Proofs for the Necessity of Eternity of Man

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In the previous chapter, the arguments of the deniers of Resurrection were, to a certain extent, propounded. After that, the verses that pointed out to the Power of Allàh in creating man and the universe and as a result, proving the Power of Allàh for granting life once again to man, were briefly studied. In short, the reasoning of the previous chapter revolved around the possibility of Resurrection. However the proofs for the need and necessity of Resurrection were not mentioned. Because of this, we shall place this matter under discussion in the third chapter.

Here it is necessary we mention that the Holy Qur'àn has never based any of its religious beliefs on forced devotion or statements without proofs and evidences, but instead, the subject matter and their interpretation are always based on sound and rational reasoning. The proofs and the reasoning, which appear in the Holy Qur'àn for proving the certainty of the occurrence .of Resurrection, shall be mentioned here

The Ultimate aim of Motion of Objects .1

Each and every object in this universe, from the minute atoms to the gigantic galaxies, are perpetually in a state of motion. Generally, this motion must be for an aim or objective, because, motion without an aim does not exist. In other words, the underlying reason for every motion is to reach perfection and step from potentiality into actuality, and objects, till such a time that they do not attain their aim and objective, cannot attain tranquility. According to this, if an appointed aim itself possesses another aim and objective,

it can be understood that, it was not propounded as an ultimate aim from the very onset but was just a route and a course, which we had assumed to be the aim and objective. Because, the inevitable fall-out of a real and an ultimate aim is that the mover, upon reaching the ultimate aim attains tranquility and becomes stationary. As a result, if we assume infinite aims for the motion of objects, it is equivalent to considering them aimless and without any objective, since in any event, it is necessary that the chain of aims and objectives reach a terminus, just as it is absolutely necessary that the chain of 'efficient causes' reach a cause who is the First Agent and the Inherent Origin of the entire existence, otherwise it would be as if the universe is without an Origin and an Agent.[12]

The Holy Qur'àn considers Resurrection to be the terminus of the motion of objects and

believes that reaching Allàh is their ultimate aim and states:

“And that to your Lord is the goal.”[13]

An interesting point here is that one of the attributes and names of Resurrection and the Hereafter is (????? ??????????) Dar-ul-Qarar meaning the 'final halting-place', 'place of rest', 'house of peace and tranquility'. The Holy Qur’àn states:

“ And verily, the hereafter is the abode to settle.”[14] So, just as the origin of creation and the start of the motion of objects is from Allàh, the termination of the motion of objects is also the [return towards Allàh.[15

Divine Wisdom .2

In order to prove, the Resurrection of man being necessary by means of the 'Wisdom Proof' certain presumptions are required, which have to be previously established by other proofs and evidences. Some of these presumptions are as follows: -

1) Allàh, the Wise Creator, has created the Entire Existence.

2) This Creator, according to the exigency of being Wise, does not indulge in vain and purposeless activities.

In addition to the above mentioned two points, which should be previously proved and established in their appropriate places, another matter must also be placed under discussion here, in the form of a premise. That matter is that there is a marked difference between the 'Aim of the Agent' and the 'Aim of the Act' and that the two are not the same. According to this, Allàh in accordance with the necessity of His Inherent Needlessness, is not in need of a thing such that by performing an action He can obtain that thing, however, at the same time, the Acts of Allàh also cannot be without aim and purpose or in other words vain and purposeless. So Allàh does not have the 'Aim of the Agent'. That is, by creating His creations, He does not wish to attain a Perfection, which He did not previously possess. But at the same time He does have the 'Aim of the Act', in the meaning that creating the creations so that the creations themselves reach perfection, is the aim and purpose which Allàh has ascertained for them. And because of this, the Holy Qur’àn regarding the 'Aim of the Act' of Allàh in creating His creations states:

“And I have not created the jinn and men, but that they worship me.”[16]

This verse, in reality, presents the 'Aim of the Act’ of Allàh, in the meaning that if the creations of Allàh did not recognize and worship Allàh, they themselves have suffered losses and have not attained their Spiritual Perfection - which has been the aim and purpose of their creation. Not in the meaning that Allàh had an aim and has not achieved it, because this meaning is incompatible with the Inherent Needlessness of Allàh. In addition to this, the Holy Qur’àn itself

pronounces Allàh as not being in need of worship and says: “And whoever disbelieves, then Surely Allàh is Self-Sufficiently independent of the worlds.”[17] So, if the recognition and the worship is not achieved, the creations have not reached their aim and purpose, that the Creator is deprived of his aim and purpose. This is because the Inherent Needlessness and the Inherent Essentiality will not have an aim and purpose different from the Infinite Essence and also will not have the ability to accept any violation, because it itself is the actual aim and purpose. After this premise and the clarification of the distinction between the 'Aim of the Agent' and the 'Aim of the Act', we shall state that the creation of the universe is not without aim and purpose because our assumption was that the Creator of the universe is Wise and does not indulge in vain acts.

