

## Role of Justice in Prophethood

Justice is one of the qualities of the acts of God implying that all acts of God are based on justice and that He does not oppress anyone. This fundamental is not present only in the creation of existing beings, as was mentioned previously; on the contrary it is the basis of all the principles of faith like prophethood, Imamate and resurrection also. If someone has doubt in divine justice, he can also not prove the authenticity of prophethood, Imamate and resurrection. In the discussion of prophethood, divine justice is used as reasoning in four instances:

### The First Instance

The first instance is about the framing of the laws of the Shariah and duties of people and conveying them through the prophets, which is called as general prophethood. In this discussion it is said as follows:

1. In philosophy and theology, it is proved through reasoning that although man is a reality and not more than one; he has a few stages of existence; on one hand he is a physical and natural body possessing its effects. Since he is a body, he requires nutrition and has potential for growth. On the other hand he has an animal soul; and possesses perception and movement. But the highest stage of his existence is the abstract ethereal soul with which his humanity is connected.
2. It is proved that although the material body of man is prone to dissolution and death, his human soul has no death and annihilation; on the contrary at the time of death, he is transferred from this world to the world of the hereafter so that in the everlasting world of the hereafter, he may be recompensed for his good and bad deeds.
3. Man in this world has two types of lives: One is a vegetative and animal life, which is related to his physical body. Another is the inner life, which is related to the soul and spirit of man.
4. The spiritual life of man is related to the kind of beliefs, morals and his good and bad deeds. If he was having correct beliefs in the world and possessed good morals; and that he walked on the straight path;

his ethereal soul would be perfected and it will be given a happy and successful life after death. And if he had harbored invalid beliefs and had bad morals and behavior; and was deviated from the straight path of humanity; he would sink into the dark valleys of bestiality and would have a difficult and painful life in the world of the hereafter.

The Holy Quran has, in numerous verses, introduced religion and religious law as the straight path; Almighty Allah as the guide and the prophets as warners and givers of glad tidings. For example:

قُلْ إِنِّي هَدَيْتَنِي رَبِّي إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ دِينًا قَيِّمًا

***“Say: Surely, (as for) me, my Lord has guided me to the right path; (to) a most right religion...”***  
**(6: 161)**

وَلَهَدَيْنَهُمْ صِرَاطًا مُسْتَقِيمًا

***“And We would certainly have guided them in the right path.”*** (4:68)

وَاللَّهُ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ

***“...and Allah guides whom He pleases to the right way.”*** (24:46)

قُلْ لِلَّهِ الْمَشْرِقُ وَالْمَغْرِبُ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ

***“Say: The East and the West belong only to Allah; He guides whom He likes to the right path.”***  
**(2: 142)**

إِنَّ اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُوهُ هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ

***“Surely Allah is my Lord and your Lord, therefore serve Him; this is the right path.”*** (3:51)

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا مُبَشِّرًا وَنَذِيرًا

***“And We have not sent you but as a giver of good news and as a warner.”*** (25:56)

As you have seen, in these verses and tens of others like them, religion and religious law is described as the straight path and Almighty Allah is introduced as the guide. Guidance is in the meaning of showing

the way and it cannot be imagined without the presence of a path. Religion is defined as a collection of correct principles of faith, morals and laws and rules of religion; and it is the same straight path. Which we ask from Allah again and again in prayers that He may guide us to it:

اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ

***“Keep us on the right path.” (1:6)***

With attention to what is said above we conclude that: The God who has created man and bestowed perfections to him, and through the power of perfection has equipped him and opened the way of perfection for him and so that in treading this difficult path, he should be in need of guidance and help; He did not at all leave him in ignorance and without any duties. To abandon needy human beings is considered as injustice and an evil deed and the holy being of the wise, knowing and self-sufficient God will be pure of it.

Although in the discussion of general prophethood, the law of grace has been employed, but as you saw, belief in divine justice is very important. If divine justice is not accepted in proving the need of prophethood, relying on the law of divine grace would alone not have sufficed and it would not have been able to reply to all the doubts.

