

Chapter 4: Resurrection or Hereafter

4.1. The Day of Judgment

All divine Prophets and Holy Scriptures are unanimous about this point that the life of a human being does not end at his death. After it another world exists where human beings would see the rewards of their deeds and character. The pious individuals would see a joyful and happy life and would be blessed with dignity and plenty of divine bounties; while the wicked and lewd would have a harsh and painful life and would have a life of torture and punishment. The reality of Judgment and a world after death is a necessity of all heavenly religions, and whoever accepts the Prophets must also accept the Day of Judgment. In order to prove this matter we would describe the following two simple arguments:

First Argument

If you pay attention, proof of the Day of Judgment would become clearly explicated for you:

1. None of the acts are without an aim and objective; whoever does some work also has an objective and goal. The aim and ultimate objective is a thing that motivates the subject to do his work, and in order to accomplish it he makes efforts and endeavors.
2. Although each task is not without an aim and objective, the aims and objectives are not similar; instead they vary with respect to individuals and their tasks. The more a subject is knowledgeable, powerful, and possesses a rational program; he pursues superior and valuable objectives. A young child who peruses a goal in a childish play would never be equivalent to the goals of an engineer, intellectual and director.
3. The human beings whatever tasks they pursue, desire that through the means of the objective and result of that task, to remove a defect from them in order to achieve more perfection. For example when we eat food it is because of the reason that we feel in ourselves a feeling of hunger, we eat food in order to remove the defect caused by hunger. But for divine acts this context is not valid, because God is not imperfect so that through the means of a result or objective, a task should remove His defect and

achieve more perfection.

Therefore, it could be said that the result of a task is not applicable to Him but it reaches to his creatures. The objective is not to achieve perfection or to be benefitted rather it is to enrich and to bestow perfection upon His creatures.

Persian Verse:

“Man na kardam khalq ta sudi kunam,

Balkeh ta bar bandgan judi kunam.”

English Translation:

I did not create creation to be benefitted

Instead it was to bestow mercy upon my servants.”

4. God has created human beings with a most superior existence and in the structure of his existence and has utilized thousands of delicacies and sophistications that the intellectuals, no matter how hard they try to comprehend it, they encounter extremely amazing mysteries in a manner that it could be said:

God, the Wise, has made the small-world (jah'an-e-asghar) the human being's skeleton as a sample of the greater world's (jah'an-e-akbar) existence and has placed a vast universe in his limited body structure. He has created water, earth, air, plants, animals, stars and other existences to meet his requirements; has accumulated thousands of amazing mysteries in the heart of the material world so that the human being could utilize it.

Also he has equipped the human existence with amazing intellectual thoughts in order to explore the hidden mysteries of the world of existence, and to utilize the precious treasures of the material world as well as to conquer it. Because of the above mentioned matters, now let us think; could it be said that: The God, the Wise, created amazing and mysterious human existence, and for his utilization commissioned a most outstanding organization of the material world, only for an insignificant period to live in this world and should simply change the vast divine bounties into a different form, then should die and be annihilated? If such is the case then is not the entire creation of God nonsense, null and void?

Your faculty of reason would never believe about such an issue and the sacred existence of God is too glorified for such a nonsensical task. Non-existence and annihilation could not be the ultimate goal of creation and ultimate result of the human being's lives, because the accomplishment of a cherished goal requires that the existence should be made more perfect and precious instead of terminating his existence and destroying the book of his age.

Our faculty of reason states that: Since God does not have any need of creation of existences, He does

not create them with the intention of earning a profit, and a nonsensical and null and void act is not issued by Him. Therefore, inevitably He has created human beings for the objective of a higher, superior, and precious objective and their lives are not limited to only a transient few days of life of this world and through the arrival of his death, their lives are not ended and the book of their deeds are not closed.

