

Lecture 3: Prophets and Religious Laws Were Sent For Mankind

Imām Khomeini repeated the following a few times this past week. He said that university students must be polished. The seminary students must also be polished, because if they are not polished they would be dangerous and corrupt. If they do not become polished they will not benefit the society at all. The unpolished doctor, engineer or mujtahid is not only corrupt, but he makes others corrupt as well.

The religion and laws that all of the prophets brought down is for man. The Qurʾān wants man to purify himself; to know himself and his evil traits. Then it wants man to correct them.

Knowing One's Self Will Help In Ridding One's Self Of Animalistic Characteristics

Polishing one's self means purifying one's self. What should a person purify himself from? He should purify himself from animalistic characteristics, from animalistic habits. When he becomes purified from these characteristics he understands that he is nothing more than his soul as well as that he was made for another world. He must travel to the next world. He will feel a responsibility to remain pious.

As long as one has animalistic characteristics he will consider himself to be an animal. In reality he is like an animal. Greed, stinginess, hypocrisy, anger, and seeking power are some of the animalistic characteristics. It is impossible for one, with these characteristics, to know himself and know that he is made for another world. For example, the materialists and communists consider themselves to be one with the animals. They think that the end of life is death.

Others are for you and you are for Allah

People say, with certainty, that man must be free just like animals. How little knowledge they have about themselves that they consider themselves one with the animals! Quadrupeds were created for man. [1](#)

Everything on this earth was created for man.² Man's station of existence is higher than that of material things. Everything was created for man and man was created for Allah.

One must be certain that he is something other than this material body in order to purify himself. How would one be able to realize his faults and their cures if he does not know this? For this reason we will discuss the immateriality of the soul.

Why Doesn't A Dead Body Have Feelings?

The soul is what feels; flesh, skin, veins, bones and organs are created for the soul. The eye, ear and tongue are means for the soul to see, hear and speak. Nothing comes from them by themselves. If they acted independently, why doesn't a dead body feel anything? The tongue is unable to speak. If it was able to speak a donkey or camel has a tongue twice the size of our tongue – they should be able to talk more than us. So, the tongue is nothing more than a tool, it does not have power in and of itself.

It is the soul that sees, hears and speaks. It is the soul that smells. These organs are just a means for the soul.

An Intellectual Proof Of The Immateriality Of The Soul

Man must know that this 'I' is in the body, not the body itself, because material things do not have knowledge. Leaves of a tree are unaware of other leaves. A finger is unaware of other fingers. But, 'I' is aware of everything from his head to his toe. I will quickly know who I am if a needle goes into the bottom of my foot or a person touches my body. 'I' controls the body, so it is not the body itself.

Ability In All Fields

Allah created man with the ability to do anything; even walk on the moon or know exactly where the moon will be on any given day, hour, minute or second. These are proofs of man's immaterial soul.

Dirt is unaware of everything. It is impossible for material items to obtain knowledge. So, man is something above materialism, something that is able to understand everything. So the term 'I' is man's essence, not his body. The body dies, but the soul doesn't. The soul is immortal, it has been created to live for ever, not to die.

Death is when the body and soul become separated, not when the soul dies. Death is like getting down from one's horse. Imām 'Alī (a) said that when one dies he changes his dirty material clothes for nice immaterial clothes. It is like a bird that was in his cage; when his cage is finally opened and he flies out.

They Have Forgotten Themselves

Communists have strangled themselves and anyone who accepts their ideology. Whoever considers himself to be an animal has misunderstood his responsibilities. He will become polluted with every carnal desire, and in reality, will become an animal. This is because they have forgotten Allah and, as a result of that, they have forgotten themselves.³ They must find themselves, review themselves, and get rid of their bad habits. One will not become a human until he leaves his animalistic nature.

I received many written questions last week. For example: What age will we be when we are raised on the Day of Judgment? Will we be raised with the same form that we have now? Is it just that one's old body be punished for a sin that one committed in one's youth? The answers to the first questions are as follows:

Believers Will Enter Heaven With Young Bodies

The Day of Judgment, in itself, is intellectually proved, but the events that will happen on the Day of Judgment remain unknown. The only way to understand what will happen is through revelation and traditions from the Ahl al-Bayt (a). We have received traditions that state that believers will enter heaven at a young age, men at 32 and women at 16. The believers will also stay that age forever because one does not age in the next world.

The answer to the second question, the question about what form we will be raised with, must also be answered through revelation.