## **The Second Instance**

The second instance is about the distinctive qualities of the prophets: In the discussion of prophethood, it was proved that prophets possess distinctive qualities and the most important of them are the following three:

One: Complete knowledge; like the knowledge of laws and rules of religion; valid beliefs, good morals, which are needed by human beings.’

Two: Infallibility; that is immunity from mistakes, forgetfulness and sins.

Three: Power to perform extraordinary feats in instances when it is necessary to prove the veracity of the claim of prophethood.

These three qualities are considered necessary in prophet. In proving their view they have generally resorted to the ‘proof of grace’; with the explanation that divine grace demands that His prophets should have the three above mentioned virtues so that they be most suitable for the guidance of human beings.

But I think that in this matter also it is better to take the benefit of divine justice with the mention that sending of prophets who are ignorant of all or some of laws and in whose propagation there is chance of mistake or that who does not have a miracle to prove his prophethood, which is not compatible

according to justice of Allah; because religion becomes deficient in guidance of people on the right path and the divine being of Almighty Allah is pure of this.

### **Third Instance: Allotting Of Duties**

In scholastic theology, it is proved that religious laws and duties should be according to the strength and capabilities of the people; in this also especially it can be concluded from verses of Quran and traditions as well as through logical reasonings. For example the Holy Quran says:

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا

***“Allah does not impose upon any soul a duty but to the extent of its ability.” (2:286)***

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا مَا آتَاهَا

***“Allah does not lay on any soul a burden except to the extent to which He has granted it.” (65:7)***

وَجَاهِدُوا فِي اللَّهِ حَقَّ جِهَادِهِ هُوَ اجْتَبَاكُمْ وَمَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ

***“And strive hard in (the way of) Allah, (such) a striving as is due to Him; He has chosen you and has not laid upon you any hardship in religion...” (22:78)***

مَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيَجْعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ حَرَجٍ وَلَكِنْ يُرِيدُ لِيُطَهِّرَكُمْ

***“Allah does not desire to put on you any difficulty, but He wishes to purify you...” (5:6)***

This point is also mentioned in traditions; for example:

The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

“Harm and causing harm are not sanctioned by Islam. Islam increases the benefits of Muslim and does not cause any evil to him.”<sup>[1](#)</sup>

The Holy Prophet (S) also said:

“The Almighty Allah has made lawful everything about which a person is distressed.”<sup>[2](#)</sup>

From such verses and traditions an absolute law can be derived that Almighty Allah in framing laws and duties has taken into consideration the strength of people, and the duty imposed on us is not difficult and

intolerable. Through this command, we can derive a general law with regard to acts, which are harmful and difficult as the Holy Imams (a.s.) have clarified them.

We can see numerous examples of them in the traditions of Ahl al-Bayt (a.s.) and the verdicts of the Islamic jurists.

For example: One of the most important Islamic laws is with regard to fasting during the month of Ramadan, which are highly emphasized. But one for whom it is difficult to fast, is exempted from it.

Like those who are indisposed and the fast is harmful for them; the expectant women who are near to their term and the fast may be harmful to them or the fetus; travelers on a journey sanctioned by religion and aged persons for whom it is difficult to fast; all of them are allowed exemptions in keeping the fasts of Ramadan; although after Ramadan, in case their excuse does not exist anymore, they must make up for the lapsed fasts by keeping them now except for aged persons who are not bound to make up for lapsed fasts. Same order applies to other laws and religious duties.

Most of these excepted orders are mentioned in traditions in circumstances that there should not be a particular textual order about them and in case no such text exists, a general law can be derived with regard to acts which are impossible or beyond human capacity.

To prove this principle in addition to verses of Quran and traditions, we can also employ the 'rule of kindness'; with the explanation that:

Divine justice on people demands that the Divine law should not impose extremely difficult duties or expect them to perform deeds, which are beyond their capacity.

Apart from these, one can also make use of the principle of divine justice; with the explanation that imposition of duties, which are beyond human capacity and harmful is also an evil act and the holy being of Almighty Allah is pure from such acts.

