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Session 5: Freedom in Islam (Part 1)

Private realms of Knowledge and Religion

How and from which materials alcohol is formed and how many types of alcohol we have are scientific questions, and it is beyond the function of religion to address such questions. The function of religion is to state whether alcohol should be consumed or not, and whether the consumption of it is harmful to the soul and spiritual station of man or not. In other words, religion states whether it is *halal* or *haram* to consume alcohol. As in other cases, religion issues the ideological decree and value, and not the scientific data. Religion does not deal with the relation between different aspects of phenomena. Instead, it examines the relationship of phenomena with the soul of man and human interests.

In connection with the management of factory and business enterprises, expounding the correct method of management, presenting the design, program, schedule and control, and examining its outcome and pitfalls are concerns of the management which is the rightful scientific authority to address them. As to what products are produced in the factory according to the principle of *halal* and *haram* is linked to the soul of man and thus related to religion.

Skepticism on alleged contradiction between religious rule and freedom

The other fallacious misgiving that has been raised in different forms to deceive people is that if religion wants to interfere in sociopolitical affairs and compel people to observe a certain pattern of behavior and obey a certain person, it is repugnant to freedom; man is a creature possessing freedom and autonomy to do whatever he wants to do and no one should compel him to do a certain thing. For religion to determine his duty and ask him to obey, nay unconditionally obey, is inconsistent with freedom.

Propagating the above skepticism through a religious tune

In order to make this misgiving appealing to religious people, feigning religiosity and presenting oneself as a believer of the Qur'an, makes it appear religiously and Qur'anically based and claims that Islam respects human freedom; the Holy Qur'an negates the ascendancy and domination of others, and even the Messenger of Allah (*s*) has no dominance over any body and could not compel anyone; thus, by citing verses of the Qur'an, we are made to acknowledge that man is free and is not supposed to obey anyone.

The orientation of these misgivings and fallacies is to undermine the theory of *wilayah al-faqih*. The point it is trying to drive at is that obligatory obedience to the *wali al-faqih* is against human freedom, and this is contrary to the spirit of Islam which regards man as the noblest of creation and the vicegerent of God on earth. Let us quote below some verses cited by those expressing the misgivings:
While addressing the Prophet (*s*), God says:

﴿فَذَكِّرْ إِنَّمَا أَنتَ مُذَكِّرٌ * لَّسْتَ عَلَيْهِم بِمُصَيْطِرٍ﴾

"So admonish—for you are only an admonisher, and not a taskmaster over them."[1]

Based on this verse, the Prophet (*s*) who occupies the highest human station has no dominance over the people; the people are free and not required to obey the Prophet (*s*) and he has no right at all to express opinion on the lives of people!

﴿وَمَا جَعَلْنَاكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيظًا وَمَا أَنتَ عَلَيْهِم بِوَكِيلٍ﴾

"We have not made you a caretaker for them, nor is it your duty to watch over them."[2]

﴿مَّا عَلَى الرَّسُولِ إِلاَّ الْبَلاَغُ﴾

"The Apostle's duty is only to communicate."[3]

﴿إِنَّا هَدَيْنَاهُ السَّبِيلَ إِمَّا شَاكِرًا وَ إِمَّا كَفُورًا﴾

"Indeed We have guided him to the way, be he grateful or ungrateful."[4]

﴿...وَقُل الْحَقُّ مِن رَبِّكُمْ فَمَن شَاء فَلْيُؤْمِن و مَن شَاءَ فَلْيَكْفُرْ﴾

"And say, '[This is] the truth from your Lord: let anyone who wishes believe it, and let anyone who wishes disbelieve it'..."[5]

Replying to the above skepticism

In contrast to the verses cited by the person expressing misgivings with the aim of negating the authority and supremacy of the Messenger of Allah (*s*) and the obligatory obedience to him, there are verses which are contradictory to the above verses, according to the incorrect understanding of the person expressing misgivings. Let us quote below some of these verses:

﴿...وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلاَ مُؤْمِنَةٍ إِذَا قَضَى اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمْرًا أَن يَكُونَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ﴾

"A faithful man or woman may not, when Allah and His Apostle have decided on a matter, have any option in their matter..."[6]

The above verse has explicitly mentioned the exigency of obeying and submitting to God and His Messenger (*s*), saying that the faithful have no right to disobey and go against the Messenger of Allah (*s*).

