

Need for Prophethood

Almighty Allah has created man in the best of the forms and bestowed perfections for him and He has placed in his being, inclination to perfection and power of movement towards it. Man, in the course of his life and to guarantee the real success is in need of a program and guide and without them he cannot reach his aimed perfection. Man alone cannot recognize the program of life and the path of success and he does not know how to apply them. On the contrary, he is needful of the creator of the world and His prophets. Thus we conclude that it is necessary for the Almighty God to send prophets to guide mankind.

We shall study this subject under two topics:

First topic: Study of the need of man for a program of life and the special qualities of a successful program:

Second topic: Recognition of the compiler of the perfect program.

We shall explain the first topic under a few headings:

1. In logical sciences, it is proved that man is a compound of a body and a soul, from the aspect of the body, he is like other material things and is subject to change and movement; and from the aspect of the soul he is considered as a part of the abstract world. But in this very condition, each of them is related to another. Since the soul of man is related to a material body, and is not solely an abstract thing; it is having possibility of movement and desire for perfection. In the beginning, he is a weak being, which progresses gradually and becomes more and more perfect; but in all the stages there is only one reality and not more.

2. On one side, man is placed on path of perfection and by nature he is desirous of perfection and on the other hand, he is equipped with the power of acquiring perfection, therefore it is possible for him to reach perfection; hence there is no vain act in the system of God's creation. Since every material being can reach its possible perfection, man is also not deprived of this great divine bounty and he can reach

his desired perfection; on the contrary Almighty Allah has prepared for him the way to achieve this.

3. Man is having two kinds of lives: one of them is the life of the world, which is related to his body; and the other is the spiritual and inward life, related to his soul. As a result of this in accordance with each of these two lives, he will either have perfection and success or decline and misfortune.

Man is busy in the life of the world and it is possible that he might become unmindful of his spiritual life, but he is also having a real life in his inner being, which in the end will either take him to salvation and perfection of humanity or lead him to an everlasting decline and evil resort.

Therefore, correct beliefs, good manners and good deeds, are means for perfection of soul and inner success, because false beliefs, bad habits and improper behaviors make a man deviate from the straight path and take him to the valley of destruction and evil.

If man is on the straight path of perfection, the essence of his being gains maturity and after traversing stages of perfection to his real condition, which is the condition of luminosity and happiness, he scales them. But if he sacrifices the spiritual perfections, good ethics and excellent character on the altar of sensual and animal desires or in shape of beastly infatuations, he would become deviated from the straight path of humanity and fall into the ravine of destruction and evil.

4. Just as there is perfect unity and attachment between the body and soul of man, there is also a relationship between the life of the world and spiritual life. And it is not possible to separate the two of them and make each of them independent entities.

Good or bad deeds and character of man, without any doubt will have good or bad effect on his self; since the qualities and capacities have effect on the howness of incidence of acts. The spiritual and inner life of man is the source of his beliefs, character and acts. Without correct faith and performance of good deeds, he cannot reach his intended stage of perfection and spiritual success, just as without purification of self it is not possible to reform ones acts and to gain perfect good sense.

5. Man lives in the society and derives all kinds of benefits from it and also passes on benefits to them. But there are instances when a person may not pass on the benefit or may trespass on the rights of others; and this would make life in society very difficult. That is why human society is needful of a perfect, precise and comprehensive set of laws so that it can guarantee the rights of people and prevent the trespassing on the rights of others.

Therefore, since man is having two dimensions of existence (body and soul) and two kinds of life, which have perfect relationship with each other, he is in need of a program and course of action to gain success in both his lives; which has the success of the world as well as everlasting success in the hereafter; in such a way that it neither sacrifices the life of the hereafter on the life of the world and neither does it give up the spiritual life for the comfort of the life of this world.

It is such a program, which is compiled according to the actual needs of man and which leads man on the path of success and salvation and not on an imaginative and hypothetical perfection. A program, which is based on human excellence and perfection and which calls the attention of man for growth of his ethereal soul and inclines him to the position of divine proximity and thus he begins to consider the world as the harvest field of the hereafter. In compilation and arrangement of these laws, real benefits of all human beings are kept in view and narrow mindedness, improper prejudice and groupism are avoided. Almighty Allah says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اسْتَجِيبُوا لِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ إِذَا دَعَاكُمْ لِمَا يُحْيِيكُمْ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَحُولُ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَقَلْبِهِ وَأَنَّهُ إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ

“O you who believe! answer (the call of) Allah and His Apostle when he calls you to that which gives you life; and know that Allah intervenes between man and his heart, and that to Him you shall be gathered.” (8:24)

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ بُرْهَانٌ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ نُورًا مُبِينًا * فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَاعْتَصَمُوا بِهِ فَسَيُدْخِلُهُمْ فِي رَحْمَةٍ مِنْهُ وَفَضْلٍ وَيَهْدِيهِمْ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ

“O people! surely there has come to you manifest proof from your Lord and We have sent to you clear light. Then as for those who believe in Allah and hold fast by Him, He will cause them to enter into His mercy and grace and guide them to Himself on a right path.” (4: 174–175)

كَانَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً فَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ النَّبِيِّينَ مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنْذِرِينَ وَأَنْزَلَ مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ فِي مَا اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ وَمَا اخْتَلَفَ فِيهِ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ أُوتُوهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُمْ الْبَيِّنَاتُ بَغْيًا بَيْنَهُمْ فَهَدَى اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لِمَا اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ مِنَ الْحَقِّ بِإِذْنِهِ وَاللَّهُ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ

“(All) people are a single nation; so Allah raised prophets as bearers of good news and as warners, and He revealed with them the Book with truth, that it might judge between people in that in which they differed; and none but the very people who were given it differed about it after clear arguments had come to them, revolting among themselves; so Allah has guided by His will those who believe to the truth about which they differed and Allah guides whom He pleases to the right path.” (2:213)

Compilation of the Program of Success

After we have become aware of conditions and specialties of a perfect program, the question arises that who is supposed to design and compile this program? Whether all human beings or intellectuals,

intelligent beings or reformers are capable of designing such a program?

With a little thought we can conclude that the reply to this is a decisive 'no', because:

Firstly: One who can occupy this post of designing such a program should have real cognition of man and he should be aware of the secrets and subtleties of the body and ethereal soul of man and he should also have knowledge about the aims and inclinations and the positive and negative points of man and the demands of time and space and occurrence of hardships as also their laws and effects; while the fact is that such a person cannot be found among human beings.

Secondly: Even if we suppose that human law makers can design such a program for administration of worldly matters of human beings, without any doubt, they do not have sufficient awareness about the secrets and mysteries of the ethereal soul of man, and the ideal needs and spiritual life, from the deep relationship between the life of the world and the inner life and also from the perfection of soul and causes of the decline of man. That is why man himself cannot to design for himself a perfect and complete program of life, and basically control the spiritual life of man with attention to the development of ethereal soul of human beings, which is beyond the scope of lawmakers of humanity.

That is why man is not capable to frame laws to guarantee peace and prosperity of his worldly life and to design a program to assure success of his life in hereafter. Thus the only one who can design a perfect and compatible program and entrust it to man, is God, creator of the world and man, who is perfectly aware of makeup and being of man, secrets and subtleties and who is well aware of all his needs, aspirations and inclinations.

It is Him alone who is aware of the real perfections of man and well knows the causes of the exaltation and decline of the soul. It is only the wise God, who sees the world of human beings equally, and all the human beings are His creatures. He loves all and is desirous of their success and salvation. He is never selfish, narrow minded and prejudiced.

Yes, it is only God who can lay down the program to guarantee success of the body and soul and world and the hereafter of man and entrust it to His chosen prophets. It is Him that His unlimited grace has caused the performance of this action and has not deprived the people from this great divine bounty. It is God, who has provided causes for the perfection for different types of material beings so that they may be able to through their actions and efforts to reach their intended aim. The Holy Quran says:

قَالَ رَبُّنَا الَّذِي أَعْطَى كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلْقَهُ ثُمَّ هَدَى

“Our Lord is He Who gave to everything its creation, then guided it (to its goal).” (20:50)

A God, who created man with this greatness and in creation of his body and soul placed thousands of secrets and mysteries and appointed the material world at his disposal; it is not possible that He should

become oblivious of his success, real perfection and actual aim of his existence and that he should not give him the capability reach this aim.

Through this is proved the need of prophets and their message. Almighty Allah, in order to convey His message to man, selected some persons from among them, so that He may through them send His programs and laws with regard to their needs. Thus prophets are selected human beings who convey the message of God and guide to success and perfection and warn of the factors of decline and misfortune. Almighty Allah says:

يَبْنَىٰ ءَادَمَ إِمَّا يَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ رُسُلٌ مِّنكُمْ يَقُصُّونَ عَلَيْكُمْ ءَايَاتِي فَمَنِ اتَّقَىٰ وَأَصْلَحَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ / وَ الَّذِينَ كَذَبُوا بآيَاتِنَا وَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا عَنْهَا أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ

“O children of Adam! if there come to you apostles from among you relating to you My communications, then whoever shall guard (against evil) and act aright- they shall have no fear nor shall they grieve. And (as for) those who reject Our communications and turn away from them haughtily- these are the inmates of the fire, they shall abide in it.” (7:35-36)

وَمَا نُرْسِلُ الْمُرْسَلِينَ إِلَّا مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ فَمَنْ ءَامَنَ وَأَصْلَحَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ / وَ الَّذِينَ كَذَبُوا بآيَاتِنَا يَمْسُهُمُ الْعَذَابُ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ

“And We send not messengers but as announcers of good news and givers of warning, then whoever believes and acts aright, they shall have no fear, nor shall they grieve. And (as for) those who reject Our communications, chastisement shall afflict them because they transgressed.” (6:48-49)

وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا الطَّغُوتَ فَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ هَدَى اللَّهُ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ حَقَّتْ عَلَيْهِ الضَّلَالَةُ فَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَقِبَةُ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ

“And certainly We raised in every nation an apostle saying: Serve Allah and shun the Shaitan. So there were some of them whom Allah guided and there were others against whom error was due; therefore travel in the land, then see what was the end of the rejecters.” (16:36)

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