The next point is that, the short life of this world cannot be the aim and purpose of this creation, because, in the worldly life, there always exist a chain of troublesome and worrying events like shortages, deprivations, destruction and inconveniences. In other words, this present worldly life is intermingled with troubles and disturbances and as a result cannot be considered to be the aim of creation, because aim and purpose should be such that, as a result of it, the act of creation becomes perfect and the benefits of it return back to the creatures and servants. Hence, with no other option, there must exist another world which would be the aim and purpose of man's journey towards attainment of perfection, such that man, upon reaching it, should consider the aim and wisdom of the act of creation, to be practical and completed. For providing more explanation, it is possible to say that the present world and all that in which we are leading our lives is very large and wondrous and the Power which causes the growth of a plant and provides it the strength to slit open the surface of the earth or at times split open hard rock or even the asphalt of the roads and emerge out, and also the Power, which has brought forth the gigantic galaxies into motion with an absolutely accurate calculation, the same Power is the Boundless Intelligence, who has created man as His most superior creation. Accordingly, if it is deemed that this most superior creation, is for a certain period a weak child and then for a certain period a worn out and tired individual, who, for most of the time, is entangled in procuring the necessities of his life - which can be summarized into eating and sleeping, and then after death, is annihilated and ceases to exist, how tyrannical and far from wisdom it would be, whereas, we, at the very onset, had considered Allàh to be Wise.

In short, if we assume, that the aim of Allàh in creating man was that the results and benefits of it would reach Him, this would not be correct because He is the Absolute Needless and possesses Inherent Needlessness. Hence, there must exist an aim whereby its benefits reach man. Under this assumption we see that the limited and material life of this world lacks the

ability to be proclaimed as the aim and purpose for the creation of man and it is necessary that another world exist so that Man can achieve the aim for which he was created.[18]

The Holy Qur'àn, in mentioning this proof, quotes the words of wise and intelligent people (after reflection upon the creation of the heavens and the earth) and states:

"O' our Lord! Thou hast not created (all) this in vain! Glory be to Thee! Save us then from the torments of the (Hell) fire."[19] Thomas Aquinas explains this very proof saying: "We have been created for attaining the Ultimate end (i.e. Happiness). However this Happiness cannot be achieved in the life of this world, because the individual wealth is not lasting, body and will, weak, and our knowledge, incomplete. However, God has not created us in vain, and so we must be able to reach the end and the aim for which we have been created, and this necessitates that our lives have a continuity even after death."

But why should anyone think that we are not able to be prosperous in the life of this world? According to Aristotle, Happiness is not the transient sensation of pleasure, but Happiness is that a person, in the span of his entire life, can convert his abilities into actualities: If we keep ourselves occupied with the activities of the intellect (thinking), we shall attain Happiness, and the transient troubles shall not cause us to lose our Happiness.

However, Thomas sees Happiness in a different light. According to him, the human Happiness is related to the aim and the purpose (that is Union with God) for which we have been created. The cognition of God, which we obtain by means of belief and faith, is an Act of the Will and not of Intellect and hence, it is possible that, the present cognition of God, which is obtained by means of natural intellect, may be faulty or may not be an intuitive faith. Hence, the cognition about God, (in which is secured our Ultimate Happiness) is not attainable in this Worldly life (except in a fleeting and transient manner). So in order that we completely experience such a [Happiness-creating insight, it is necessary that we continue our lives even after death.[20

Manifestation of Reality .3

One of the distinctions of man over the other creations is thought and reflection, and this necessitates the possession of different ideas and these different ideas become cause for the clashing of views and opinions, encounters between doctrines, starting of wars, even between different sects of the same religion.

Another point is that while studying the different ideas and views, it is not possible to classify all of them as being correct and true, because eventually, some of these ideas run in contrast and contradiction in meaning to the others and hence are not compatible with each other and so it is not possible to regard both of them as correct and true. On the other hand, it is also not possible to classify both of them as incorrect and untrue, since if two ideas are contrary to one

another, considering both of them as untrue would be tantamount to 'Elimination of Contrast', which according to the Science of Logic is incorrect.[21] Considering both the contradictory ideas to be untrue would be, in fact, denying every Reality – a concept, which is particular to the Sophists.

In short, it is not possible to accept all the different ideas and consider them to be the truth and it is also not possible to consider all the ideas as untrue. A poet, in this context says:

Do know this reality, neither are true all of these Nor in totality are deviated these flocks.

Hence, some of these ideas or doctrines are correct and true and the others are incorrect and untrue, so it is necessary that the real face of Truth become apparent and that in some way or the other manifests itself and pronounces its sovereignty. On the other hand, we do know that the present world can never be the place where Truth will manifest itself such that no falsehood can find a way into it, because such a situation is in contradiction to the obligations and trials of man in this world. In other words, this world is a place for manifestation of the abilities, performance of obligations and trials of man and it cannot be the place of manifestation of the results of the trials of man. Hence, it is necessary that another world exist where the Truth and the results of the striations and the efforts of man are manifested.[22]

Nevertheless, it is possible to summarize this Proof and state:

1. In this world, differences and different ideas exist and basically the life in this world is a scene of clashing and contradiction between these varied thoughts and ideas.
2. All of these thoughts and ideas cannot be true and correct and similarly all of them cannot be false and incorrect.
3. There must be a place where Truth eventually manifests itself and presents its absolute sovereignty.
4. This world cannot be the place for the manifestation and for the absolute sovereignty of the Truth.
5. Hence, another world must exist, wherein such a manifestation takes place. In other words, another place should exist for such an occurrence.