﴿إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلاَةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَهُمْ رَاكِعُونَ﴾

"Your guardian is only Allah, His Apostle, and the faithful who maintain the prayer and give the zakat[7] ***while bowing down."***[8]

﴿...النَّبِيُّ أَوْلَى بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ﴾

"The Prophet is closer to the faithful than their own souls ..."[9]

Whether we consider the supremacy mentioned in the verse to mean guardianship [*wilayah*] or more worthy, the verse proves that the right of the Prophet (*s*) to decide for the people takes precedence over their right to decide for themselves. All the exegetes [*mufassirin*] point to this, and as such, the people have to accept the decision of the Prophet (*s*) over their own and have no right to oppose his decision and view. Of course, the verse states only the essence of *wilayah* of the Messenger of Allah (*s*) and not the limits of that *wilayah*—whether the limit of *wilayah* and preeminence of the Prophet's decision applies only to social affairs or, in addition, also to personal affairs.

Undoubtedly, the skeptics who have resorted to the first group of verses in order to negate the *wilayah* of the Messenger of Allah and his successors cannot be expected to resolve the outward contradiction of these two groups of verses. Most of them are unaware of the existence of the second group, or do not

accept the content of these verses. However, since we deny the existence of contradictions and inconsistencies in the verses, we should strive to resolve the outward contradiction of the verses. For this we need to pay attention to the particular course of both groups of verses by taking into account their contexts as well as the tone of the verses and their addressees in order to understand the real purpose of the verses.

Reason behind the uniqueness of the Qur'anic approach

Once we scrutinize the two groups of verses, we will find that the tone and expression of the verses are different from each other. The first group of verses is in connection with those who had not yet embraced Islam. As such, God enlightens them with the truth of Islam and mentions the benefits of obeying Him.

Since He knows that the Prophet (*s*), who is the embodiment of divine mercy and compassion, is worrying about the people who refuse to accept Islam, the path of truth, and obey God, as a result of which they will taste chastisement in hell, God consoles him—Why are you endangering your life out of grief and sorrow for the people's refusal to embrace the faith? We ordained Islam for the people to accept it out of their own freewill and volition. Had We only wished, We could have guided all the people:

﴿وَلَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ لآمَنَ مَن فِي الأَرْضِ كُلُّهُمْ جَمِيعًا أَفَأَنتَ تُكْرِهُ النَّاسَ حَتَّى يَكُونُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ﴾

"And had your Lord wished, all those who are on earth would have believed. Would you then force people until they become faithful?"[10]

God's purpose in sending down the apostles (*'a*) is to guide the people in recognizing the truth and the path of salvation. They have to accept the religion of truth out of their own freewill, and God does not want to compel and force people to accept the faith. Faith acquired through compulsion is of no value and inconsistent with human guidance, which expects human beings to recognize and accept the truth with awareness and understanding, and not submit to it out of coercion. As such, God says:

﴿لَعَلَّكَ بَاخِعٌ نَّفْسَكَ أَلَّا يَكُونُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ * إِن نَشَأْ نُنَزِّلْ عَلَيْهِم مِنَ السَّمَاءِ آيَةً فَظَلَّتْ أَعْنَاقُهُمْ لَهَا خَاضِعِينَ﴾

"You might kill yourself* [*out of distress*] *that they will not have faith. If We wish We will send down to them a sign from the sky before which their heads will remain bowed in humility."[11]

So, acceptance of Islam and faith depends on conviction of the heart. Such a conviction is acquired out of cognition and awareness, certain and solid proofs, and one's freewill. It is not subject to coercion. As such, God says to His prophet (*s*), "You did your duty. Your duty was to convey Our message and signs to the people. You are not supposed to worry about the polytheists' refusal to accept the faith and to think that you did not do your duty. It is not part of your mission to let the people become Muslims by

compulsion and force, because We did not make you dominant over the polytheists to make them Muslims by force.