Our faculty of reason states that: After this world there should be another world or hereafter; the period of his transient living in this world with so many hardships should only be a preliminary for an eternal life in the hereafter and achieving the prosperity and infinite ease and comfort in the next world. God's intentions were that a human being in this world should make progress and should acquire for him perfections and excellent habits in order to live a prosperous life full joy and heavenly bounties forever in the eternal world.[1](#)

Second Argument

Some human beings are pious and righteous; they are well-farers of the people, help their inferiors and fellow human beings, treat orphans with compassion, do favors towards the destitute and distressed, their conduct is good, they do not speak lies, cheat, oppress others, usurp people's belongings; they offer their prayers and fast, practice their mandatory obligations and prevent others from committing sins.

Another group is wicked and indecent, they oppress and do injustice to their fellow human beings, usurp rights of the others, are liars rude, and traitors, do not offer divine mandatory obligations, neither do they offer prayers nor do they fast, they do not feel the least embarrassed from indulging in illegitimate and shameful acts, and like beasts day and night are busy in oppression, transgression, and fulfilling their carnal desires.

These two groups continuously had been existing and would remain always, and do not see the punishment of their deeds in this world. We know so many such persons that throughout their lives were engaged in the path of oppression, transgression, usurpation of people's belongings, sinning, and perusing their carnal desires. They left the world in affluence, luxuries, and joyful without seeing the retribution of their evil deeds. On the other side there were many pious and righteous individuals who remained in complete poverty and harsh conditions without seeing rewards of their good deeds.

Therefore, should there not be another world where deeds of the people could be scrutinized, where the righteous ones should obtain excellent rewards for their good deeds and the wicked ones should be punished for their evil deeds? If the age of the people would end in this very world and their book of deeds becomes completely closed and annihilated then in that case would not the creation of human beings be a nonsensical act opposite to the justice and wisdom of God-Almighty?

Would your faculty of reason like it, that the righteous and pious individuals would be treated similarly like the wicked and lewd people and their deeds should not be scrutinized? Can such an indecent and inappropriate thing be related to God?[2](#)

If there is no Hereafter and the Day of Judgment of deeds, dispatching of the divine messengers for implementation of divine Command of encouraging good and forbiddance of evil would be irrational and without any profit; if there exists no accounting of deeds and reward and retribution then why should people obey the commands of God and heavenly messengers?

4.2. Death

Death means separation of the soul from the body; Islam tells us: A human being is not annihilated through the means of death; instead it is transferred to another world and from this life enters into another form of life. The Holy Prophet (S) said: “You have not been created for annihilation instead for eternal life; it is not but your transfer from this world to another world.”³

From the Islamic point of view the separation of the soul from the body is not done for all human beings in a similar manner; individuals who are sinners, their inclination is more towards the world are not linked with the hereafter are hopeless, and give up their soul with hardship and difficulty. But the individuals whose deeds are decent and do not have much attachment with this world, instead they have more inclination and attachments towards God and hereafter give their soul comfortably and with ease.⁴

4.3. Interval between Death and Resurrection

Regarding the basic reality of Resurrection and life after death, our faculty of reason proves it for us however regarding the quality and how it is supposed to be, the reason cannot be our guide; instead we are helpless but to benefit from verses of the Holy Qur’an and sayings of divine messengers and religious saints. It could be understood from the Holy Qur’an, traditions of the Holy Prophet (S) and Infallible Imams (a.s.) that before the Day of Judgment and general resurrection, another world exists where human souls live between death and resurrection called barzakh which is a means between the world and hereafter.

When a person dies in the beginning he enters into barzakh, where he would have some sort of special life. In the beginning of the spiritual life that starts from the grave an overall questioning is conducted in which a person’s faith and belief are reviewed; if his beliefs were true and he had righteous deeds, a door from paradise opens and he is assigned on the path of paradise. He utilizes bounties of paradise and remains in waiting for the occurrence of resurrection and to receive eternal heavenly bounties.

If a person happens to be with bad belief and deeds he is assigned to the path of hell and a door from the door of hell opens for him. He would remain in punishment and torture until the occurrence of the resurrection and would suffer a bitter and unpleasant life and have fear of the arrival of the Day of Judgment and severe punishment of hell; he would remain in anxiety and horror.⁵

4.4. Day of Judgment and General Resurrection

The Holy Qur'an and traditions of the Holy Prophet (S) and Infallible Imams (a.s.) describe the Day of Judgment in the following manner: "The sun and moon would become dark and without illumination, mountains would become scattered, oceans would become burnt and without water; the solar system would be annihilated; the earth and heaven would be changed into a different form; then all dead would be resurrected alive and would be brought to accounting of their deeds. All accounts of deeds of the people are proven and recorded in a book of deeds; even a tiny act of theirs would neither be forgotten nor removed.