The Holy Qur'àn also considers the Resurrection of man in another world to be necessary for the purpose of total manifestation of Truth and states one of the names of the Day of Judgement as 'The Day of Truth' and states:

"That is the True day." [23]

The Day of Judgment has been presented as a day in which the hidden things and the secrets shall become manifest and evident and states:

"On the day when hidden things shall be made manifest."[24] Since the day of Resurrection is a

day of total manifestation of Truth and Justice, all that which shall occur on that day, shall be nothing but Truth and Justice. Hence, all that which shall be presented on that day in the form of the Scales, Weighing of Actions, the Path, the Trial of the servants or other such things, shall be by the Truth and Justice. Even the Weighing of Actions is the Truth and Justice and this is the reason the Holy Qur'àn says:

"And the measuring (of the deeds) that day shall be just (I.e. the Weighing on that day is the Truth)"[25] In other words, the deeds of the people shall be weighed and measured in such a manner that it would become apparent as to how much of it had been the truth. As a result, one, in whose deeds, no truth exists, for the weighing of such deeds, basically no scales exist, because such deeds are in reality, a non-entity and no scales exist for weighing of non-entities. For this purpose, the Holy Qur'àn says:

["And so We will not set up a balance for them on the day of Resurrection."[26

The Manifestation of the Absolute Justice .4

For the mentioning of this Proof also, we are in need of a couple of premises, which have to be discussed, proved and accepted previously. One of the premises is that, we consider Allàh to be Just and the Justice of Allàh is a reality which has been proved and the reasoning and proofs have also been presented in its appropriate place and context. Secondly, the present world is not the place where justice can be meted out to all the people and the rewards of the Righteous be given to them in totality and the punishment of the Evil doers and the tyrants be meted out to them in totality. By accepting these two premises, we can conclude that hence there must be a day and place wherein the rewards and the punishments can be afforded to all the individuals in their totality.

The Holy Qur'àn while considering Resurrection to be a necessity for the purpose of rewarding the Righteous and punishing the Evil doers says:

"What! Shall we then treat those who submit as We treat the guilty. What has happened to you? How do you judge?" [27] No sane and justice-loving person shall accept that the end of a righteous person and an offender, a just person and a tyrant be the same and that too in the presence of Allàh, all the acts of Whom, are based on Justice.

The Divine Mercy .5

The comprehension of this proof also requires two premises.

1. One of the most important attributes of the Lord of the World is the attribute of mercy and compassion, in the meaning that, Allàh fulfills the needs of His needy creations and provides all the things, which are necessary for their existence and perfection.

2. Man or his soul has the ability to live an eternal life and also to attain great achievements, which is not possible to be achieved in this world.

Considering these two premises, we can conclude that there must exist another world in which these potential abilities of man reach their actuality and perfection and the need of man to have an eternal life be fulfilled and Allàh the Clement and Merciful will never refuse him such grace and happiness because He is the Source of blessings and mercy. Hence if Allàh does not respond positively to the need of man to attain eternity or to bring into actuality his immense abilities, this entails that Allàh is either a miser or is powerless, whereas in reality, Allàh is neither a miser, nor powerless. He is the Absolute Powerful and the Absolute Generous and when there exists a real need, He fulfills it and also, every place and thing which has the ability to receive His mercy, He descends His mercy on it.

Regarding this, Allàh himself says:

"He has ordained mercy on Himself; most certainly He will gather you on the Resurrection day - there is no doubt about it."[28] In this verse, He very clearly mentions that the gathering of people on the day of Resurrection is obligated by His mercy. However, it is possible that a question be asked that if the Day of Resurrection is obligated by the Divine Mercy, then how is it that some people would find themselves in suffering and would be facing torture and punishment?

In answer to this question, briefly, it can be said that the meaning of mercy does not mean that it is performed with respect to the people - individually and separately for each one, but more importantly it is with regards to all the people and the total existence, and it is very evident that the existence of the Resurrection with regards to all the human beings and the entire system of existence is mercy, although a few people may experience difficulty and suffering. As an example, is it possible to classify rain and sunshine as not being mercy and blessings, just because a few people experience trouble and difficulty due to them?

Secondly, the same troubled individuals, after some time shall attain salvation and bask in the Divine Mercy. Of course, it is possible that a small group of people shall always remain in .punishment and difficulty, the study of which requires an entirely separate discussion

The Instinct of the 'love for eternity ' of man .6

For the establishment of this proof also, attention is to be paid to certain premises and assumptions, which are as follows:

1. The presence of an instinct in man or in other animals is proof that, there exists externally, something, which can fulfil this instinct. In the meaning that, if the presence of an instinct within man is proved, it can be concluded with certainty, that there also exists, in the external

world, means to satiate this instinct. Thirst is proof of the existence of water, and hunger and inclination for food is proof of the existence of food. Similarly, attraction towards the opposite sex is proof of its existence, because if such was not the case, placing such instincts and tendencies within man would be vain and futile and hence would be incompatible with the assumption of the Wisdom of Allàh.

2. The second premise is that man, by nature, loves eternity of himself and endeavors, by every means possible, to make his life eternal. Man has been so created that all types of decline and annihilation always pain him. On the contrary, he never experiences pain and vexation with life and its being eternal.

However, it is possible that some individuals, due to misfortunes, beyond their ability to withstand, may intend to destroy themselves and commit suicide, but in reality, these people have become frustrated with the misfortunes of life, not with life itself. And proof of this is that, if circumstances undergo a change for the better, and their misfortunes, at the very least, reduce in magnitude, they once again experience a love for life.

