood and communication with the God of worlds that in itself is an abnormal act; such an act is called a miracle. In summary since a prophet claims communication with God, therefore he must show types of Godly acts, in order to prove his claim that he has the power of communicating with God.

However, let it not remain unsaid that programs of prophets were not that they should have completely taken off their hands from the natural causes and resources and should have only resorted to miracles for every task; rather wherever they thought it was expedient to prove their prophethood through performance of a miraculous act, in such cases they did perform miracles.

2.2.1. Path of Identification of a Prophet

It was proved that a messenger or prophet possesses an outstanding position and rank that he could communicate with God and through means of revelation could receive realities; the prophet possesses extraordinary, special infallibility and is immune from sins and mistakes, and it is obvious that identification of this important mysterious position is not the task of everyone. It was due to this reason

through the means of one of these two paths one could identify the prophet and could conclude his being as truthful:

First Path

That another prophet had already proved his Prophethood, through his testifying or should predict about his arrival in advance and should describe his indications and effects.

Second Path

That in order to prove his truthfulness of his word he should be able to bring a miracle that human beings should be helpless in creating of its like. When human beings saw that a person claims prophethood and says that he is appointed by God for your guidance; in order to prove the truthfulness of his words he performs an act that could not be performed through a human being, seeing that act they attain certainty of his being truthful.

If he was a liar, God would not have supported him through the means of a miracle, since the testifying of a liar is relevant to ignorance and indecency and God does not indulge in indecent acts. Therefore in order to diagnose the position of infallibility and Prophethood another path does not exist except these two paths.

However let it not remain unsaid: For intellectuals and researchers another path remains open, they could study commandments and laws and investigate them profoundly and then should compare these laws with laws and could appreciate their distinctions and benefits. In the conduct of words and deeds of a person claiming prophethood they should show serious and precise curiosity and through these means of witnessing and testifying should acquire the facts about his being truthful.

But perusing of such a path is not possible for every one and except for testifying the position of prophethood and strengthening the power of belief; it does not have any worth. In the Holy Qur'an regarding a group from prophets, miracles have been mentioned: Whoever considers the Holy Qur'an as a heavenly

book, inevitably must accept about the story of Prophet Moses' (a.s.) staff turning into a serpent, and the dead coming back to life and the return of sight to a blind person since birth through the means of Jesus (a.s.); the story of speaking in the cradle by Jesus (a.s.) is certainly a part of the Holy Qur'an.

2.2.2. Number of Prophets

It has been mentioned in the narration that 124,000 have been sent by God for the guidance of human beings, the first one of them was Adam (a.s.) and the last one of them was Muhammad ibn Abdullah (S).² The prophets could be divided into several categories as follows:

Some of them received their duties through the means of revelation but were not assigned the

responsibility of propagation. Another group was assigned the responsibility of propagation; some of them possessed special religious laws and religion while others didn't bring special religious laws instead propagated the religious laws of another prophet and very often many prophets were busy in undertaking their duties in various regions and cities.

Noah (a.s.), Abraham (a.s.), Moses (a.s.), Jesus (a.s.), and Muhammad (S) were distinguished prophets and brought special religious laws and were called as men of decision (ulul-azm) prophets. A group of prophets have the book, like Noah (a.s.), Abraham (a.s.), Moses (a.s.), Jesus (a.s.) and Muhammad (S). Some of them were appointed for the entire humanity while some of them were appointed for a particular group of people.³

2.3. Muhammad (S) – Seal of the Prophets

Muhammad son of Abdullah (S) was one of the great and most distinguished among them and is a prophet of Muslims. When he was appointed for his prophethood, due to the continuous and prolonged hardships and the painful endeavors of past prophets, the religious learning level of human being reached to the point whereby they were in a position to receive the best and most perfected laws and could comprehend the highest leanings; they should guard forever the trust of knowledge of all prophets, then the Prophet of Islam was appointed and he presented the most complete program and comprehensive commandments for the human beings.

If the commandments of Islam been implemented, the prosperity of the world and hereafter would have been assured as they were sufficient for guidance of humanity during the period of the Holy Prophet (S); likewise they are sufficient for the prosperity of the present period as well as for more progressive forthcoming generations.

Everyone who would conduct research with accuracy and precision regarding Islamic commandments and learning and would compare them with other commandments; the distinction of Islamic commandments would become explicitly clear upon him. And it was because of this reason that he is the last prophet and after him no prophet would come. The matter of being the Seal of the Prophets for Muhammad (S) is a necessary requirement and whoever denies it would not be considered as a Muslim.

2.4. Eternal Miracle

The Prophet of Islam possessed miracles that occurred during his life period and they have been pointed out in the books of history and narrations; in addition to that the Holy Qur'an is an eternal miracle and absolute certification of his prophethood. The Holy Qur'an itself introduces it as a miracle and declares officially to the people:

“And if you are in doubt concerning that which We reveal unto Our servant (Muhammad), then

produce a surah of the like thereof, and call your witnesses beside Allah if ye are truthful.” (The Holy Qur’an, 2:23)

And says:

“Say: Verily, though mankind and Jinn should assemble to produce the like of this Qur’an, they couldn’t produce the like thereof though they were helpers one of another.” (The Holy Qur’an, 17:88)

Although the enemies of Islam didn’t stop from taking any sort of action in their confrontation against Islam and readied them for the dangerous and bloody wars, and in this path suffered plenty of financial and physical losses, but in spite of that were unable to confront with the Holy Qur’an of Muhammad (S) and could not produce a similar verse. While if such an act was possible, for them they certainly would have preferred it to difficult confrontations in order to rescue them from all those headaches and hardships.