On the Day of Judgment curtains would be rolled up from human eyes, they would witness their character and deeds personally; then the accounting of deeds would begin and would be scrutinized with precise accuracy. Unbelievers and sinners who are not pardonable would be sent to hell. The believers and righteous persons would go to paradise.

"The sinners who are illegible for pardon, since they were under punishment in the barzakh and have already tasted the result of their evil deeds; through means intercession of the prophets and infallible Imams would be pardoned, eventually the illumination of monotheism would remove the darkness of their sins and they would enter into paradise.

For believers and righteous persons the accounting of deeds would be done easily and they would be sent to the paradise sooner; but with respect to the unbelievers and a majority of sinners, it would be very hard. Even the smallest of their deeds and actions would be severely scrutinized; they would remain stopped in resurrection for a prolonged period and with a great deal of hardship and after passing through various stages, would end up in their accounting."⁶

4.5. Paradise

Paradise is a place where decent and righteous individuals would be taken; different kinds of blessing, bounties, resources and means of comfort and joy are present there; whatever a human being could imagine and desires is available therein.⁷

The bounties of paradise are far superior and better to the bounties of the world, and no one has ever heard or seen them. There is no discomfort and hardship in them; whoever would enter paradise would have eternal life and would remain therein forever. Paradise consists of different ranks and positions and everyone in accordance to his virtues and perfections of self and decent conduct would be assigned an appropriate place accordingly.⁸

4.6. Hell

Hell is the place of unbelievers and wicked ones; every sort of horrible punishment and torture is implemented therein. The individuals who would go to hell would be under punishment with intense hardships and discomfort; the punishments of hell are so severe that it is impossible to describe them. The fire of hell not only burns the body but also the burns souls and hearts of individuals, and it oozes from the fountainhead of its essence and sets the entire existence ablaze.⁹

The dwellers of hell consist of two groups: The first group consists of unbelievers, who are completely deprived of the illumination of faith, and God's worshipping; this group would always remain in hell under the intense punishment and torture. The second group consists of God worshippers and faithful who indulged in sinning due to the weakness of their belief and due to this reason deserved the punishment in hell.

This group would remain under hell's punishment temporarily, but eventually the illumination of Monotheism would be dominated over the darkness of their sins and either through the direct pardon of God or through intercession of the chosen prophets would be rescued from hell and would enter paradise. Hell consists of different ranks of various sorts of punishment; everyone would be assigned a place in accordance¹⁰ to the degree of his sins and would be punished with special sorts of punishment accordingly.

4.7. Intercession

The issue of intercession has been mentioned in Holy Qur'an and plenty of narrations have been issued by the Holy Prophet (S) and Infallible Imams (a.s.) about it. In a manner that the reality of intercession cannot be denied; in general it could be concluded from narrations that the Holy Prophet (S) and Infallible Imams (a.s.) would act as an intercessor with respect to some of the sinners and say: "O God! Although this person is a sinner and deserves punishment but because of the means of that particular outstanding virtue and goodness that he has or through Your Own forgiveness and benevolence or through the dignity that we have near You, we request to consider his sins as unseen and delete the crime of his deeds with Your compassion."

Their request of his intercession would be accepted and the relevant person would be blessed with Compassionate God's forgiveness and benevolence. Because of the verses of the Holy Qur'an and narrations, the reality of basic intercession cannot be denied, however some of the points should not be neglected as follows:

1. The intercessors would not offer intercession without permission and command of the God of the Worlds.
2. The place of intercession is at resurrection and after the accounting of deeds. It is here that since the

file of deeds is scrutinized its obligation should be explicitly declared, and due to this reason the intercessor requests for his intercession and sends him to paradise, who was otherwise destined to go to hell because of his sins.

