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The entire lives of the animals are spent in eating, sleeping, and breeding. The intelligence and knowledge of animals is imperfect. They are unable to discriminate between good and bad. Therefore they don't have any responsibility imposed on them. They will not be required to account for their deeds.

There is no preordained responsibility for them. But man, who is the best of the creations of Allah, is not like the animals. Man has wisdom and capability. He can discriminate between good and bad, pretty and ugly. Man has been created for a perpetual and eternal existence and not for extinction.

Therefore he carries a great responsibility and duty ordained for him. Man is the vicegerent and trustee of Allah in this world. The purpose of the life of the man is not just eating, sleeping, satisfying desires and procreation. But the man has to tread such a path that he proves himself even more superior than the angels. He is human and must strive to promote his humanity. Man should have a goal in life. The goal has to be idealistic. Man strives in Allah's cause and to serve His creations and not only for achieving the worldly benefits. Man has to search the Truth and to follow the Truth.

Yes the human existence is such a precious jewel which is far superior than all the animals. It is a shame that lot of men have squandered their invaluable worth. They spend their lives literally like animals. In their view eating, drinking, sleeping, fulfilling carnal desires alone are the purpose of their lives. It is possible that a person might live for a hundred years without understanding himself and die in utter ignorance, He comes into the world like an animal and will die an animal He will remain aimless and itinerant all his life. The result of all his striving will be nought.

Man should know himself. Who is he? From where he has come? Where he has to go? What is the purpose of his birth? What path he must take? What is the real goal and what is auspicious for him?

'Ali, The Commander of the Faithful, says:

"The best enlightenment is that the man recognizes himself, and the greatest ignorance is when a

person doesn't know his own self."1

"One who did not recognize himself, he strayed from the path of salvation, and took the road to ignorance and aimlessness."2

"For Allah the most abhorrent person is one who has made eating and satisfaction of carnal desires the sole purpose of life."3

"One who has made achievement of Salvation on the Day of Judgment his purpose in life will get fulfillment."4

The parents should give the lesson of self-assessment and purposeful existence to their children. They can progressively give a purposeful character to the lives of the children. The child, with the help of the parents, should be helped to know himself. From where he has come?

What is the purpose of his existence? Where he will go ultimately? What are his duties and responsibilities in this world? With what program and aim he should live his life? If the parents know themselves and have definite aims in life, then they will be successfully able to guide their children on the desired path.

- 1. Gharar al hukm, p. 179
- 2. Gharar al hukm, p. 77
- 3. Gharar al hukm, p. 205
- 4. Gharar al hukm, p. 693

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