

Incorrect understanding of Destiny

When we say that luck is imaginary and illusory, it does not mean that Divine religions and the holy Quran has said so. What we mean is that some simple-minded people think that they are captives of luck and that someone else makes and unmakes their destiny.

We may be theists or materialists; we may be of the opinion that some 'intellect' controls the management of the universe thoughtfully and with a planning; or we may say that the universe has come into existence by chance through the coming together of innumerable atoms.

Anyway we cannot deny that ever since a young man has started drinking he has made his future dark for himself and ruined his luck. After some time he would end up in a hospital with a damaged kidney then either his heart would fail or his nerves break.

We are sure that a man who does not know how to control carnivorous animals should not start playing with the tail of a lion or a cheetah. Otherwise he would become a morsel for them within no time.

Surely when a gambler loses he himself is responsible for his bad luck.

Someone has said quite correctly: It is madness, not misfortune to lean out precariously from the terrace and then fall down. Work is the best wing to fly in the sky of knowledge. Art is the best wealth in the world. You should keep trying even if your aim is beyond imagination and you must continue walking even if your path passes through the mouth of a python.

A successful student who had studied day and night has improved his destiny ever since he entered the university.

To summarize, our efforts today construct our future. Worldly affairs are interconnected like the rings of a chain. If an intermediary ring breaks off the whole series or scheme of life is disturbed. Every ring is the cause for another.

Every happening is based on a series of causes and effects. For example, today's events will become the cause for tomorrow's events. Similarly the causes of tomorrow will be the reasons for the happenings of the day after. The story of future is inscribed on the forehead of the present day. Previous events themselves tell us that today's happenings are the harbingers of tomorrow's events. The relation

between the two is unmistakable. If somebody ponders over the management of the Creator he can clearly predict tomorrow's events.

If we read in religious books or in the holy Quran that man lives within the limits of destiny or if it is written in the holy Quran that whatever you do has been inscribed in the Lauhe Mahfuz (Protected Tablet) from the beginning, it does not mean that we are the prisoners of destiny and are bound to act accordingly. Rather what is meant thereby is that the Omniscient God is aware of all the events of the past and the future and knows who will work voluntarily for what and will consequently decide his own good or bad fortune.

Allah is aware of what man will do but man is absolutely free to shape his destiny.

A wrong notion about destiny

Some people deceive themselves and ignore the voice of their intellects. The mind, in the words of Rumi, says:

When you say I will do this or that, my dear!

It is the proof of your freedom of action.

Some people think that they are born helpless and that they have no freedom of action at all. In their opinion they are like stones dropped from above that cannot do anything except falling down.

Or they are like a plant, which grows and flourishes in a certain way by which it is bound. They think against the dictates of their intellect and that of the nature. Everyone knows that he is free to do what he likes. He himself shapes his own destiny.

Force of Environment

If, in earlier days, people used to blame destiny for the bad effects of their wrong deeds, people today say that environment is responsible for the adverse effects of their bad deeds. They are deceiving themselves and trying to cover up their own misdeeds.

Let us see what is the 'Force of environment', which is mentioned in some social and philosophical books.

What they mean is that it is in the interest of man to meet the demands of time and to live according to the times.

For example, today, people share the benefits of modern technology. They travel by airplanes; rest under the shades of electricity (air conditioning) and modern techniques are utilized in the educational field etc. Thus man has to walk with the society and has to act like others. We accept the 'force of environment' upto this limit.

However some people take undue benefit and blame the society and the environment for their own wrong ways and if the young generation is being spoilt they say, "The youths are not to blame because

the environment is bad.” Such people make a mockery of reason and logic. They are themselves responsible for the consequences because were free to act rightly or wrongly.

Under the Shade of Allah’s blessings

It is necessary to mention here that though man is free to make or unmake his destiny, it does not mean that he needs no one else and that he can do everything without the help of Allah. Such a theory is neither accepted by the Divine scriptures nor by intelligence and logic. However strong a man may be, he is after all created by Allah----God has created him and he needs innumerable things to live. He uses the energy given by God for fulfilling his needs.

Man is like an electric bulb, which needs to remain connected with the powerhouse for remaining on. But he is free to light up either a mosque or a nightclub.

If man realizes that he is connected with the limitless power of Allah, he will never become lazy. Rather his working power will increase, because he will be aware of the fact that a great source of power is backing him, and that he has not been left alone to suffer the hardships of this world.

Soldiers who remain in the front ranks of the army for fighting the enemy can fight courageously only when they are confident that they are sufficiently backed. Without such assurance they would become nervous.

Giving instruction in a battlefield Ali (a.s.) had advised his son: My Son! Remember that real help comes only from Allah.

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