But in the barzakh, any intercession is not available and the sinning person inevitably must see torture and punishment in accordance with his deeds; although it is possible that there too due to intercession of the Holy Prophet (S) and Infallible Imams (a.s.) he might be given some sort of reduction in his punishment, but this does not constitute as an intercession.

3. The intercessors themselves have said: “You should try your best to appear in resurrection in the form of a human being so that we could do intercession for you. Therefore, if the beastly sins reach to a point that would metamorphose human essence entirely, thus making his appearance in the form of a wild beast, there is no room for his intercession. Anyhow for intercession merit and worthiness are essential.”

4. Regarding some of the sins the intercessors, like renunciation of prayers, have said: “Our intercession would not include this group.”

5. Therefore on the basis of the above mentioned matters a human being should not feel proud because of the promise of intercession and do sins; because someone who indulges in sinning with the hope of intercession is like an individual who is poisoned and exposes himself to the danger of hoping that the doctor and medicine would be able to save him.

4.8. Repentance

It could be understood from the verses of the Holy Qur’an and narrations of the Infallible Imams (a.s.) that a sinner, if before his death repents and is ashamed of his evil deeds, his sins are forgiven and wouldn’t be scrutinized for his deeds on the Day of Judgment. [11](#)

Therefore, the door of repentance and return remains always open for all sinners and none should be hopeless of God’s blessing; but lest we think that whoever simply recites the phrase of: “O God forgive me (Astaghfirullah)” and through the pressure of nerves sheds a tear from his eyes, repents and would be blessed with forgiveness; instead, real repentance requires conditions that Imam Ali (a.s.) has pointed out. Imam Ali (a.s.) said: “There are six things necessary for repentance:

1. He must be really ashamed from the past sins.
2. He must seriously be determined that he would not commit sins in the future.
3. If people owe something upon you; you must pay them all of their dues.
4. The mandatory obligations not offered must be offered as make up (Qad’a).
5. The flesh that has been grown upon the body through utilization of illegitimate (har’am) food should be

melted down completely through means of sorrow and grief about the committed sins.

6. As you have tasted the sweetness of sinning, should also tolerate the bitterness and hardship of worshipping, then you must recite the phrase of forgiveness: O God forgive me (Astaghfirullah). [12](#)

[1.](#) God in the Holy Qur'an has pointed out about the same reason when He says:

“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.](#) God in the Holy Qur'an has pointed about the same meanings and says:

“Shall We treat those who believe and do good works as those who spread corruption in the earth; or shall We treat the pious as the wicked?”(The Holy Qur'an, 38:28)

[3.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, v. 6, p-249.

[4.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, v. 6, p-145.

[5.](#) God has said in the Holy Qur'an:

“And behind them is a barrier until the day when they are raised.” (The Holy Qur'an, 23:100)

“And call not those who are slain in the way of Allah 'dead.' Nay they are living, only ye perceive not. (The Holy Qur'an, 2:154)

“Think not of those who are slain in the way of Allah, as dead. Nay, they are living. With their Lord they have provision.” (The Holy Qur'an, 3:169)

The Holy Prophet (S) said that: “The grave is the prime station of hereafter, whoever is rescued from that later on the task would become easier upon him, and whoever is not rescued from it the later punishments are not easier than it.” Bihar al-Anwar, v. 6, p-242.

Imam al-Sajjad (a.s.) said that: “The grave is either a garden from gardens of the paradise or is a trench from trenches of the hell.” Bihar al-Anwar, v. 6, pp-214, 202-282.

[6.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, v.7, pp, 54-237.

[7.](#) “Therein are brought round for them trays of gold and goblets, and therein is all that souls desires and eyes find sweet. And ye are immortal therein.” (The Holy Qur'an, 43:71)

[8.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, v. 8, pp, 71-322.

[9.](#) “(It is) the fire of Allah kindled”. (The Holy Qur'an, 104:06)

[10.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, v. 8, pp, 222-374.

[11.](#) Wafi, 1, part-3, p-183.

[12.](#) Nahj al-Balaghah (Printed in Egypt), Part-2, p-253.

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