

Published on Al-Islam.org (https://www.al-islam.org)

<u>Home</u> > <u>Resurrection (Ma'ad) in the Quran</u> > <u>Evidences of resurrection</u> > <u>6) Abstract nature of the soul</u> > Acquired Knowledge

Evidences of resurrection

Resurrection is one of the important and difficult problems of philosophy and scholasticism. In books of scholastic theology, it is discussed in detail and hundreds of books are written on this subject. Since the books of this present series are supposed to be compact and simple, we would try to prove this belief through basic arguments that may be clearly understood by all:

1) Nature

Nature is in the meaning of a special creation. Innate features are matters of natural characteristics embedded in the nature of human beings, which arise from the conscience of every perfect human being and do not need reasoning and evidence. Attention to conscience and waking up of nature to accept them is sufficient. Recognition of beauty is natural.

Every sane and mature person can understand beauty. He considers some things to be beautiful and some he finds lacking in beauty. All are having this nature, although it is possible that there might be difference in their applications and manner. The goodness of equitability, truthfulness and the evil of injustice and falsehood and betrayal of truth are also like this. The origin of attention to God, humility to Him and His worship are also natural matters present in the being of every human.

Awakening of the nature in faith in them is sufficient, although it is possible that some persons would commit a mistake in recognition of its aims and get deviated; such as the origin of idol worship, which came into being in this way.

Misunderstanding of idolaters and followers of nonsense lies in the fact that in specifying the applicability or sense of God, about which the innate nature testifies, they fell into an illusion and in ignorance went into deviation.

Desire for perpetuity and life after death is also an established matter and is present in the innate being of every man and from that springs the God–given source and it shows its effects; even though throughout history and in some communities and sects, they are mixed with a number of nonsensical

matters.

2) History

All this leads us to conclude that belief in the perpetuity of human soul and life after death is deeply rooted in human history and even in pre-historic man and communities that are now extinct.

So much so, that history and excavations of ancient graveyards show and archeological studies like the pyramids of Egypt and other communities and nations, which have come down to us that most people of the past had belief in perpetuity of soul and life after death. Therefore they buried their dead with their personal effects, belongings and things, which they might need; continued to perform rituals to honor the dead for a long period of time and sending offerings and charities on their behalf.

Regarding this, Will Durant says:

Since Sumerians (524 B.C.) buried with their dead, provisions and objects of their use, we can conclude that they had belief in life after death.1

He also writes:

The body, Egyptians believed, was inhabited by a small replica of itself called the 'ka', and also by a soul that dwelt in the body like a bird flitting among trees. All of these: body, ka and soul – survived the appearance of death; they could escape mortality for a time in proportion as the flesh was preserved from decay; but if they came to Osiris clean of all sin they would be permitted to live forever in the "Happy Field of Food" – those heavenly gardens where there would always be abundance and security.2

Then he writes:

The Mycenaean himself, as well as most of his art, is found in the tombs; for he folded and buried his dead in uncomfortable jars, and seldom cremated them as the Heroic Age would do. Apparently he believed in a future life, for many objects of use and value were placed in the graves. 3

He further writes:

According to Egyptian belief, these Elysian Fields, however, could be reached only through the services of a ferryman, an Egyptian prototype of Charon; and this old gentleman would receive into his boat only such men and women as had done no evil in their lives. Or Osiris would question the dead, weighing each candidate's heart in the scale against a feather to test his truthfulness. Those who failed in this final examination would be condemned to lie forever in their tombs, hungering and thirsting, fed upon by hideous crocodiles, and never coming forth to see the sun.4

From what is stated above and from hundreds of other examples, we can conclude that belief in life after

death is an ancient phenomenon present in the innate nature of man, in such a way that the ancient man even through his simple understanding was able to obtain and have faith in it. Although priests and temple assistants had role in promoting this belief and in order to misuse it, invented nonsense and rumors, but the actual belief in life after death was not their creation; on the contrary they took advantage of the belief present in the innate nature of man. Will Durant writes in this regard as follows:

The priest did not create religion, he merely used it, as a statesman uses the impulses and customs of mankind; religion arises not out of sacerdotal invention or chicanery, but out of the persistent wonder, fear, insecurity, hopefulness and loneliness of men.5

Although prophets throughout the history of whom Prophet Adam (as) was the first; and who is also called as the father of humanity had a role in formation of belief in God and life after death, but they did not invent this belief; on the contrary they only tried to awaken the innate nature of man, to strengthen the beliefs and to purify and train the self. And since their call was based on innate nature they also had divine support.