Hence, the original love for an eternal life is the ultimate love, and at the same time, a hidden secret, of every man. However matters of instinct and nature are intuitive and to be experienced and not deductive, in the meaning that every person should reflect within oneself and seek it. In spite of all this, some factors do play a role in better and easier perception of innate matters. It is due to this that, should a person doubt his love for eternity and permanence, he should reflect upon his own activities and also that of the mankind in waging war against diseases and calamities and also observe the widespread work that is being done to prolong the lives of human beings. What does all this signify? Is it anything except the fact that man loves his eternity and permanence? In addition to these, some people also consider the love of man towards his children as signs, which point towards this instinct, because children are regarded to be the continuation of the lives of men.

Nevertheless, considering these two premises, we can conclude that another world must exist, wherein man would attain an eternal life and thus satiate his instinct of ' love for eternity'.

Basically, according to some of the scholars, the thirst of man for an eternal life and his instinct of 'love for eternity’ is so encompassing that, under no circumstances is it possible to [accept that, this desire shall not be fulfilled or that this instinct shall not be satiated.[29

The actual observation of life after death .7

This proof is based upon the claims of people who have almost died or have completely died, but have once again returned to life (depending upon our definition of death and how we comprehend it.) Nevertheless, these people claim that they have experienced ' Near-death ' or

a ' Life-after-life'. Such people by merely encountering death either find themselves on the verge of dying or find themselves dead. After that, they feel as if they have cast their bodies and then view their bodies and the surroundings and those around them, who are trying to resuscitate their body, from a different angle (usually from the top). In these circumstances, they find themselves possessing a new body which they have described in different ways: cloudy, without any form, or a spiritual body resembling the material body of an individual. Unlike their original body, this body of theirs, cannot interact with the material surroundings. After this, they experience a traversing in a dark place and upon crossing that place, they enter into a new domain in which, they encounter various people, who do not possess a material body, but can be generally identified, and establish telepathic contact with them. Similarly, they come across a luminous entity who exhibits sympathy and affection and helps them to remember their past (like a videocassette, shows their past to them, in an instant) and make an evaluation. These people sincerely desire to remain there and derive great pleasure from the conciliatory and happiness inducing experience. However, at the same time, they desire (or are requested) to return back to their material bodies.

These people in addition to observing the luminous entity also report seeing their relatives. An interesting thing here is that sometimes they observe people whom they have never seen before (however, later they recognize them in a photograph - for example) or they observe people who are unknown to them and are presently dead.

The description that these individuals give for their bodies (after death and before their renewed life) is that this body is not perceivable and can penetrate into and traverse material objects. It also lacks weight (i.e. weightless.) In spite of all this, it possesses the power to perceive and listen (however much listening is more related to the form of transfer of thought rather than possessing the experience of listening). This fact signifies that individuals who are in the other world are incarnated in a manner such that they can be recognized and their positions established.[30]

An interesting point regarding the above proof is that, a lot of these experiences and personal observations are the same facts which have been mentioned in the traditions of the Holy Prophet (S) and the Infallible Imams (‘a) regarding the Intermediate World or the Purgatory, that is, the world which starts after death and continues up to the great and universal Resurrection. Another thing to be noticed here is that these experiences are not confined to the followers of any one particular religion but have been reported by the Christians, Muslims and also by the followers of other religions and sects. In addition, these reports and narrations, .basically, do not differ a great deal among themselves

8. Communication with Souls

Another evidence and proof for Resurrection and life after death is, that many people establish communication with the deceased and with their souls, either directly or indirectly (through a medium). If we accept this communication with the deceased and their souls, we can be assured that people after their death do remain alive.

Many of the people are of the opinion that the utilization of 'means' and 'mediums' for the purpose of summoning of souls, reduces the importance and strength of this Proof. This is because firstly, there exists a possibility of imposture. Secondly, things, which the 'mediums' relate from the deceased individual, can be explained in a simple manner. For example, it could be said that the different aspects of the personality of the 'medium', could consciously or unconsciously, be playing a role in the matter or that the 'medium' could be establishing a telepathic contact with the people who are present and wishing to seek information regarding the deceased. So, in reality that which is obtained, is the very expectation, which these people had in their minds which by some means was transferred to the 'medium'.[31]

Nevertheless, it is possible that these probabilities and objections may be put forward but it must be understood that, Firstly, these communications do not always occur by means of another person (or 'medium'), but there exist numerous people, who, professing different religions, faiths and sects, are capable of such communication with the souls and with little investigation, one can be satisfied that all of them cannot be lying. Also, very many of these people are not inclined to flaunt this strength of theirs and so the question of imposing also does not arise. Secondly, there have been incidences, which can, be illustrated in the manner as propounded in the two arguments, but with great difficulty. On occasions, deceased individuals have manifested themselves to the living and provided them with factual information, which was previously not known to them and after investigation, it was realized that what they had come to know, by means of communication with the soul of the deceased, was the absolutely true.

In addition to this, sometimes, the efforts for establishing communication, did not take place by a living person, but instead, communication was established by means of a deceased and his soul, and the information which was consequently obtained, was found to be in total conformity with the reality.

9. Immateriality and Eternity of the Soul

Perhaps, the most important proof and one of the best reasonings for the establishment of the necessity of Resurrection is the "Proof of the existence of the soul and its immateriality and permanence". And it is because of this, that many of the Islamic and religious philosophers, in

the topic of Resurrection, involve themselves on the topic of immateriality of the soul and set about to prove and establish it, whereas, it is also possible to prove the Resurrection without indulging in any discussion regarding the soul.