It is said that in Islamic Shariah also there are some laws, which in the beginning seem to be absolute and difficult; like the obligatory nature of holy war and defense, which in addition to being difficult also sometimes ends in injuries and martyrdom of the fighters. But we should note the important point that Jihad is a logical matter and it is considered as a need of the social life of man.

This order is not restricted to Islam, on the contrary all heavenly religions, communities and sects in circumstances in which their beliefs, ideals, territories and their own community is surrounded by enemies, they know that their duty is to make efforts to defend it. Not only do they consider this difficult act to be a duty, which they cannot bear and a hardship, on the contrary they take precedence in loyalty and sacrifice. They consider their dead as martyrs and honor their memory. In Islam also it is in the same way; in verses of Quran and traditions sacrifice and loyalty in the way of Allah is praised and exalted and a high position is accorded for martyrs.

## Fourth Instance: Justice of God in the World After Death

Divine Messengers throughout the period of history have always spoken of resurrection and the day of recompense. From the statement of Almighty Allah to the believers and pious He has promised Paradise and bounties of Paradise and in this way encouraged belief and good deeds. And to the infidels He has promised Hell and chastisement of the Hereafter. The basis of the call of the prophets was as such and through this the believers and righteous are given hope and the infidels and unjust are warned.

Now the question arises that whether Almighty Allah in the world of the hereafter would really fulfill His promise or that it is possible from Him not to fulfill His promise; or in contrast He would send the believers and the righteous to Hell and send the infidels and unjust ones to Paradise? Believer in divine justice say: Almighty Allah would definitely honor His promise since breaking of the promise is an evil deed and evil acts cannot be committed by Almighty Allah.

The same point is explained in numerous verses of Quran:

وَنَضَعُ الْمَوَازِينَ الْقِسْطَ لِيَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ فَلَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْئاً

***“And We will set up a just balance on the day of resurrection, so no soul shall be dealt with unjustly in the least...” (21:47)***

فَالْيَوْمَ لَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْئاً وَلَا تُجْزَوْنَ إِلَّا مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

***“So this day no soul shall be dealt with unjustly in the least; and you shall not be rewarded aught but that which you did.” (36:54)***

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْساً إِلاَّ وُسْعَهَا لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ

***“Allah does not impose upon any soul a duty but to the extent of its ability; for it is (the benefit of) what it has earned and upon it (the evil of) what it has wrought.” (2:286)***

وَاتَّقُوا يَوْماً تُرْجَعُونَ فِيهِ إِلَى اللَّهِ ثُمَّ تُوَفَّى كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ

***“And guard yourselves against a day in which you shall be returned to Allah; then every soul shall be paid back in full what it has earned, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly.” (2:281)***

Here we consider it necessary to mention some important and subtle points:

It is concluded from traditions and verses that the reward and punishment of the hereafter is not a supposed and stipulated; on the contrary it is factual and conclusive and in the form of the good or bad morals that man had in the world. Paradise and bounties of Paradise are the unseen aspect of good morals and character of man and his attitude in the world, which would be exposed in the world of the hereafter. Hell and chastisement of the hereafter is also as such.

In the Holy Quran, it is said:

يَوْمَ تَجِدُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مُّحْضَرًا وَمَا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ سُوءٍ تَوَدُّ لَوْ أَنَّ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَهُ أَمَدًا بَعِيدًا وَيُحَذِّرُكُمُ اللَّهُ نَفْسَهُ وَاللَّهُ رَءُوفٌ بِالْعِبَادِ

***“On the day that every soul shall find present what it has done of good and what it has done of evil, it shall wish that between it and that (evil) there were a long duration of time; and Allah makes you to be cautious of (retribution from) Himself; and Allah is Compassionate to the servants.” (3:30)***

Therefore good or bad morals and good and bad character that man has in this world and which became the essence of man, would remain with him until Judgment Day and he would be resurrected along with it. Paradise and bounties of Paradise would be prepared from good morals and character and Hell and the different chastisements of the hereafter would be brought into existence through evil behaviors and despised morals.

1. Mizanul Hikmah, Vol. 2, Pg. 180.

2. Biharul Anwar, Vol. 75, Pg. 413.

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