People Will Be Raised According To Their Nature

The following tradition is related from the Messenger of Allah in the book *Tafsīr al-Qummī* under the verse,

“You will come forth in crowds on the day that the trumpet is blown.”⁴

People asked the Prophet (S) if this verse refers to the Muslims or the unbelievers and the Prophet (S) answered: “It is in reference to the Muslims. They will be raised in ten groups, some will look like monkeys, some like pigs, some will be upside down, some will be blind, some will have puss falling off of their tongue...”⁵ Another group will be raised with faces that are gleaming more than a full moon; they will be like angels leading all of the other groups.

He (S) said regarding the women of heaven: “The relationship between the heavenly women and the *hur al-‘ayn* is like the relationship between the *hur al-‘ayn* and other women.”⁶

As a summary, everyone will be raised according to their nature. One will be raised up more beautiful

than the angels if he obtained these characteristics on earth, but, if he was like a predator he will be raised up in such a condition that pigs will look beautiful next to him. He will hate his appearance so much that he will wish to be thrown into hell so that others will not see him in this state. How bad it is that hell will be his place of refuge!

We will now answer the third question which was: is it just for one's old body to be punished for a sin that one committed while in one's youth?

The Spirit Has Pleasure Or Pain

The answer should be clear to those who paid attention to what I have said. One's flesh and skin is a tool for one's soul. 'I' commit a sin and 'I' must be punished, the soul must be punished. 'I' is the same in old age as it is in young age. A soul whose body is a hundred years old is the same soul who had a twenty-year-old body. It is the same if he committed a sin when he was twenty or a hundred. Allah punishes the soul not the flesh and skin, because it is the soul who wanted to commit the sin.

The Punishment Of The Hereafter Is Different Than The Punishment Of This World

One of the things that one must know about resurrection is that the punishment in the next world is different than the punishment of this world. The punishment of the hereafter is incomparable to punishments like prison or taking off one's fingernails. In the next world, one's bad actions come to life and man is engrossed in fire. We are unable to picture exactly what the punishment will be like, but we should know that it is unlike anything in this world.

Perfection Is In The Hereafter

Another question that was asked was: is there perfection in this world or not? Can a person who dies or becomes a martyr have knowledge about what is going on in the world?

The answer to the first part is that whatever man becomes in this world is what he will become. Death closes the folder of one's actions. The Prophet of Islam (S) said: "The Earth is the farmland for the hereafter." As long as man is on earth there is time to plant seeds. The time for harvest is when he dies. He will see whatever he has done in the next life. If what is meant by perfection is that he will receive the reward of something that he did not do, it is incorrect.

Of course intercession and generosity have their own places, but one should not expect the reward of a prayer that he did not perform, the reward of charity that he did not give or the reward of good actions that he did not perform. One should ask Allah to give him the rewards of what one has done.

Expect Mercy If You Were Merciful

One can ask those who ask Allah for mercy if they were merciful themselves. Is mercy good or bad? If it is good, why don't you show mercy? Man should expect Allah to treat him the same way he treats others.

One can ask those who ask Allah to forgive them – how many people have you forgiven? Many people do not forgive those that they fight with, but expect Allah to forgive them. The Qurʾān says that you should forgive each other; don't you want Allah to forgive you?⁷

Imām Sajjīd's Conversation With His Servant

Sayyid Ibn Tawūs wrote in his book *Al-Iqbal* that Imām Sajjīd (a) gathered his servants on ʿĪd al-Fitr. The Imām wrote down all of the bad things that his servants did in the year and on this day said to them: I forgive you for all of the bad actions that you performed in this year. You are also free from this day forward. Tell Allah; "Alī ibn al-Husayn forgave us, so forgive him as well. He also freed us, so free him from the tortures of Hell."

Compare what reality is to what we think it is. We should show a little bit of what we want from Allah. If we want Allah to forgive us we should forgive others. Allah is the Most merciful; are you willing to show mercy or do you want to take revenge? If you want revenge, then why do you ask Allah for mercy?

¹. Refer to 16:5.

². Refer to 31:20.

³. Refer to 59: 19.

⁴. 78: 18.

⁵. This has been explained in Shahīd Dastghayb's book about the resurrection (Ma'ad), available on line at: <http://www.al-islam.org/the-hereafter/> [1].

⁶. 'Allamah Majlisī, Bihār al-Anwār, volume 3.

⁷. Refer to 24:22.

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[1] <http://www.al-islam.org/the-hereafter/>