Nevertheless, without any semblance of doubt, a living man has a definite distinction over non-living entities, in the meaning that, a living man possesses some particularities which do not exist in non-living entities and man himself, when he departs from this world, tends to lose them. That thing within man, which is the reason for his life, is called Soul. Hence no one denies this reality that soul exists. In fact, even the most zealot materialists do not deny the existence of the soul in this meaning. In other words, even they do not deny the distinction and difference between a living man and a non-living one. But the bone of contention is, whether the soul of man is an entity, devoid of matter and independent of the body and consequently, after the death of man, continues to exist or that the soul too, with the death of man, along with his body becomes annihilated and destroyed.

If the soul of man is independent of the body, it will continue to exist even after the death of man, and this death would, in reality, mean transference of his soul from one world to another. As a result, the Resurrection could be proved in a very simple manner. However, if the independence and the immateriality of the soul is not proved, this Proof would not be very useful. It is because of this that the materialists deny the independence of the soul from the body and claim that the soul is the elite outcome of the synthesis of the body and, with the disarray of the organic functioning of the body and its subsequent annihilation, the soul also ceases to exist, exactly like the movement of a watch, which is dependant on the watch.

In short, the permanence of the soul after death is secured in its independence and its primariness. And because of this, above all, it is necessary to prove, whether the human soul is an independent essence or something similar to the physical and chemical particularities of the body and the cerebral cells such that, with the death of the brain or the organic activities of the body, it too ceases to exist.

Scholars and religious philosophers claim that within man is concealed a 'reality' and an essence which is non-matter, in the meaning that in addition to the materials which form the human body, there exists a reality which places the body of man directly under its influence. Hence the soul is a metaphysical reality, but at the same time has a direct communication with matter and the body of man and administers it. Hence, it is necessary that initially, the proofs of the claimants of the independence and immateriality of the soul are studied and then the criticisms over it and the objections of the materialists be dwelt upon.

Proofs for the Independence and Immateriality of the Soul

1. Oneness of personal identity

For the mentioning of this proof, it is appropriate that at the onset, answer is given to the question “What is the essence of man?” Answering this question is not an easy task, because we cannot consider ourselves as a material entity only. The material body and its parts are constantly in a state of change, however, we are of the belief that we possess the same identity which we had possessed years ago. Our bodies are something that “we” own. These bodies are not the “we” itself. Our movements, states and physical characteristics are illustrative of us, but are not “us”.

In addition, we also cannot consider ourselves as just a “Mind” (that is, a collection of individual information, meditative categories, memories by which we perceive and experience the world) because firstly, it is possible that the individual information, categories and memories undergo a change or cease to exist without an individual losing his identity. Very many incidences, which have occurred five or ten years ago or even those, that have recently occurred, fail to be brought to memory by us. Or we consider our present actions to be different from those, which we had performed years ago. Secondly, claims, which are based upon memory, are prone to error. It is possible that we may be claimants to remembering events which have never taken place at all!!

Hence, we can consider ourselves to be a self or a soul - unchanging, fundamental and indivisible. We do not just claim that we possess a self or a soul, but go a step further in claiming that we are soul, because we distinguish the personal identity of others by means of their behavioral pattern and distinct physical attributes, however we distinguish our soul either by means of a kind of internal self-awareness and intuition or by means of experiences which we achieve. The soul, which is the subject of our experiences, is also the meditating agent for meditation, recollection sensation and perception.[32]

It is possible to mention this proof in a simpler manner. Every individual, within himself, has knowledge of his existence and has no doubts whatsoever regarding it. Alternatively, this knowledge is intuitive and presential. That is, this knowledge is always present before everyone and the perception of its presence does not require any learning. Thus “My” knowledge about “Myself” cannot be an “ acquired knowledge.”

Another point is that, the “I” of everyone, from the beginning of life to its end, is the same. For example, the “I” of the age of 77 is the same “I” of the previous years. It is because of this that, when we recount the past memories, we use the word “I” and say: “From childhood, I was fond of studies.” In addition to myself, the people also recognize “I” to signify the one person, from the start of his life up to death.

Now we should investigate whether this “I” or the “Personal Identity” can be this very body of man? A little reflection upon the matter will yield an answer in the negative. This is because the body is a collection of cells, which, in the entire span of life, undergo changes several times. And, as has been stated, if all the cells of the body undergo a change every seven years at an approximation, a seventy year old person would have changed all the parts of his body, for a minimum of ten times. So, in such a case, how can “I” of the seventy years be the same “I” of the seven years?

Hence, it is possible to conclude that, in addition to the body and the material parts, there exists a “Fixed Reality”, in the entire life of an individual, which, unlike the material parts and the body cells, does not undergo any change and it is this Fixed Reality which is the agent of the individuality of our identities, and we know it to be the soul - non-material and independent of .the body

The manner of superposition of 'large' over 'small' .2

For comprehending this proof, it is necessary to recount two premises.

i) One of the laws of the 'material world' and the nature is that never can a larger matter be superposed upon a smaller matter, and nor can it be accommodated within it. This rule of non-superposition of large over small is applicable to all the material things without any exception. For example, it is just not possible to place a mountain having a height of a thousand meters within a well, which is just a few meters in depth, except that we enlarge the well or compress the mountain. Or for that matter, it is not possible to floor an area of half meter by a stone of area one-meter.

ii) The perception of man is such that he can perceive vast deserts, expansive seas and oceans and lofty mountains. In addition, the faculty of sight and the eyes of man also possess the ability to observe the infinite space and the small and large stars Hence, if our perceptive faculty are the very cerebral cells which are present in our body, how is it that we are able to superpose the lofty mountains or the expansive oceans over these small cells, and how is it that, we are able to observe the mountains and the oceans, without reducing their great magnitude even by the slightest amount?