Therefore it can be said: Since belief in resurrection existed throughout the ages in the nature of human beings, it can be counted as an innate and original belief. It should also be mentioned that we don't claim that all human beings in all the ages had belief in life after death and acted according to it. On the contrary, throughout the ages and even today there are persons who because of ignorance, rebellion and selfish desires suppress their human nature in their acts; sometimes they almost deny resurrection verbally. As attributed to Assyrians and ancient Babylonians that they had no faith in resurrection, heaven or hell.6

But this type of doubts even leading to verbal denial is natural and it does not harm faith in resurrection in any way. Deniers of resurrection have no evidence to support their claim. On the contrary since their reality had not become clear to them and the selfish desires overcame them, they denied resurrection till they became free from following the base desires. And in the terminology it can be said that they preferred immediate joy instead of the promise of future enjoyments.

Will Durant has quoted the statement of a denier of resurrection as follows:

Saddest of all is a poem engraved upon a slab now in the Leyden Museum, and dating back to 2200 B.C. Carpe diem, it sings: None cometh from thence. That he may tell us how they fare; that we may content our hearts; until we too depart to the place whither they have gone.7

Will Durant has presented the above statement in his book as an evidence of denial of resurrection while the fact is that it does not at all show any such denial; on the contrary the opening lines say that no one has returned from that side to explain its existence to us; he has expressed doubt about it and has preferred immediate pleasure to the promise of Paradise and said that he wanted instant happiness. Today also we see most deniers of resurrection using the same argumentation.

3) Desire for Perpetuity

One of the signs of nature is to desire perpetuity and inclination to live forever. Man always makes efforts to continue to live as long as possible. And since he knows that his death is imminent, he tries to leave behind his influence. He trains his children, writes books, performs acts of charity, and makes bequests with regard to commemoration assemblies and offerings at the place of his burial. He wants his plans and aspirations to endure forever and sometimes he even gives up his life to defend them.

All these are signs of a desire for perpetuity and eternality. If he considered death as the end of his life and annihilation, what will be the use of commemoration assemblies, presence of children and a respectable place of burial?

If he has faith in death of annihilation, how will he justify sacrificing his life for the defense of his views and aims. All this leads us to conclude that desire to live forever after the death is present in the being of every man and it is a natural factor. These natural desires must be beyond investigation and if not, the presence of such desires in man would be meaningless and none of the actions of the all–knowing and wise God is meaningless.

4) **Immortality**

In the discussion of knowing God, it was proved that the wide world is having the being of God, who is the creator and controller of the creatures. His knowledge, power and wisdom were also proved and also that He never does anything illogical and aimless. But His aim in the creation of the world was not to satisfy any of His needs since He is needless; on the contrary His aim was to benefit and perfect. He bestows perfection to every phenomenon according to its capability. His gracefulness is in His being and miserliness is not present therein. Between the phenomena of the world, man is having an extraordinary and a distinctive position in his capability.

His body is from the material world and his soul is from the spiritual and the celestial world. The material world, throughout years and extremely long centuries, has developed the capacity through perfections of actions and reactions so that it may assume the form of an astounding man. His physical constitution is composed of digestive system, organs of hearing, sight, smell, speech, reproduction, blood circulation and other organs, which operate through astonishing niceties, some of which are mentioned in books of science.

More important than all this is especially the creation of the celestial soul of man; his reasoning power and intelligence; and an extraordinary mechanism of his thinking faculty consisting of his learning ability and memory retention. Man is created in such a way that he is able to remove the curtain from the secrets of the world through contemplation, reasoning and his experience and controls the material world one after another. He inhabits the world and makes it useful for himself and other human beings.

Therefore, all the phenomena of the material world, different types of plants and animal, earth, mines, atmosphere, light and elements are practically at the disposal of man and he has the power to control and use them at present or in the future.

