

Lesson 17: Allah's Decrees

Types of Decrees

﴿يَمْحُوا اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيُنَبِّتُ وَعِنْدَهُ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ﴾

God blots out, and He establishes whatsoever He will; and with Him is the Essence of the Book. (Ar'ad 13:39).

Based on the Ayahs of the Holy Qur'an and narrations, the Divine Decrees are of two types:

The first, matters that have an eternal benefit, and so its laws are also eternal. Such as the Ayahs

{ مَا يُبَدِّلُ الْقَوْلُ لَدَىٰ }

The Word is not changed with Me (Qaf 50:29).

{ وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ عِنْدَهُ بِمِقْدَارٍ }

Everything with Him has its measure (Ar R'ad 13:8).

Everything has a detailed register of accounts with the Lord and as such, the Divine Decrees are recorded in a guarded tablet¹ and only the nearest to Allah^ﷻ and with His permission can have knowledge of it.

{ كِتَابٌ مَّرْقُومٌ يُشْهَدُهُ الْمُقْرَبُونَ }

A book inscribed, witnessed by those brought nigh. (Al Mutaffifin 83: 20–21).

The second, are matters which are not definite and their benefits depend upon the actions and behaviors of the people, such as repentance from sins which has the benefits of forgiveness, or alms giving which has the benefits of repelling calamities, or oppressions which brings about Divine Wrath upon the sinners. So Allahﷻ is not hand tied with the matters revolving around the administration of all his creation, and with His eternal wisdom and knowledge that He has, he can change some conditions to change the creations and the laws with in it. It is clear that these changes are not a result of ignorance or a change in view, or even regret on His part, but rather, it is based on His wisdom and the changed conditions and/or end of that period in question.

The Holy Qur'an with regards to this presents many examples, some of which are:

- 1. Supplicate to me, I will answer you (Holy Qur'an 40:60). Mankind, can with supplication, bring about benefits to himself and change his own denouement.***
- 2. Allah'sﷻ rules are not fixed everywhere, perhaps Allahﷻ, upon the fulfilling the necessary conditions, will rewrite a new program and bring something new to pass (Holy Qur'an 65:1).***
- 3. He has a specific status for every specific day (Holy Qur'an 55:29).***
- 4. Because some people choose a deviated path, Allahﷻ leads their hearts astray (Holy Qur'an 61:5).***
- 5. With faith and piety, Divine Wrath changes to Divine kindness and blessings (Holy Qur'an 7:96).***
- 6. Allahﷻ will not change the denouement of any nation unless they change themselves (Holy Qur'an 13:11).***
- 7. One who repents, believes, and performs a good deed, Allahﷻ will change that individual's bad deeds in to good (Holy Qur'an 19:60).***
- 8. If you return, We too shall return (Holy Qur'an 17:8).***

Of course, Allah'sﷻ knowledge is based on the foundation of cause and effect, in such a way that He knows that if one uses a particular method, a particular result will occur, and the use of another method results in an alternative outcome.

[What Is A New Manifestation?](#)

In Shia Islam, New Manifestations ((بداء) is something that becomes apparent that we, contrary to its reality, suspected, not a change in the knowledge of Allahﷻ and the discovery of contradiction for Allahﷻ.

New Manifestation in creation, is like a law that supersedes an older one, just as we thought that a particular law was eternal... yet later realize that it has changed. Of course, this does not point to a regretful lawmaker or their ignorance, but rather the changed conditions that brought about changes in laws. The correct prescription the doctor writes remains correct so long as the condition of the patient is unchanged... but once it changes, a new prescription needs to be written.

Here, we present some examples of New Manifestations in the Holy Qur'an:

1. We suspected that Allahﷻ ordered Prophet Ibrahimؑ to slaughter his son, wanting his son Ismaelؑ dead and his blood scattered on the earth. Yet later it becomes apparent that the will of Allahﷻ in this matter was a test of the father, not of the slaughter.
2. We suspected that the promise of Allahﷻ with Prophet Mosesؑ consisted of a period of thirty-night period, but then realise that it was always intended to be forty nights (Holy Qur'an 7:142), but was divided in to two periods in the form of a test, the first being thirty, the latter being a further ten nights.
3. We suspected that the direction for which Muslims will face to pray will always be that of Al- Quds, but then Ayahs were revealed changing the direction eternally to the House of Allahﷻ, The Ka'ba.
4. Once the signs of Divine Wrath started to appear, even Prophet Yunusؑ was sure that the punishment was coming and his disbelieving nation would be annihilated, and so left his people. But then the nation started to believe and the Divine Wrath was lifted (Holy Qur'an 10:98).

At any rate, New Manifestation does not implicate change in His knowledge or ignorance, as Allahﷻ knew from the outset the blood of Ismael (pbuh) would not be shed by his father, the period of litany for Prophet Moses (pbuh) was always going to be forty nights, the direction to which Muslims eternally pray towards will be the Ka'ba and the Nation of Yunus (pbuh) will be saved. Yet the style and syntax in which the stories are narrated may give a superficial impression otherwise.

So it was not a change in His knowledge, but our view of the story in a new light.

New Manifestations have a specific role in cultivating lessons, one of which is that one must till the last moment in their life, must maintain hope in the changing conditions, the spirit of reliance upon Allahﷻ should be brought to life, not become a slave to the apparent outlook and faith in the unseen and Allah'sﷻ ability increased. One must make an effort with repentance, alms giving, litany and supplication until the way of events and Divine Wrath are changed for the better.

1. {فِي لَوْحٍ مَّحْفُوظٍ} - in a guarded tablet (Al Buruj 85:22)

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