Of course, it is possible that, one could argue saying, just as computer diskettes store a very large quantity of information and the photographic films encompass a large quantity of scenes within them, the brain and the faculty of vision of ours also work in exactly the same manner. In reply, it must be said that between the perception by the brain or visualization by the faculty of sight, and a computer diskette or a photographic film, lies a huge difference.

This is because, the diskette miniaturizes the information. The camera too, gathers the

photographed scenes and miniaturizes them, whereas, we perceive the mountains, seas, galaxies and the infinite space in the same magnitude as we see them.[33] Hence, when our perception cannot be 'material' and cannot possess the attributes of matter, how then can man be considered totally material? However, we do not deny that, for the perception of a subject or for observing an external thing, we are in need of a sequence of 'material preliminaries'. However, the result of these 'material preliminaries' cannot be material and possess its attributes.

And because of this, the religious philosophers, for the attainment of sight or the other perceptions, consider the occurrence of a series of physical and chemical preliminaries to be necessary, but at the same time are of the opinion that after the occurrence of these preliminaries, perception and sight take place by means of an entity, which is devoid of matter, independent of the body and not possessing the attributes of matter.

In short, perception of the extensive world and the observation of the huge mountains and the vast and deep oceans take place by means of the soul, which is not influenced by the laws of matter and among them the law of non-superposition of large over small.

Paranormal Powers of man .3

The third proof starts with the assumption or claim that man possesses paranormal powers. It has been claimed that, a part of the minds can, with other minds, with whom communication in a natural manner (by means of a series of physical causes) is not possible, establish communication (called telepathy), or can attain knowledge of some physical events without perceiving such events by sensuous perception (clairvoyance), or can bring about an object into motion, without the use of any material means (psychokinesis).

For example, experiments have been set up which have shown that some individuals are able to establish mental contact with others, from a great distance, even with people who are enclosed in trunks with leaden or iron walls. These paranormal events do not conform with the theory of the mind being material, because these events hint that the mind possesses this power, whereby it can attain the information about other regions and other minds, or whereby it can influence the material world without the need to make use, like the brain, of material means.[34]

Nevertheless, some of the scholars, by way of sensing and experience and by research into psychology, psychoanalysis, telepathy, clear-sightedness and dreams, have set about to prove the existence of the soul and also its immateriality and its independence from the body.[35] For example, one of the general and universal means for proving the existence of the soul is the visualizing of dreams in the state of sleep. An individual who dreams while sleeping, after

awakening, accurately remembers that, in his dream, he had traveled to places of great distance and had performed a great deal of work. That is, on the one hand, his body was rested and eyes closed, while on the other, had traveled a great distance, performed a lot of work and witnessed beautiful and ugly scenes. Hence, if we do not accept the existence of the soul and its immateriality, then who or what was it that had traveled places and had witnessed the scenes?

The Theory of ' Immateriality of the Soul ' and the arguments against it

We have, in a very concise manner, alluded to some of the proofs for the independence and the immateriality of the soul. However those who do not accept the independence and the immateriality of the soul, have presented certain arguments and conjectures, upon which they rest their claim that the soul is a material entity. Some of these arguments are as follows:

1. Injury to the brain directly influences the knowledge, intelligence, memory and the ability to conceptualize. For example, if the communication between the two hemispheres of the brain of an individual is severed, upon encountering an object to his left, he would not be able to discern and recognize the object (because this object can only be sensed in the right hemisphere of his brain) however much he may be able to point to the object with his left hand.

The right hemisphere which controls the left side recognizes the object, but the left hemisphere, which is the actual center for speech and establishing contact, does not make a recognition because no information flows across the injured 'Corpus Callosum'.[36] 2. It appears that some of the mental powers like memory are specific to certain specific centers of the brain. In addition to this, some of the intelligence is associated with one of the two hemispheres of the brain (however much difficult it may be to pinpoint the specific centers for them). For example, the analytical, conceptual and lingual intelligence are centered in the left hemisphere of the brain, but the right hemisphere controls the artistic and the intuitive process of the mind.

3. Authentic indications exist which show that some of the mental abilities and also the measure of success of individuals in utilizing these abilities is, to a great extent, hereditary. In addition to this, some of the diseases, which affect the mind of an individual, such as the Down's Syndrome[37] or the diseases which affect the ability of an individual, such as the Alzheimer's disease[38] are fundamentally, genetic. These facts indicate that, the material process of hereditariness has a distinct influence upon the ability and the working of the mind.[39]

4. During the process of thinking or other mental work, the material changes within the brain increase and the brain takes in more food and gives out more phosphoric substances.

5. Scientific studies have shown that the brain of thinkers is usually, more than the average in weight. (The average weight of the brain of men being around 1400 grams and that of women being slightly lesser.)