In conclusion, we can define man as the by-product of rotation and search of the material world and the pick of the whole lot of the system of creation. Aim of creation of the world should also be searched in him.

Now this important question arises that can we consider that the aim of creation of this world and most important of all, creation of man whose life is at the most a hundred years, which is filled with various types of hardships, calamities and unhappiness is short in comparison to the seeking of pleasures and to say: Death is the end of life of man and his complete annihilation? Your reply is an absolutely negative. If it was so, creation and running of the material world; its coming into existence and life of man would all have been meaningless. An absurd action is not expected from any sane person; how can we expect it from the Almighty Allah, who is all–powerful, all–knowing, wise and needless?

Therefore it can be said that man is created for an everlasting life in the hereafter and not for destruction and annihilation. The aim of the Almighty Allah in creation of man is that he should live in this world and train himself in good manners and good deeds and prepare for an everlasting good life in the hereafter. He created him with this aim, equipped him with ability for perfection programmed for his personal success of the hereafter. He also sent prophets to guide man. In this way, creation of world and man can be justified rationally.

This is indicated in the verses of Quran; as for example:

And We did not create the heaven and the earth and what is between them for sport. (21:16)

What! did you then think that We had created you in vain and that you shall not be returned to Us? (23:115)

And We did not create the heavens and the earth and what is between them two but in truth; and the hour is most surely coming... (15:85)

5) Reward and punishment

In the discussion about the cognition of God, it was proved that the Almighty Allah is just and the creation of man and the world was based on justice. He bestows perfection to everything according to its capacity and does not allow the right of any phenomenon or man to be violated. Since injustice is due to ignorance or needfulness of one who commits it and the creator of the world is pure from every defect.

Injustice is an evil deed, and the Almighty Allah never commits an evil deed. Not only the Almighty Allah does not commit injustice, on the contrary He also desires to be kind and just to man. And He has not allowed them to act unjustly with each other. In the Holy Quran He says:

Surely Allah enjoins the doing of justice and the doing of good (to others) and the giving to the kindred, and He forbids indecency and evil and rebellion; He admonishes you that you may be mindful. (16:90)

The Almighty Allah has fixed laws and duties for the purification of the life of man, which is surrounded by injustice and oppression, so that he may lead a life of peace and success. And through the messenger prophets and His selected representatives they should be kind to each other and keep away from injustice and sins. He has fixed good rewards for the doers of good, and decreed severe punishments for oppressors and sinners. But regrettably all people are not same with regard to social duties; they are of two types: one is group of those who are aware of their duties, well–wisher and righteous; they neither oppress others and nor cause harm to anyone.

On the contrary, they are seekers of justice for those whose rights have been violated and those who have been oppressed. So much so that those who tread this path have to face deprivations, are subjected to imprisonments and cast themselves into dangers. They are good natured, trustworthy, truthful, having a good character, helpful and who are cognizant of truth.

Another group is of those who live in such a way in this world, but they are not rewarded for their good deeds in the world. And sometimes, as a result of their good behavior, they even have to face deprivation and numerous hardships. As a result of truthfulness and seeking justice they are subjected to torture and imprisonment at the hands of tyrants and oppressors and sometimes they sacrifice their lives. Should there not be another world where the doers of good receive rewards for their good deeds. If the hereafter and good rewards had not been there, would it have been according to the justice of the Almighty Allah?

If earth is the end of life, what will be the rational justification of righteousness and piety and holy war (Jihad) and martyrdom on the path of seeking justice?

Another group is that of oppressors; who have no qualms in causing harm to others and in violating the rights of people. They are power hungry, tyrannical and greedy. They prefer their own good and the good of those who are related to them over the good of others. They do not refrain from any injustice in order to gain power and wealth. They subject their opponents to prison and torture and even eliminate them: they usurp their properties and do not refrain from any crime.

Not only individuals, they even eliminate communities and nations through imperialism and dictatorship. They have no qualms about committing even the most shameless crimes. On the contrary, they enjoy it and exalt themselves. Such criminals were numerous throughout history and are still present in the world. Although some of them received some punishment in this world, but it was definitely less than the crime that they committed, but most of them did not receive any punishment for their crimes.

