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Lesson 2: The Proof or Reason for the Creator's Justice

1. Goodness and Evil

We have learned and it seems that this issue is necessary that our intellect distinguish between good and evil to a certain extent. (This is that very thing which scholars speak about in ethical terms as 'goodness' and 'evil'.

For instance, we know that justice and goodness are good and oppression and stinginess are evil. Before religion even mentions these things, it was clear to us. However, there are other issues which exist which our intelligence is not sufficient to understand and we must seek guidance from Divine leaders and the prophets.

Thus, if a group of Muslims in the name of the Asharites deny intellectual goodness and evil and the way of distinguishing between 'good' and 'evil', to think that only religion brought the issue of justice and oppression, and things like this, is completely wrong.

Because if our intellect does not have the ability to choose between good and evil, how should we know whether or not God would send His message through false prophets? But the moment we say that lying is wrong and evil, and that it is impossible that God would lie, we know that God's Promises are always true and that He is always truthful, we would never encourage deceit and never give miracles into the hands of a deceitful person.

It is here that we can rely upon what religion and the Divine Law says.

Thus, we can conclude that the belief in intellectual good and evil is from religion. (Note this with care).

Now, let us return to the proof of Divine Justice. In order to understand this, we must know.

2. What the source of oppression is

The source of oppression is one of the following things:

A- Ignorance: It sometimes happens that an oppressive person does not, in truth, know what he is doing. He does not know that he is destroying someone's rights and he is not aware of what he is doing.

B- Need: Sometimes a person is tempted to undertake a satanic act in order to attain something that another has whereas if he were self-sufficient, in such a situation, he would have no need to commit oppression.

C- Inability: Sometimes a person is not willing to have the rights of another curtailed but he does not have the power or ability to do anything about it, and without willingness, he commits oppression.

D- Selfishness, bearing grudges and seeking revenge: Sometimes none of these qualities exist but selfishness causes one to aggress against others or the sense of seeking revenge or bearing a grudge makes that person commit oppression or the spirit of 'exclusiveness' and 'monopolization' causes injustice to others.

But noting that none of these ugly qualities and deficiencies exist in God, because He is the Knower of all things, Needless of all things, has Power over all things and is kind to all, it makes no sense for Him to commit oppression.

He is a Being Who is Endless, Perfect and Unlimited. Only Goodness, Justice and Mercy can stem from such a Being.

If He punishes those who commit evil, in reality, it is the result of their deeds which causes this, just like a person who, as a result of the use of narcotics or alcohol, is afflicted with an incurable disease. The Holy Quran says,

هَلْ تُجْزَوْنَ إِلَّا بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْسِبُونَ

"You receive but the recompense of what you have earned." (10:52)

3. The Quran and the Justice of the Creator

It is important to note that the Holy Quran greatly emphasizes this point:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ النَّاسَ شَيْئًا وَلَكِنَّ النَّاسَ أَنفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ

"Verily God will not deal unjustly with man in aught: it is man that wrongs his own soul." (10:44)

And in another place, it says,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ ﴿٤٤﴾ وَإِنْ تَكَ حَسَنَةً يُّضَاعِفْهَا وَيُؤْتِ مِنْ لَدُنْهُ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

"God is never unjust in the least degree." (4:40)

And,

وَنَضَعُ الْمَوَازِينَ الْقِسْطَ لِيَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ فَلَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْئًا ﴿٤٠﴾ وَإِنْ كَانَ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِنْ خَرْدَلٍ أَتَيْنَا بِهَا ﴿٤١﴾ وَكَفَى بِنَا حَاسِبِينَ

"We shall set up scales of justice for the Day of Judgment so that not a soul will be dealt with unjustly in the least." (21:47)

Thus, note that what is meant here by 'balance' is the method of weighing good and evil, not like scales of this world.

4. Invitation to Justice and Equity

We have said that the qualities of the human being must be like a ray of God's Qualities and in human society, God's Qualities are widespread. According to this principle, to the same extent that the Holy Quran stresses the Justice of the Creator, He has also stressed justice and equity in human society and the individuality of individuals. The Holy Quran says that oppression and injustice will destroy society and that the fate of oppressors is of the most painful kind.

The Holy Quran, in addition to mentioning the fate of past tribes, has often repeated this truth for people to see the result of oppression and corruption and what punishment will be given, fear that you not suffer such a fate.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ ﴿٤١﴾ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ

"God commands justice, the doing of good and liberality to family members and He forbids all shameful deeds and injustice and rebellion ... " (16:90)

It should be noted that committing oppression is an ugly act, to accept oppression and suffer suppression is also wrong according to Islam and the Holy Quran,

فَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا فَأْذَنُوا بِحَرْبٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ۗ وَإِنْ تُبْتُمْ فَلَكُمْ رُءُوسُ أَمْوَالِكُمْ لَا تَظْلِمُونَ وَلَا تُظْلَمُونَ

"Deal not unjustly and you shall not be dealt with unjustly." (2:279)

In general, submission to inequity encourages oppression, increases suppression and aids oppressors.

Think and Answer

1. Can our intellect, independent of the Divine Law, distinguish between good and evil?
2. What does oppression stem from? What is the intellectual proof of God's Justice?
3. What does the Holy Quran say about the justice of the Creator and how does it negate oppression from Him?
4. What is a human being's responsibility in regard to justice and oppression?
5. Is it also a sin to submit to oppression?

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