All these indications and observations go to show that there exists an intimate connection between the working of the cerebral cells – which are material – and those things which we consider to be spiritual phenomena. In other words, if every man possesses an independent and an immaterial soul and this soul performs the acts of perception, which are also immaterial, then what is the need of the cerebral cells, which slip into working disorder upon facing an injury, or require more food under conditions of mental activities, or which are influenced by the material factors and conditions of the father and mother (i.e. hereditariness). Hence, it is not only possible to prove the immateriality of the soul, but on the contrary, these observations of ours are more convincing in proving its materiality.

Answers to the above Arguments

The answers to all of these arguments and objections can be provided by clarifying just one point. The point under consideration is this that there exists a clear difference between an 'agent of action' and a 'tool of action'.

All the above indications, at the utmost, prove that there exists a relation between the cerebral cells and our perception, but does not clarify the manner and the type of this relation. Hence, we claim that, the manner of this relation is similar to the relation between an agent and the tool of his work, in the meaning that the cerebral cells, food, hereditariness,.... All of them influence the quality of our perception in the same way as every tool influences the performance of work. Thus, in reality, all of these are means of perception and tools of the soul in the performance of its work and in the event of these means and tools getting destroyed, the soul does not get destroyed and nor does it relinquish its work. The only thing, which occurs, is that, the connection of the soul with these means gets severed. As a result, the work that was previously being performed through these means, shall henceforth, not be performed through them.

Exactly like an airplane, whose communication, with the control tower of the airport, is severed. Here, the plane still exists and continues to perform its work, but is no longer able to keep the control tower informed about its state and location. Or like a ship and its captain, who, in the middle of the sea loses communication contact. Under these conditions, the ship as well as its captain do exist and as yet have not suffered any injuries, however their communication has been severed and the means of communication have gone dead.[40]

In short, man is an entity, made up of body and soul[41], and his reality and essence is formed

by the soul, which is an entity, independent of the body, but at the same time, has a connection with the body and administers it. By proving this theory, resurrection or life of man after death can be easily proved, because according to the theory of the' existence of the soul and its independence and immateriality', man, due to death, does not get destroyed, but it is only his body which gets decayed and turns into earth, whereas his soul continues its life (although (.under different conditions

Immateriality of the Soul according to the Holy Qur'an

The Holy Qur'àn and basically, all the Divine religions believe in the resurrection of man after death, and consider man to possess an eternal life, which he shall lead, after death, either enjoying the Divine bounties, or at times in pain and suffering.

In addition to this general aspect, it is possible to understand from the subtle allusions and references of the verses of the Holy Qur'àn that, according to it also, man possesses an immaterial soul, independent of matter and body. In this context, we shall briefly refer to certain verses of the Holy Qur'àn, from which the above mentioned fact can be deduced.

"Reckon not those who are slain in the way of Allàh to be dead; Nay! Alive they are with their Lord being sustained." [42] Hence, if it is to be that the martyrs be alive after death, it is necessary that they possess a soul - immaterial and independent - which, after death, continues to exist, because, their bodies have fallen on the battlefield and at times have decomposed and disintegrated. In other words, we observe that the bodies of the martyrs get decomposed and turn into earth. On the other hand, the Holy Qur'àn considers them to be alive and obtaining sustenance in the presence of Allàh. Thus, we conclude that, they, before their deaths, possessed a 'Reality' which was separate to their bodies, and after their martyrdom, this 'Reality" continues to lead its life, and receive sustenance in the presence of Allàh.

Another point is that it is not possible to accept that it is only the martyrs who live after death, and the others do not possess an immaterial soul and after death do not continue to lead their lives. This is because, amongst people, there existed and exist a large number of Divine Prophets and Divine Saints, for whom, assumption of a status and position, lower than that of an ordinary martyr is not possible. Hence, it is possible to question the criterion and the basis by which only the martyrs possess a soul, which, after their death, continues to lead its own life, while the others do not, more so, when the Holy Qur'àn itself, in various verses, claims resurrection of man to be universal and general. Thus this verse does not wish to just mention that the martyrs continue to live even after their death, because this life is not confined to them only, but the verse wishes to present the exalted position of the martyrs in the presence of their Lord, wherein they shall be drowned in the bounties and pleasures. Now if this soul was not

immaterial, it would not be able to attain a presence in front of the Lord, Who possesses Total and Perfect Immateriality in all respects and aspects.

“A dreadful doom encompassed Pharaoh’s people. The fire, they are exposed to it (every) morning and evening; and on the day when the Hour shall come to pass: (the sentence shall be) Cause the Pharaoh's people to enter the most awful doom.”[43]

This verse is in reference to the punishment of the people of Firoun after their drowning in the sea. It says: These tyrants after drowning in the sea, shall be presented, every morning and evening, to the fires of hell and shall face the punishment, and when the universal resurrection shall occur, they shall face a severe chastisement.

Hence, if they did not possess an existing soul, what would be facing the chastisement morning and evening. Their lifeless bodies have drowned beneath the waves of the sea and are thus oblivious and unfeeling towards any chastisement or pain. Hence, it is necessary that their souls exist and these souls possess the perception and intelligence to experience the Divine chastisement. Summary of this verse is almost in opposition to the previous verse, in the meaning that the previous verse was mentioning the Divine bounties in relation to the martyrs, in the Purgatory and these verses are mentioning the Divine chastisement with respect to the people of Firoun and the tyrants in the Purgatory.