The righteous and sinners will be rewarded and punished according to their good deeds and crimes after a short while. Should not there be a world, where each of them is exactly accounted for with regard to his or her deeds? And that the doers of good receive his or her rewards and the sinners are punished in accordance to their crimes? If the world of the hereafter had not been there, what would have been the rational justification of the creation of this world, which is full of injustice and crime? Is this compatible with divine justice?

If there is no other world of reward and punishment, why God has commanded observing justice and refraining from injustice? What is the decision of your intellects with regard to this? All would definitely reply: The righteous and sinners are not equal. There is another world after this world, in which the deeds of people will be verified. The righteous will be given a good recompense and sinners will be awarded a severe punishment. The same thing is implied in the verses of the Holy Quran:

Shall We treat those who believe and do good like the mischief-makers in the earth? Or shall We make those who guard (against evil) like the wicked? (38:28)

Nay! do those who have wrought evil deeds think that We will make them like those who believe and do good that their life and their death shall be equal? Evil it is that they judge. And Allah created the heavens and the earth with truth and that every soul may be rewarded for what it has earned and they shall not be wronged. (45:21–22)

6) Abstract nature of the soul

To prove the perpetuity of the soul of man and life after death we can reason through various justifications and one of them is through abstraction of human soul. The abstract nature of human self is a difficult philosophical problem. This important matter is studied in detail in books of philosophy like: Asfar, Risala Tasawwur wa Tasdeeq and other books of Mulla Sadra as well as in the commentary on Zaadul Musafir and Isharaat of Abu Ali Sina and Sharh Manzuma of Mulla Hadi Sabzawari. In this brief writing, we cannot explain this matter in detail, but we shall discuss some evidences of the same. Before the actual discussion, it is necessary to mention some points in brief.

Meaning of Abstractness

Existent beings are of two types: material and abstract. Material beings are as follows: non-living things like stone, dust, different kinds of minerals, metals, chemicals, pigments, water etc; in this category are included gases, energy and even rays of light are considered material things and in the same way, plants and animals also fall into this category as they are also supposed to have souls called animal soul. Material things possess the following qualities: quantity, space, time, movement, change, remoteness and proximity, survival and decay.

Such factors are the signs of the material existing beings. Material matters can be perceived through one of the senses or their presence can be discovered through experimentation. The second type is the abstract things: like God; angels are supernatural beings and they do not possess qualities of material beings like place, time, quantity, movement, change, survival and decay. To be abstract is to mean lacking in material qualities.

Definition of the self

Some existing things have souls like the different plants, which possess vegetative souls. Living things like animals are in possession of animal spirits and human beings possess human souls. With regard to plants, it is said: even though their bodies are composed of various elements like water, air, minerals, chemicals, energy, different metals, compounds etc. and they do not possess a soul.

But with regard to the fact that this new compound possesses new qualities like: nutrition, maturity and birth etc. thus it would be said: the source of these effects is the vegetative soul, which came into being through compounding of these elements. Especially with regard to animals it can also be said: Although their body is composed of various elements like: water, air, matter, chemicals, energy, various metals etc, but since in this combination new qualities like perception, voluntary movement have come into existence, it is said that the origin of these new qualities lies in the animal soul.

Especially man also can be said to have the same qualities, since he possesses the qualities of self-awareness, perception and senses, memory: hence it can be said: the origin of these new qualities is

the human soul.

Through these explanations we realize the reality of the soul. Here we consider it necessary to mention that man is multi-dimensional. On one side his body is a compound of different natural elements and the effect of each of them is present in him. On the other hand, he is a named body, capable of nutrition, maturity and reproduction and he also possesses a vegetative soul. On the other hand, he is an animal possessing an animal soul and having animal instincts.

Finally, a man is a conscious human soul possessing distinctive qualities. It is said that although the vegetative, animal and human souls have come together in man, each of them is having a separate identity and are considered to be the various stages of his existence. The organizing human body is the single human soul, which performs different actions in different stages. The soul and intellect of man is the controller of the human body, and it should control different actions of the vegetative and animal soul in different stages and should persuade them according to actual exigencies.