In contrast to the first group of verses, the other group of verses addressed to those who embraced Islam out of recognition, awareness and their own freewill, informing them that they have to act upon the commandments of Islam, to obey the Prophet whom they believe to be from God and whose decrees and orders are all from Him, to submit to his decision, and not to have any right and option vis-à-vis his orders. Before embracing the faith, man has the right to choose, but after embracing the faith he has to submit to all the injunctions of the Islamic law [*shari'ah*]. He who has faith in only a part of the divine laws has been strongly condemned by God, thus:

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ بِاللّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَ يُرِيدُونَ أَن يُفَرِّقُوا بَيْنَ اللّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَيقُولُونَ نُؤْمِنُ بِبَعْضٍ وَنَكْفُرُ بِبَعْضٍ وَيُرِيدُونَ أَن يَتَّخِذُوا بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ سَبِيلاً * أُوْلَـئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ حَقًّا...﴾

"Those who disbelieve in Allah and His apostles and seek to separate Allah from His apostles, and say, 'We believe in some and disbelieve in some' and seek to take a way in between—it is they who are truly faithless..."[12]

The acceptance of a portion of the decrees and rejection of the rest, the acceptance of a part of the laws and rejection of the rest actually mean the non-acceptance of the essence of religion, because, if the criterion of acceptance of religion is acceptance of the commands of God, one has to act upon the kernel of divine ordinance, and divine ordinance requires acceptance of all decrees and laws. Even if the criterion of acceptance of religion is the benefit and harm embedded in the commandments of God, undoubtedly God is well aware of it. So, why accept only some of the laws?

Only he who has faith in God would believe in the Prophet (*s*), submit to his decision, decree and order, be pleased with them and not nurse a grudge in his heart:

﴿فَلاَ وَرَبِّكَ لاَ يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىَ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لاَ يَجِدُواْ فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا﴾

"But no, by your Lord! They will not believe until they make you a judge in their disputes, then do not find within their hearts any dissent to your verdict and submit in full submission."[13]

The truly faithful are sincerely pleased with the order and decision of the Messenger of Allah (*s*) and do not worry about them because they believe that the Prophet (*s*) has been appointed by God and his decree is God's decree for he does not speak without Divine guidance:

﴿إِنَّا أَنزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ لِتَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ بِمَا أَرَاكَ اللّهُ﴾

"Indeed We have sent down to you the Book with the truth, so that you may judge between the people by what Allah has shown you." 14

After embracing Islam and expressing belief in it, the person who says, "I am free in acting upon the laws of Islam; I would do so if I like and I would not do so if I don't," is like saying that in a country where a democratic and liberal system exists, the people voluntarily participate in the referendum, and through a majority vote, choose their government, deputies and concerned authorities of the social system, but once they install the legitimate government they shrink from following it!

When that government levies taxes from the people, they say, "We will not pay taxes. We were free to elect a government, now, we are equally free to follow its orders, or refuse to discharge our responsibilities." Obviously, no reasonable person will ever accept such attitude and behavior.

Yes, at the beginning no one will be compelled to accept Islam because basic acceptance of it is a matter of faith and conviction of the heart. By force no one will believe in Islam, God and the Resurrection. However, once he accepts Islam and is asked to pray and says that he does not want to pray or once he is asked to pay *zakat* and refuses to do so, no reasonable person will believe him (to have really embraced Islam). Is it possible for a person to accept a religion but not submit to its laws and act voluntarily upon them?

He who accepts Islam should be bound by its laws. Similarly, no government will accept a person who votes for it but in practice refuses to accept its laws and regulations. Commitment to contracts and obligations is the most fundamental principle in social life. If there is no commitment to promise, faithfulness to agreement, pact and treaty, and discharging of duties, social life will never be possible.

Therefore, there is no sense in a person saying that he accepts Islam and believes in the Prophet being sent by God, but neither acts upon his orders nor accepts his authority and guardianship. Undoubtedly, there is a blatant contradiction in the acceptance of Islam without following the Messenger of Allah (*s*).

