Al-Islam.org
Ahlul Bayt Digital Islamic Library Project
Published on *Al-Islam.org* (https://www.al-islam.org)

Summary

The necessity of religion, as presented in the above discussion, arises from the psychological, intellectual, individual, and social necessities in this world and the world to come.

Western scholars often express recourse to religion in psychological and sociological terms. Considering the specific functions of religion for man, they regard such recourse as necessary. Muslim thinkers often prove the necessity of religion through emphasis on its epistemic function and consider religion as a complement to man's epistemic shortcomings, although, more or less, they make mention of the non-epistemic functions of religion.

The necessity of taking recourse to religion in the above discussion is closely connected with "the necessity of the prophets' Divine mission as discussed by Muslim scholars, since the most significant intellect for the necessity of the prophetic mission, as mentioned in their arguments, is a kind of defect inherent in man's epistemic means, necessitating recourse to a more complete means. Therefore, the need for Divine revelation and its necessity presupposes the necessity of a Divine mission and precedes it.

Contrary to Ash'arite theologians, Shiite and Mu'tazilite theologians prove the necessity of sending down Divine revelation through the law of intellectual good and evil as well as the law of Divine Grace. Mystics consider Divine revelation to be necessary, as a prerequisite, for knowing God and treading the path toward Him.

One of the arguments presented for the necessity of the prophets' Divine revelation is known as "the philosophers' argument." It emphasizes man's social nature, the society's need for laws, and man's incapacity to legislate laws and enforce them. It is dealt with by philosophers and scholars such as Farabi, Avicenna, and 'Allama Tabataba'i.

Evidence may be found in the philosophers' works revealing the necessity of imparting Divine revelation for a need lying beyond mundane matters and social laws. They are in pursuit of laws which may guide man toward his own perfection as well as his happiness in this world and the world to come.

A number of thinkers have expounded the necessity of sending down Divine revelation on the basis of man's need to perceive the path toward perfection.

The two mentioned arguments fall short of proving the necessity of sending down the Qur'anic guiding verses, but they are restricted to what lies beyond human perception and the intellect. Furthermore, the twain arguments take the shortcomings of human epistemic means on the way to perfection as the center of gravity, but apparently, besides the epistemic aspect, what necessitates sending down Divine revelation is to provide man with the true incentive to proceed toward guidance.

Apparently, in addition to placing emphasis on man's epistemic shortcomings, it is necessary to emphasis his psychological defects, possession of contradictory desires, and the role of sending down Divine revelation in motivating man toward guidance.

Two further arguments revealing the necessity of recourse to Divine revelation are: the intellectual necessity to avoid incurring contingent losses and the intellectual necessity to submit to true propositions.

A number of people, including Dr. Soroush, emphasize the sufficiency of scientific advancement and man's intellectual development as arguments substantiating needlessness of Divine revelation.

Emphasizing three further arguments (prophets' success, presentation of a specific standard for needlessness, and citation of the Qur'anic verses and prophetic traditions) he endeavors to support his claim, but none of them is acceptable.

A glance at a number of consequences of extreme scientism and the Western materialistic intellect discloses the shortcomings of science and the intellect on the path toward guidance. Finding the two means adequate led to destructive consequences in modern societies and called upon scholars to revise the materialistic thoughts predominant in the West. Such revisions resulted in theoretical deadlocks and practical crises. In terms of theorization, the modern world has confronted the deadlocks of science and the purely materialistic intellect, and in the sphere of practice, it has encountered and experienced a large number of social problems arising from the same attitude.

A number of the evil consequences of contentment with science and the intellect include: nihilism, anxiety and loneliness; mental fatigue and the feeling of spiritual and moral emptiness; metamorphosis of man into a machine; increase in criminal acts; incapacity to solve the complications of modern man.

Source URL:
https://www.al-islam.org/religion-and-modern-world-age-need-abu-l-fazl-sajedi/summary