Evidences of the abstractness of the soul

Among the distinctive qualities of man, which makes him superior to all creatures is the quality of knowledge. Knowledge means awareness, understanding and cognition. Every conscience can understand that some things possess awareness. Evidence of this is not needful of reasoning. Sadruddin Shirazi says: Knowledge can be defined as the presence of form of existing things in view of intellect. Knowledge by nature is determined and revealed and know–how is revealed through knowledge.8

With regard to knowledge, it is necessary to know that one should be in the presence of the scholar. This presence is only possible when the knower and the known thing is material. Since if both or one of them is material, they would be unseen by the other and not possible to be exposed or become present. Hence to prove the abstract nature of the soul of man, it is necessary to undertake a deep study about the kinds of knowledge and their kinds.

In books of philosophy, knowledge is divided into two types: present and obtainable. Sadruddin Shirazi has written in this regard that knowledge with the present reality; sometimes the existence of his knowledge is the very same knowledge seen by him, like the knowledge of abstract with his own being and like knowledge of self with regard to his own self and qualities depending on the self and his own actions and spiritual phenomena.

Such knowledges are named as innate knowledges. Also sometimes the presence of knowledge is without the presence of identical existence like our knowledge of things, which are beyond our being and perceptive powers; like earth, man and horse etc. which are named as acquired and affective knowledges.9 We shall explain both of them here in more detail:

Innate Knowledge

As mentioned previously, knowledge of the self is itself innate knowledge; that is the self of man possesses an awareness and understanding of its own being. He considers himself to be an individual and a separate being and keeps this in mind always and is never ignorant of it. He can forget everything; but he never forgets his ego. He considers himself to be an individual possessing a separate self throughout his brief lifespan. This 'l' through the passage of time and changes of times does not undergo any change even though all these factors have profound effect on his body etc. This 'l' is not hands, feet, eyes, ears, tongue, brain or heart etc.

On the contrary, all of them are connected with him. Although according to testimony of intellectuals all parts of body are in constant change throughout the life, and they are changed tens of times, this 'I' is always stable and permanent, with the supposition that even though he may lose or change his organs and limbs, he can never be divested of his identity and it would be same as it was before.

Therefore, it must be remembered that the ego of man, which we refer to as 'I' is not material and changeable; on the contrary it is an abstract thing. Since the abstract is from the material and effects of matter, it is always exposed to itself, and it is having innate knowledge about itself; that is the personality and reality of its self is determined and known to itself and is not unseen from it. In other words, knowledge, the knower and the known are one and the same.

This shows that in order to prove the self there is no need to reason from its actions and effects; because Decarates has reasoned from this way and said: "I think therefore I am". On the contrary, before reasoning through thinking, one should be aware of oneself so that one is able to reason out ones action. If one has no awareness of his own self, one cannot reason through ones action, which is its effect.

We quote the statement of Abu Ali Sina to support and explain further the innate knowledge of man with regard to his self 10:

He addresses himself: Imagine yourself in each of these four conditions:

First condition: In sanity and perfect physical health: In this condition you will find your self as a person about whom you are well aware; and you will not become unmindful of him in any way.

Second condition: While you are asleep: In this condition, your conscious senses are suspended and you do not feel your body or external things; but you are not unaware of your self, which you call as 'l'. (If someone calls you, you wake up and reply to him).

Third condition: Intoxication (senselessness). In this condition your outward and inward perceptions are suspended and you don't feel anything; but even in that condition your awareness about yourself is intact.

Fourth condition: Just suppose you are created all of a sudden with sanity and perfect physical health in a vacuum and you are not under any kind of pressure that you should be aware of your body. In this condition also, you would not be oblivious of your self; you would be aware of yourself.

Therefore, there is no doubt that man understands his self in every condition. In this way, we have one who understands and a thing which is understood. Now let us see what is understood and who has understood it?

In order to understand the two, the Shaykh employs the realization addressed to his self, and says: Ponder well whether you can perceive yourself with outward senses or through intellect and inward faculties? It is well known that outward and inward faculties have no role in this; since you were unaware of them in the mentioned supposition. Thus they are not the ones who perceive, on the contrary your intellect directly, and the body through senses, are the perceiving ones.

Now let us see what is the perceived (Mudrik)? What is that, which you call "I"?