It is clear that if we examine truly the verses of the Qur'an and consider the tone and style of the two groups of cited verses, we will not find any contradiction in the Qur'an and skepticism on the incompatibility of submission and obedience to others with the principle of human freedom, also endorsed by the Qur'an, will be uprooted. Yet, sick hearts do not look at the Qur'an with sincerity, truthfulness and justice. They refer to the Qur'an for a basis for their deviant opinion, and as such, they tend to be selective without considering the important context of the verses. According to the Qur'an, the deviators abandon its definitive verses [*muhakkamat*] and intentionally emphasize its metaphorical verses [*mutashabihat*]:

﴿فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ في قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَابَهَ مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاء الْفِتْنَةِ وَابْتِغَاء تَأْوِيلِهِ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلاَّ اللّهُ وَالرَّاسِخُونَ...فِي الْعِلْمِ...﴾

"…As for those in whose hearts is deviance, they pursue what is metaphorical in it, courting temptation and courting its interpretation. But no one knows its interpretation expect Allah and those firmly grounded in knowledge…"[15]

Apart from looking for the *mutashabihat*, they quote verses out of context and then imagine that verses of the Qur'an are contradictory! We have said that the verses that speak about the lack of dominance of the Prophet (*s*) over the people are addressed to the unbelievers prior to their acceptance of Islam. The Messenger of Allah (*s*) could neither invite them to Islam by means of compulsion nor exert authority over them. Actually, according to those verses, the freedom of action and liberty in accepting the divine orders are prior to the acceptance of Islam.

After the acceptance of Islam, every Muslim has to accept the guardianship and authority of the Prophet (*s*) and Islamic rulers. He is obliged to observe the Islamic values. The Islamic state does not interfere in the personal and private life of individuals as well as in actions done in secrecy, but in relation to the social life and interaction with others, it requires everybody to observe the divine limits. It deals severely with transgression of chastity and divine values, defamation of religious sanctities, and spread of perversion and vices. This is actually a manifestation of the Islamic rulers' guardianship over society, urging it to comply with the requirements of faith and Islam—Islam which they have accepted out of their own freewill.

Propagating the skepticism through an extra-religious approach

We have so far replied to the skepticism raised by someone posing to be a religious Muslim who, by citing the Qur'an, concludes that Islam should neither have mandatory orders nor interfere in the lives of people because it is inconsistent with the accepted principle of freedom in Islam. Now, we shall reply to the skepticism in the meta-religious and extra-religious form and approach.

The non-Muslim skeptic tries to show that mandatory religious orders and the call for the people to follow and obey are inconsistent with the essence and fundamental nature of humanity. Of course, this skepticism has been expressed in different forms and shapes. We shall point out some of them below:

In the parlance of logic, freewill constitutes the essence of humanity. Now, if we deprive man of freewill and liberty and compel him, it means depriving him of humanity and likening him to an animal with a bridle on his neck to be pulled here and there. So, to respect man and protect his humanity requires that the right to choose be given to him. As such, religion should not have mandatory decrees that urge him to obey the Prophet, Imams and the successors and deputies of the infallible Imam (*'a*), for in doing so, he is reduced to the level of an animal which is pulled here and there.

Hume's skepticism and the first reply to the above skepticism

We shall give two replies to the above skepticism and the first reply is linked with Hume's[16] skepticism which is incidentally accepted by skeptics. Hume's skepticism holds that the perceiver of "beings" is the theoretical intellect while the perceiver of "dos and don'ts" is the practical intellect. Since the theoretical intellect is alien and has no relation to the practical intellect, one can not regard the objects perceived by the practical intellect—dos and don'ts—on the basis of the theoretical intellect.

This skepticism of Hume drew the attention of Western philosophers and they made it the foundation and basis of many of their theories and scientific ideas. After the victory of the Islamic Revolution in Iran a number of the so-called intellectuals utilized this skepticism. In their discussions they argued that we can never deduce "beings" from "dos and don'ts". If a person has a distinct character and attribute, we cannot conclude that he should therefore be or not be so-and-so, because the perceiver of the former is the theoretical intellect while that of the latter is the practical intellect and these two are not related to each other.

