

L11

Topic: **Guidance and Deviation are in God's Hands**

Allah has given us intellect, knowledge, eyes, ears and sent us messengers, Imams and the Qur'an to provide us with the requirements of finding and going the right path.

Verses like this in the Qur'an may look admitting fatalism but they do not.

[14-4] «... يُضِلُّ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ...»

“Allah sends astray [thereby] whom He wills and guides whom He wills.”

«ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ» [2-2]

“This is the Book about which there is no doubt, a guidance for those conscious of Allah.”

To infer some idea from the Qur'an, one condition is to look at all the verses related to the issue.

Some other verses related to the issue of guidance:

[14-27] «وَيُضِلُّ اللَّهُ الظَّالِمِينَ وَيَفْعَلُ اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ»

“Allah sends astray the wrongdoers. And Allah does what He wills.”

«وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِيْنَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا...» [29-69]

“And those who strive for Us - We will surely guide them to Our ways.”

Therefore, putting the verses together, it can be inferred that when someone goes astray, it is one's own act out of free will and he/she will be answerable for that, but it is also God's act in the sense that He has given us the ability to choose and act.

Another mistake is to think that Allah's knowledge means that we have to act according to His knowledge and this proves fatalism. The answer is that this choice

is also a part of Allah's knowledge of the future i.e., **He knows what the person will choose by his/her own free will**; so the knowledge of God does not take the free will of human beings away.

God's Justice and the Issue of Eternity

In verses like:

«وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْمُنَافِقِينَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتِ وَالْكُفَّارَ نَارَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا» [9-68]

“Allah has promised the hypocrite men and hypocrite women and the disbelievers the fire of Hell, wherein they will abide eternally.”

And:

«وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا» [9-72]

“Allah has promised the believing men and believing women gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they abide eternally ...”

God has promised the sinners or believers eternal punishment or reward ...

The question is, why would Allah eternally punish an individual for the sins he/she has committed for a short period of time?

Some points must be taken into consideration:

- a. The troubles in the other world are **the very truth and direct result of the sins in this world**. As said in:

«وَلَا تُجْزَوْنَ إِلَّا مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ»

“... and you will not be recompensed except for what you used to do.”

A very good example to clarify is a person who consumes narcotics for some days or weeks and destroys his body and nerves but has to face the

consequences for many years or someone who cuts one of his/her limbs carelessly and has to live with it for a lifetime.

- b. The relation between the sin and its punishment is not temporal because it depends on the result and quality of the sin; such as many crimes which have long-term consequences.

This eternity in punishment belongs to those who have closed all doors of salvation to themselves and have let the darkness of kufr and hypocrisy take over all their hearts and souls.

«بَلَىٰ مَنْ كَسَبَ سَيِّئَةً وَأَحَاطَتْ بِهِ خَطِيئَتُهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ» [2-81]

“Yes, whoever earns evil and his sin has encompassed him - those are the companions of the Fire; they will abide therein eternally.”