“Say: The angel of death who is given charge of you shall cause you to die, then to your Lord you shall be brought back.”[44] This verse firstly is with respect to the souls of all the men, that at the time of death, their souls shall be seized by means of commissioned angels. Secondly, it is also an answer, for those who deny resurrection. For they used to say that once we are dead and our bodies turn to earth and are lost, how then can we be brought back to life?

The verse answers that, the 'Reality' of man (which is his soul), shall never get lost or be destroyed, such that it cannot be brought back to life. The actualityof death is (????) and not (???) which is taken from (?????) which means seizing a thing completely.[45] Thus, in reality, the verse says: You will not be annihilated, but at the time of death, your essence and reality, which is your soul shall be seized completely by delegated angels, after which you shall continue to lead your lives.

With the help of the previous discussions, the topic of the existence of the soul and its immateriality can be considered to have been proved and established. With this premise and assumption, the 'spiritual resurrection' can be proved, however the 'corporeal resurrection' must be proved by other rational and narrative Proofs, especially by the verses of the Holy Qur’àn, which shall be dwelt upon in the next chapter. By proving the immateriality of the soul, the Purgatory, which is in itself, a Lesser Resurrection, and placed between the present life and the

Larger and Universal Resurrection, also becomes clear, and as such does not require any .further proofs

Notes:

[12]Habibullàh Tàhiri, Sairi dar jahan pas az marg, Pg. 40, and Payàm-e-Quràn, Vol. 5, Pg. 260

[13] Najm (53):42

[14] Mo'min (Ghafir) (40):39

[15] For more reading on this proof, refer Ayatollah Jawadi Amoli "Mabda' wa Ma'ad"

[16] Dhariat (51):56

[17] Aal-e-Imràn (3):97

[18]Abdullah Jawàd? Amùl?, Mabda' wa Ma'ad, Pg. 284, Sairi dar Jahàn Pas az Marg, Pg.44, Payàm-e-Qur'àn, Vol. 5, Pg., 240

[19] Aal-e-Imràn (3):191

[20]Michael Peterson, and others, 'Aql wa I'teqàd-e-D?n?, Translation: A?mad Naràq? and Ibràh?m Sultàn?, Pg., 349

[21] "Gathering of antithesis" and "Absence of antithesis" are two terminologies of formal logic, both of which according to this logic are incorrect and unacceptable. Their Incorrectness is from the immediate perceptions, which does not even require any proofs.

[22] Abdullah Jawàd? ?mol?, Deh Maqàlah P?ràmùn Mabda' wa Mà'ad, Pg. 292

[23] Naba' (78):39

[24] Tàriq (86):9

[25] A'araf (7):8

[26] Kahf (18)105

[27] Qalam (68):35-36

[28] An'àm (6):12

[29] Abdullah Jawàd? Amùl?, Deh Maqàlah P?ràmùn Ma'?d, Pg. 309, Doctor Habibùllàh Tahir?, Sair? dar Jahàn Pas Az Marg, Pg. 50, Payàm-e-Qur'àn, Pg., 236

[30] Michael Peterson and others, 'Aql wa I'teqàd-e-D?n?, Translation, A?mad Naràq? and Ibràh?m Sultàn?, Pg., 344 - 346.

[31] Michael Peterson and others, 'Aql wa I'teqàd-e-D?n?, Translation, A?màd Naràq? and Ibràh?m Sultàn?, Pg., 347

[32] Michael,Peterson and others, 'Aql wa I'teqàd-e-D?n?, Translation, A?mad Naràq? and Ibràh?m Sultàn?, Pg., 327 - 328

[33] Indeed, due to the limitations, which exist in our sensual perceptions, we are not able to perceive those greatness in the manner that they exist, but we are able to perceive in only that

measure as permitted by our senses. Indeed, the power and strength has been given to man that he can overcome these limitations and break the shackles and thus perceive the things as they actually are, which should be discussed at an appropriate occasion.

[34] Michael, Peterson and others, ‘Aql wa I'teqàd-e-D?n?, Translation, A?mad Naràq? and Ibràh?m Sultàn?, Pg. 331

[35] Zain-ul-?bid?n Qurbàn?, Be Suey Jahàn Abadiyat

[36] The largest intermediary between the two hemispheres of the brain.

[37] This disease result from the derangement in the chromosomes of the cells and the person affected suffers from severe retardation of the mind.

[38] In this disease, a large number of the superficial cells of the brain get injured and one of its earliest and the most important symptoms is the derangement of the memory.

[39] Michael,Peterson and others, ‘Aql wa I'teqàd-e-D?n?, Translation, A?mad Naràq? and Ibràh?m Sultàn?, Pg., 332 - 333

[40] °abibullàh Tahir?, Sair? dar Jahàn Pas az Marg, Pg. 53, and Payàm-e-Qur’àn, Vol. 5, Pg. 294

[41] Another explanation, which is nearer to the Gnostic insight and also to reality is that we say, basically the soul and the body are not two independent identities which got compounded together, but they are one reality which are present in two dimensions. The soul, in the material dimension, manifests itself in the form of body and its parts and the body in the higher dimension and in the metaphysical dimension is in reality the soul itself. The soul and the body are not two entities, which interact reciprocally but are one entity, which are placed in two dimensions. Of course, the comprehension of this reality and its explanation requires deeper reflection.

[42]?le Imràn (3):169

[43]Ghàfir (40):45-46

[44]Sajdah (32):11

(????) [45]Mufradàt Alfà¨ Qur’àn, Raghib Isfàhàn?, word