The same people who accept this skepticism of Hume say that compelling people is inconsistent with their humanity, and religion should not have mandatory orders for people because people are free and autonomous. They say at the outset that man is free, and then conclude that he should be set free and not forced. Therefore, from the free nature of man which is among the "beings" that are perceived by the theoretical intellect, they draw "dos and don'ts" which are perceived by the practical intellect, and this is in conflict with their own basis. They themselves do not accept that "dos" should be drawn from "beings".

Of course, we believe that in cases where "beings" are the sheer cause of a phenomenon, one can arrive at "dos and don'ts", but such a conclusion cannot be arrived at in our discussion because his freedom is not the sole cause of his being compelled. Rather, freewill paves the ground for duty, and the duty and obligation to do or not to do a certain act is based on the benefit or harm, as the case may be, that actions cause. So, the mandatory order to do a certain act is meant to secure the benefits embedded in it and the reason behind the prohibition of a certain act is the harms it entails.

Second reply—absoluteness and limitlessness of freedom

If we submit to the skepticism—and say that since man is free, a mandatory law should not be imposed on him and no government should have mandatory orders for people; that they should be free to do whatever they like; and that imposition means deprivation of freedom which, in turn, means deprivation of humanity, and thus, no law is credible!! This actually means we accept anarchy and the law of the jungle. Basically, to be mandatory is the eminent feature of law.

In every system and structure, once a person accepts certain laws and orders, he has to act upon them under all circumstances. It is not possible for a person to accept the law but when he sees that its

implementation is detrimental to him, he does not follow it without considering its benefit and harm. In this case, the system will collapse and no progress can be made. So long as a law is regarded as credible and official by the legislative authorities, all need to follow it even if it is found to be defective, it is not their prerogative but the duty of the concerned authorities to address the matter. Under the pretext of the defect in the law, the rest are not supposed to shrink from following it.

Skepticism on alleged contradiction between government authority and man's divine vicegerency (khilafah)

The other skepticism they have expressed is that, as stated in the Qur'an, man is the vicegerent of Allah [*khalifat Allah*]. It means that he is the viceroy of God on earth and acts like God. Just as God has created the universe, man also has to create phenomena. Just as God administers the world as He wills, man also has to do whatever he likes on earth.

Reply to the above skepticism

The reply to the above skepticism is that the meaning of divine vicegerency [*khilafat–e ilahi*] should be properly understood and it must be noted that the title "*khalifat Allah*" mentioned in the Qur'an for Hadrat[17] Adam (Adam) (*'a*)[18] is not applied to all the Children of Adam because the Qur'an calls some of them "devils" when it says:

﴿وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَا لِكُلِّ نِبِيٍّ عَدُوًّا شَيَاطِينَ الإِنسِ وَالْجِنِّ﴾

"That is how for every prophet We appointed as enemy the devils from among humans and jinn."[19]

Undoubtedly, the human devil is neither a viceroy of God nor among those before whom the angels had to prostrate when God said:

﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلاَئِكَةِ إِنِّي خَالِقٌ بَشَرًا مِن صَلْصَالٍ مِن حَمَاءٍ مَسْنُونٍ * فَإِذَا سَوَّيْتُهُ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِن رُوحِي فَقَعُوا لَهُ سَاجِدِينَ﴾

"When your Lord said to the angels, 'Indeed I am going to create a human out of a dry clay [drawn] from an aging mud. So when I have proportioned him and breathed into him of My spirit, then fall down in prostration before him'."[20]

The vicegerent of Allah possesses great distinction and qualities such as knowledge of the Names—*"And He taught Adam the Names, all of them..."*[21] Also, the viceroy of God must be capable of

implementing justice on earth. So, the wicked man who sheds blood in the world and does not refrain from committing any crime, or the one who does not possess any sense of justice cannot be the viceroy of God. Is God an oppressor that His vicegerent is also an oppressor?