Is it the apparent aspect of the body, which is visible to the eyes and which can be perceived through the sense of touch? Or with a little concentration you can understand that you are not organs and skin of the body, because you do not change with their change and transformation, on the contrary you are the same person as before. Moreover, as stated before, it is possible for you to become oblivious of them, but you can never become oblivious of your own self.

You are also not like internal organs as the heart, nerves and brain etc. because they cannot be perceived even with outward and inner senses and their proof is needful of anatomical dissection.

This clearly shows that you (the perceived one) are neither the outward nor inward organs of the body; on the contrary you are something, which cannot be perceived and which does not possess the signs of perceptible things.

At that moment the Shaykh mentions to himself the doubts and then replies to them. He says: Perhaps you may say: I prove my existence with my own action, which is the effect of itself (as Descartes has said: I think therefore I am). Then he replies that objection in two ways:

First reply: In such a supposition, you should pay attention to your act, so that you may be able to prove yourself through it. Whereas it was stated before that without paying attention to anything, even your own action, you can perceive yourself.

Second reply: If you want, you can prove your own self through presence of absolute action; but it is not right since presence of absolute action proves the undetermined doer and not a particular personality (self) and if you want to prove a particular act, which was committed by you, to reason out your existence; it is also incorrect. Because in this supposition it is necessary that you should identify your being as the cause of this act or at least consider it to be contemporary to it, so that you can prove your

own being through it.

In that case, before reasoning you had awareness of your own being and reasoning through the act is meaningless. In any case, reasoning through presence of act to prove the doer is not valid reasoning.

The following important points can be derived from the statements of the Shaykh:

- Man is always, at every moment and in every condition, aware of his self.
- This perception is direct and without any medium.
- In this perception, the one who perceives and that which is perceived, are both not from material and perceptive things.
- In this perception, the knower and the known is one reality, and not more and that is the definition of the self of man.
- In this perception, the reality of the known is having presence and exposition for the knower of the reality; that is it is innate knowledge and not acquired through the mind.
- The self of man is a non-perceptible and non-material thing.
- Since it is abstract and free of matter and material effects, corruption has no access to it and it will be everlasting.

Acquired Knowledge

Now that we have learnt what innate knowledge is and that it consists of the presence of self, which is known to the knower. In this instance, the knower perceived the known directly and without any intermediary. Now let us see what acquired knowledge is. In this case, the knower becomes aware of a thing through external form and sense, which that thing has acquired. The thing known to a person in this case is in the beginning and by nature a mental form and when the mental form develops an aspect of exposure by external phenomenon, through this it perceives external phenomenon. Thus in acquired knowledge, a medium called form or sense is present between the knower and the known.

Mental forms can be of two kinds: Partial and general.

Partial forms are concepts which only denote a particular person and are not applicable to more than one person like the mental sense of Muhammad, Hasan, Husain, Fatima... etc. The sense of Muhammad that we have in our mind is only of one single person and it alone cannot imply a number of people. Partial mental forms can also be of two types:

A) Perceptions: The knowledge of man obtained through one of the apparent senses, like sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch. When man through one of these five senses establishes contact with an external

phenomenon; and after the action and reaction that comes into being between these two, he comes to know about that external phenomenon. This knowledge will last only as long as the contact is on. After it is off, the connection of awareness is also discontinued.

B) Memories: The contact that man retains through one of the senses with external phenomena leaves an imprint on his being, which remains even when the contact is discontinued. If this effect is from perceptible things, it would be stored in the faculty known as thought or memory. Whenever he likes, he may refer to the archives and recall that previous form and make use of it.

And if the mentioned effect is from partial meaning, it is stored in archives of the faculty called imagination. Like love or hatred perceived between two persons, or fear or attachment, especially which one develops with a person or thing. Such concepts are stored in the faculty of imagination and may be recalled at time of need.

General senses and forms: A general sense can be defined as a mental form, which describes a common aspect of numerous persons and it is applicable to each of them. Like the connotation of 'human being', which can be applied to each of them separately. It can be said: Muhammad is a human being, Ali is a human being, Hameed is a human being and Ashraf is a human being...and so on. And same is the case of terms like animal, substance, vegetation and their parts.