The blessed Holy Qur’an was descended gradually during a period of twenty–three years upon prophet Muhammad (S). His companions wrote exact revelation called signs (a’ayat) that were collected later on and was then presented as it is in the current form.

The Holy Qur’an is the only heavenly unique book in which any sort of changes or deviations have not been made, and without more or less is available for mankind; the Holy Qur’an is a book of deeds. If the Muslims desire to be prosperous and could raise their heads in dignity, to acquire back their lost majesty and grandeur; they do not have any other option except to follow the steady and firm program of the Holy Qur’an, and its implementation should cure their untreatable pains and social problems.

2.5. A Brief History of Holy Prophet’s (S) Life

His father’s name was Abdullah and his mother’s name was A’aminah. He was born on the seventh day of Month of Rabi al–Awwal in the year called the Year of Elephant (A’am al–Feel) in the Holy City of Mecca; he was appointed to prophethood at the age of forty years. He remained in Mecca for thirteen years and during this period he invited people towards Islam openly and secretly, during this period a group of people believed in him but the pagans and idol–worshippers with their complete stubbornness interfered and prevented the advancement and progress of the Islam.

They made serious efforts and endeavors in torturing Muslims and the Holy Prophet (S) to the extent that his own life was threatened with danger, then he was forced to migrate to the Holy City of Medina; gradually little by little the Muslims too joined him there and eventually the Holy City of Medina was turned into the prime capital of the Islamic Government and its military garrison. The Holy Prophet (S) continued propagation of commandments, guidance of the people and administering social affairs for a period of ten years; the Islamic Army continuously remained at the alert position for defense and war.

The Holy Prophet (S) lived in this world for a period of sixty three years; he passed away on the twenty-eighth of the Month of Safar in the eleventh year of migration, and was buried in the Holy City of Medina. Since his childhood, he was well mannered, truthful and righteous and due to this reason he was called as Muhammad, the trusted one (amin); from the point of view of good moral ethics he was the most famous among the people of his period.

Treachery and lying were never noticed with respect to him, he never oppressed any one, never performed indecent acts, treated the people with respect, was well mannered and courteous, showed favor and compassion towards the destitute and distressed; whatever he said, he acted upon it accordingly and it was due to the means of his loveable manners that people were inclined towards Islam and became Muslims with their own determination.

Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) said: "A beggar came near the Holy Prophet (S) and asked for help, he got a little amount of dates from a helper as a debt and gave it to him; a little time passed but the means of paying the debt were not available to him. One day the person to whom he was indebted came and demanded his dates, he replied: 'Right now I do not have them, whenever I am in a position to do so I would return them to you.' He came again and heard the same reply from him. At the third time when he arrived and heard the same reply, he said: 'O Prophet of Allah! Until when will you keep saying, God-willing, I would pay?' The Holy Prophet (S) while encountering his impolite reply smiled and said: 'Is there anyone who would give me dates as a debt?' A person replied: 'O Prophet of Allah, I would give you.' He said: 'Pay this man such amount of dates, the creditor said: 'I do not demand more than half of this quantity; the Holy Prophet (S) replied: 'I have bestowed the remaining half quantity upon you.'"⁴

2.6. Islamic Laws

The Islamic laws are not only limited to worshipping, commandment and individual obligations, rather it consists of a comprehensive social order and has commands and a program in various arenas of human beings; it has laws and programs regarding social, political, legal, and civil affairs. The Holy Prophet (S) and the Commander of the Faithful Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (a.s.) governed the Muslims through the execution of the same laws; Muslims in the beginning of Islam through means implementation of the same programs were able to achieve all those advancements and astonishing progress, and established a powerful and magnificent government. We believe that the laws of Islam are better and more perfect than all the laws; if they could be executed completely between mankind and if they could be utilized for administering society, mankind would attain prosperity and goodness, oppression and tyranny would be completely rooted out, piece and coexistence would replace wars and confrontation; and poverty and unemployment would be totally eliminated.

We believe that: The laws of Islam are not defective and do not require reformation and completion. We know that the sacred Islamic ideology understands real interests of the people and has provided them the very best laws. We believe that every law that is against the Holy Qur'an is not in the interests of the people and does not have any worth. We believe that we should follow the Islamic commandments and

the Holy Qur'an in all areas of life in order to become prosperous.

We know that the horrible state of affairs of Islamic nations has not been created because of the effect of Islam; instead their entire affliction is because of their refusal of the implementation of Islamic laws. Since, we left the Islamic laws behind and required medicines of sickness for our social problems from others, and only sufficed ourselves in the name of Islam, we have fallen into such a dark day.

We believe that if Muslims want to regain their lost prestige, dignity and grandeur and join the lines of progressive and advanced nations, they have no options except to become the real Muslims, and should implement all commandments of the Holy Qur'an and should take inspiration from its social programs. But so far the laws and programs of Islam remain only written with ink upon paper, and have not been implemented in their totality; we should not wait for progress and grandeur.

1. Did you think that We had created you for a playful purpose and that you were not to return to Us?" (The Holy Qur'an, 23:115)

2. Bihar al-Anwar, v. 11, p. 30.

3. Bihar al-Anwar, v. 11, p. 1-61.

4. Hayat al-Qulub, v.2, p-168.

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