The vicegerent of Allah is he who manifests divine qualities in his private and social life, and not just any two-footed being walking on the surface of the earth. Therefore, those who are striving to misguide people and overthrow the Islamic government are not only unqualified to be divine vicegerents but they are the same human devils who are regarded by God to be viler than animals, and about whom He says:

﴿إِنَّ شَرَّ الدَّوَابُ عِندَ اللّهِ الصُّمُّ الْبُكْمُ الَّذِينَ لاَ يَعْقِلُونَ﴾

"Indeed the worst of beasts in Allah's sight are the deaf and the dumb who do not apply reason."[22]

To say that human dignity lies in freedom and that anything which limits this freedom is condemnable and unacceptable is a deceptive slogan chanted by the Western world. Without paying attention to its corollaries, some people in other countries have also pursued it and are regularly insisting on it. Undoubtedly, to deal with this slogan and the objectives it tries to attain requires a lengthy discussion on which we shall embark in the future.

But for the meantime, let us briefly pose this question: What does it mean by saying that man should be absolutely free and have no restrictions at all? Does it mean that there should be no mandatory law? This is something which no rational person will ever accept because it implies that everyone is free to do whatever he likes—everyone is free to commit murder, transgress upon the chastity of women, and create havoc in society! Certainly, the first harm and mischief of such an outlook will be tasted by its proponent. Could there possibly be a society where such freedom is prevalent? Obviously there is no concept of unrestrained freedom and man is not free to do whatever he likes.

Clarifying that freedom has limitations and restrictions, the question arises: Who should determine the extent and limit of freedom? And, what is the extent of freedom? If every person is supposed to determine the scope and extent of freedom, everyone would do whatever he likes which will manifest the same problems indicated in relation to absolute freedom. So, there is no option but to consider a legal reference in order to describe and determine the scope, limit and boundary of freedom.

In this case, if a person acknowledges the existence of God and believes that He knows better than him what is beneficial and harmful to man, and Who does not acquire any benefit from the lives of people and only wishes what is good for His servants, for him, is there anyone worthier than God in determining the limits of freedom? Thus, there is no contradiction in the intellectual and ideological system of the Muslims because they believe in God who knows best what is beneficial and harmful for human beings.

It is He who has stated the limits and boundaries of freedom.

But if we do not believe in God, or believe in monotheism but do not recognize God as the authority determining the limits of freedom and believe that the people themselves should determine the limits of freedom, we will be afflicted with thousands of evils, because people will never arrive at a consensus. Even if the majority determines the limits of freedom, how will the minority that does not accept the limits of freedom determined by the majority exercise its rights? So, freedom is an elegant and pleasant term but it is not absolute and unrestricted. No one can claim absolute freedom.

1. Surah al-Ghashiyah 88:21-22.
2. Surah al-An'am 6:107.
3. Surah al-Ma'idah 5:99.
4. Surah al-Insan (or, ad-Dahr) 76:3.
5. Surah al-Kahf 18:29.
6. Surah al-Ahzab 33:36.
7. Zakat: the tax levied on various categories of wealth and spent on the purposes specified in Surah at-Tawbah 9:60. [Trans.]
8. Surah al-Ma'idah 5:55.
9. Surah al-Ahzab 33:6.
10. Surah Yunus 10:99.
11. Surah ash-Shu'ara' 26:3-4.
12. Surah an-Nisa' 4:150-151.
13. Surah an-Nisa' 4:65.
14. Surah an-Nisa' 4:105.
15. Surah Al 'Imran 3:7.
16. David Hume (1711-1776), Scottish historian and philosopher, who influenced the development of skepticism and empiricism, two schools of philosophy, is considered one of the greatest skeptics in the history of philosophy. Hume thought that one can know nothing outside of experience, and experience —based on one's subjective perceptions— never provides true knowledge of reality. Accordingly, even the law of cause and effect was an unjustified belief. [Trans.]
17. Hadrat: The Arabic word Hadrat is used as a respectful form of address. [Trans.]
18. In this regard, God says:

﴿ وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلاَئِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً قَالُوا أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَن يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَ يَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ قَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لاَ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴾

"When your Lord said to the angels, 'Indeed I am going to set a viceroy on the earth,' they said, 'Will you set in it someone who will cause corruption in it, and shed blood, while we celebrate Your praise and proclaim Your sanctity?' He said, 'Indeed I know what you do not know'." (Surah al-Baqarah 2:30)

19. Surah al-An'am 6:112.
20. Surah al-Hijr 15:29-30.
21. Surah al-Baqarah 2:31.
22. Surah al-Anfal 8:22.

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