Such types of general senses that in the external aspect have an external application are called primary rationalities. We have another general type, which are called philosophical rationalities. They are senses, which do not have an absolute outward implication; on the contrary, human mind through making an analogy between two external phenomena makes an abstraction of these senses. General sense of cause and effect is of this type; for example, we consider external fire as the cause of burning and burning cotton as its effect and we say: fire is the cause and burning cotton is the effect. But causation is not an additional quality of fire.

It is not that externally we can have a fire and the quality of causation. On the contrary it is human intellect that can derive causality and effecitivity through comparison between fire and burning cotton. Causality in the outward is having reality, but it is the manner of existence of fire and not an added quality.

From this discussion it becomes clear that we have two kinds of general rationalities: primary rationalities and philosophical rationalities.

Now the question arises that through which medium are the generalities perceived and who is their perceiver?

Is it possible to perceive and recognize them through the five senses, brain and nerves?

In reply it is said: Since the absolute natures like man, animal, tree, stone do not have an external

existence by the quality of generality, they cannot be perceived through the five senses. That which is present in the outward is the person of man and not the man generally. Implications of man, like: Hasan, Husain and...can be perceived through senses, but the absolute man does not exist with the quality of generality outwardly that he could be perceived through senses.

Connotations produced in the mind from each individual person only describe this and can only implied as such (as an individual). In such a case we also have the connotation of man in our mind, which is common to all human beings and which can be applied to each of them separately.

Therefore it can be said: The general perceptive man is not but the soul and intellect without the mediums of senses. It is intellect that perceives the quantum of commonality between persons of different natures and constructs the general human being along with the fact that the five senses have no interference in making sense. It should be said: An act is abstract and non-material.

This proves that the doer of this act, the self, also be an abstract and non-material reality since it is not possible for a material doer to perform an abstract function. Therefore it should be said: Rising of absolute senses to the self of man is an originative rising and not transmigrative or reactionary.

Now another important question arises: what is the abode of memory and where are the forms and meanings stored? Does the brain or nerves play the role of archives?

Its reply is that since brain and nerves are material, they cannot serve as safe repositories of intellectual forms and connotations, because as intellectual have said, all the parts of the body, like brain and nerves, as a result of nutrition and growth are constantly changing and are being renewed. Physical parts of the body of man are completely changed a number of times during his lifetime. If the location of memory had been the brain and nerves, the forms and meanings stored in them would also be changed along with the change of these organs after a period of time.

But such a thing does not happen, because a seventy – eighty–years–old person retains a major part of memories of dangers that have passed on him. He can recall the memory and recognize that they are the same dangers that passed on him. Such a thing is not compatible with materiality of memory!

This can lead us to conclude that memory (imagination) is an abstract and non-material thing and in fact it is the intellect of man that in the stage of imagination perceives partial forms and meanings and retains them in the archives of his memory. This can also lead us to discover the abstractness and non-materiality of the self of man. Rising of the forms and meanings are matters, which are perceptible by the intellect of man also are originative rising and not transmigrative or reactionary.

So far we have learnt three reasonings from the reasoning of the abstractness of the soul:

- 1. Innate knowledge of the self with regard to itself.
- 2. Knowledge of the self with the generalities.

3. Knowledge of the self through forms and partial meanings stored in the memory.

More arguments are offered on the abstractness of the soul in books of philosophy, but we shall be content only with these. 11

- 1. Story of Civilization, Vol. 1, Pg. 155.
- 2. Story of Civilization, Vol. 1, Pg. 241.
- 3. Story of Civilization, Vol. 2, Pg. 49.
- 4. Story of Civilization, Vol. 1, Pg. 241.
- 5. Story of Civilization, Vol. 1, Pg. 83.
- 6. Story of Civilization, Vol. 1, Pg. 283.
- 7. Story of Civilization, Vol. 1, Pg. 234.
- 8. Risala Tasawwur wa Tasdeeq, Pg. 307.
- 9. Risala Tasawwur wa Tasdeeq, Pg. 307.
- 10. Al-Isharaat wa Tanbihaat, Part 2.
- 11. Refer to Asfar, Vol. 2.

Source URL:

https://www.al-islam.org/resurrection-maad-quran-ibrahim-amini/evidences-resurrection#comment-0