

?Is Eternity of Man Possible

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Those who do not support the theory of eternity of man and deny this reality – state that the occurrence of such an event is impossible. Of course, two explanations exist, for their claims of the impossibility of this reality, 1) The basis of the first objection is doubt and uncertainty in the Power of Allah. Such people state that Allah does not have the Power to make man alive again after death, or to grant him a new life, once dead.

2) Bodies that have decayed and turned to earth are in such a state that they are not capable of being collected and as a result, it is not possible to bring them forth in the form of a man. The Islamic philosophers and other scholars, for the occurrence of each and everything, consider two points to be necessary: 1. Power and the will of the agent. 2. Receptivity of the recipient. As a result, if on an occasion, the power or the will of the agent exists, but the recipient lacks the receptivity for a particular work, the work can be reckoned to be impossible.

Here too, some are of the belief that the Power of Allah is infinite, however, collection of the decayed bodies is an act, which does not possess possibility. The Holy Qur'an, in response to the first objection proceeds to state and explain the Infinite Power of Allah, and compares the re-creation of man after death to the great creation of the heavens and the earth and reminds that He who has created this entire universe also possesses the Power to give life to the dead. Is not He who created the heavens and the earth able to create (again) the like of them. Yea! and He is the Creator, the All-Knowing?^[1]

It is self-evident that the creation of the heavens and the earth is Greater than the creation of man. So when Allah is Powerful to create the entire Existence, would he not be Powerful to create man, who is just a part of the entire Existence, once again?

The Holy Qur'an in reply to the second objection also alludes to the first creation of man and says: So they say Who will bring us to life? Say: He who created you the first time?^[2]

In another verse it states: And he strikes out a likeness for Us and forgets his own creation. Says he: Who will give life to the bones when they are rotten. Say: He will give life to them Who brought them into existence at first, and He is Cognizant of all creation?^[3]

The above verse alludes to a philosophical proof, which states that if two or more things are similar to each other, then with respect to being possible (in existence) and not being possible (in existence), they are equal. That is, if one is possible (to exist) the other will also be possible (to exist) and vice-versa, if one is impossible (to exist), the other shall also be impossible (to

exist).

Thus Allah, Who created man in the first instance would also be Powerful to create him once again, since the second creation is not only possible but, assuming that the words 'difficult' and 'simple' convey their meanings in the Holy Presence of Allah also, the re-creation appears to be simpler. Since, in the first creation, neither was experience at work, nor did a model-plan exist,

whereas in the re-creation, both experience and a model-plan exist[4].

In any event, from the human point of view, the re-creation must be simpler than the creation

of man at the first instance, although, with respect to Allah, both are easy and similar.

The Holy Qur'an, for the purpose of proving the Power of Allah for bringing man to life after death, refers to the coming to life of the earth and the growth of plants, and considers the Resurrection of men similar to the coming to life of the earth which takes place every year in spring. How is it that every year man himself witnesses the leaves of trees falling off every autumn and then decay and turn to earth, but in the next spring, new leaves clothe the plants and the earth becomes fresh and green, and in spite of all this, when his coming to life after death is propounded, he considers it to be impossible and out of the ordinary and insists on denying it.

The Holy Qur'an says: And Allah is He Who sends the winds so they raise a cloud, then We drive it on to a dead country and therewith We give life to the earth after its death. Even so is the Resurrection?[5]

Therefore the same Allah, Who every year, brings to life and makes green the dead earth, would be Powerful to create man again, after death. Because, every year, Allah, by the renewed growth of plants, in reality makes the dead earth a part of the bodies of plants and trees and converts it into living plant cells.

In addition to this, if we focus our attention upon the start of the creation of life on the earth, we shall conclude that in the beginning, no living thing existed on the earth and after the start of life, these plants were the ones that appeared on the earth. In other words, for the first time, the plant life manifested itself on the earth. An appearance and manifestation, the wonderful and astonishing secrets of which remain a mystery to the scholars even today. However, this point is certain that, in any event, this plant life has appeared from this very dead earth

Creation of the Embryo

Another example, which the Holy Qur'an presents, for the purpose of proving and bringing into the focus of man, the boundless Divine Powers and uses it to prove the Power of Allah in

bringing man to life again after death, is the creation of the embryo. It states if you have doubt and uncertainty in the possibility of Resurrection - reflect upon how we created you from a sperm-drop. Then we brought out this sperm-drop as an 'alaqah' (blood clot). After that we made it grow in the womb and finally in the form of a complete human, we gave him birth by means of his mother.

Was he not a (mere) drop of sperm emitted? Then he was a clot of blood, then He Shaped (him) and fashioned (him). Then He made of him of two kinds, the male and female. Is not he able to bring the dead to life?[6]

The above verse and so do the other verses which deal with resurrection, consider it to be a natural phenomenon and similar to the creation of sperm-drop and the birth of a child or giving of life to the plants and making them grow and as a result regards Resurrection to be like the other Divine Acts, whereas, the deniers of Resurrection view it as a strange, new and an impossible phenomenon, the pattern of which cannot be found in Nature.

As a result, it is possible to state that fundamentally, it is necessary to balance our view on Resurrection and view it through the looking glass of the Qur'anic verses. In such a case, not only shall we not consider Resurrection to be impossible, but on the other hand comprehend it .to be necessary and compulsory, upon which we shall dwell in the chapters to follow

Transformation of the Energies

We usually imagine that energies after use get exhausted and destroyed. For e.g., we imagine the solar energy after being radiated towards the earth and the other planets gets destroyed.

Whereas today, science has proved that energy does not get destroyed but simply gets transformed into another form and manifests itself in a different form of energy. In other words, the energy continues to exist in new conditions and in a new environment.

The Holy Qur'an, in proving the possibility of Resurrection makes use of this fact also and states: And he strikes out a likeness of Us and forgets his own creation. Says he: Who will give life to the bones when they are rotten? Say: He will give life to them Who brought them into existence at first, and He is Cognizant of all creation. He Who has made for you the fire (to burn) from the green tree, so that with it you kindle (fire)?[7]

The interpretation, which according to some of the commentators, is appropriate for the above verses and which has been brought to light as a result of recent scientific advancements and

discoveries, is that plants and trees, during the entire span of their lives, regularly absorb the light and heat from the sun and in addition also absorb water and necessary substances from the ground by means of their roots and by the combination of these, generate cellulose, which formats the mass of the trees and the wood of the trees is thus formed. Thus, plants, for the purpose of absorption of vital substances from the ground, must utilize the heat and light of the sun as an active energy. It is due to the utilization of this light and heat that trees grow and develop and accumulate a great deal of energy of the sun within themselves and transform it into wood. Now, observe the burning of wood, as to how the transformed energy of the sun within it, after burning once again turns into heat and light. According to the verses of the Holy Qur'an, Resurrection of man is just this. And so, in these verses, reference is made at the onset to the first creation of man and then the Resurrection and the re-creation of energies is pointed out. Another interesting point that exists in the verse is that, usually we consider dried wood to be more capable and more suitable for burning, whereas in the verse, reference has been made to a green tree. Perhaps, the reason for it is that the greenness of the trees and their leaves is a pre-requisite for the taking in of the heat and light of the sun. In simpler words, a living tree is one, which can transform the energy from the sun into wood and store it within itself whereas a dried tree does not have such a capability. And because of this the verse says: That Allah who has made for you the fire (to burn) from the green tree, has the Power to create man once again after death?^[8] In short, one of the things to which the Holy Qur'an has made reference to, in order to establish the possibility and the necessity of Resurrection of men is the resurrection of energy or .transformation of energy under different conditions

Motives for Denying Resurrection

As we have observed, the polytheists and the deniers of Resurrection had no philosophical proofs, experimental witnesses or convincing evidences to support their claim. Their arguments always centered on, either, the coming to life of decayed and destroyed bones being strange and peculiar, or something to that effect. And because of this, the Holy Qur'an does not enter into answering their scientific doubts and misgivings, because fundamentally, scientific doubts and misgivings do not exist. In fact, in Surah-e-Qiyamah after mentioning the talks of the deniers, it refers to their motives.

Their motives for denying Resurrection were promiscuity, libertinism and in one sentence, escape from the burden of commitment and responsibility. Now, the acceptance of Resurrection obligates the acceptance of commitment and responsibility, which some people do not approve of and instead are of the belief that as much as possible, one should be engrossed in seeking success and pleasure. This is the thing, which in the first stage denies the belief in Allah and the Resurrection. Regarding this, the Holy Qur'an says: Does man think that we shall not gather his bones? Yea! We are able to make complete his very fingertips. Nay, man desires to deny what is before him?[9]

Of course, the idolaters and the deniers of Resurrection also had and have another argument, which is nothing except idle and nonsensical talk. That is, there does not exist any rational, philosophical, logical or scientific reasoning in their argument. They would say that belief in Resurrection is only a myth of the ancestors.

Now since all the Divine religions persisted in the belief in God and Resurrection and since times immemorial, these two beliefs have been present among the religious people and were considered to be among the fundamentals of religion, the idolaters and the deniers, instead of presenting evidence to prove these beliefs as incorrect, they would just claim that these beliefs are nothing except historical legends and myths.

The Holy Qur'an mentions their talks as follows: And those who disbelieve say: When we have become dust like our fathers, shall we verily be brought forth (again). Indeed we had been promised this, we and our fathers before; these are naught but fables of the ancients?[10]

Any sensible person shall see that, such idle talk does not merit any answer or response, because the historical background of a theory does not signify its baselessness, and a realist and a just person should accept or reject a matter on the basis of proof and evidence and not on the basis of the matter being antiquated or new.

And so, the Holy Qur'an does not get itself involved in answering these arguments, but on the other hand, reasons out and presents evidence to prove Resurrection as not only possible, but also necessary and these reasoning are so strong and clarifying that should any person reflect appropriately upon them, not only would he notice that the occurrence of Resurrection is very ably proved but all the other doubts and misgivings would also appear to have been cleared.

Notes:

[1] Ya Sin (36):81

[2] Isra (17):51

[3] YaSin (36):78-79

[4]It is apparent that, these words or terminologies, possess meanings, with respect to us, the finite creations and humans but are devoid of any meaning or concept with respect to Allah, the Infinite. Hazrat Ali (p) referring to this fact that Allah was not in need of any reflection or experience for creating his creations says :Allah created the things and the creations and started without reflecting or investigating or seeking benefit from experience? Nahjul Balaghah,

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[5] Fatir (35):9

[6] Qiyamat (75):37-40

[7] YaSin (36):78-80

[8] Extract from Payam-e-Quran, Vol. 5, Pg. 194

[9] Qiyamat (75):3-5

[10] Naml (27):67-68