

BELIEF IN THE LAST DAY

God Almighty proclaims:

﴿تَبَارَكَ الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ الْمُلْكُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ۝ الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفُورُ ۝﴾ الملوك: ١ - ٢

(Translation of meaning) [“Blessed is He in whose hand is the Sovereignty, and He is able to do all things. Who hath created life and death that He may try you, which of you is best in conduct; and He is the Mighty, the Forgiving” (Al-Mulk: 1-2)].

Belief in the Last Day [Akhirah] is an essential article of a Muslim’s faith. Anybody, who denies it ceases to be a believer. Allah has prescribed the belief in the Day of Judgment as a precondition for the faith of all righteous and blissful men. Allah says: ﴿وَبِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ ۝﴾ البقرة: ٤ (Translation of meaning)

“And they [Muslims] believe in the Last Day” (Al-Baqarah: 4). Belief in the Last Day means that one day this material world will come to an end, when, all living creatures will die. Then by the command of Allah, all human beings will be resurrected and arrayed before their Lord Creator for a reckoning of their deeds. Those, who had lived piously in the material world and performed good deeds will please and satisfy their Lord God, who will reward them with a place in His Garden where they will enjoy His bounties forever. But those who had defied His commands and lived a life of vice and sin will earn His displeasure and wrath and be punished. Their destination will be the Hell where they will be subjected to eternal torture. These tenets, according to the holy Quran, belong to the realm of *Ghaib* [unseen or the occult]. We Muslims are enjoined to believe in the Unseen. Because we in this material world cannot fathom such ideas with our senses the so-called rationalists have denied the possibility of the Last Day. However, even on rational grounds the belief in the Last Day is unavoidable and inexorable.

Does it sound rational that men who are endowed with power and capacity be divested of their accountability for their actions and deeds? Is it conceivable that those who live piously and virtuously, perform good deeds, and work for the well-being of their fellow-beings be not rewarded for their good deeds? Is it rational that people who indulge in wrongdoing, spread evil and corruption, and transgress the rights of their fellow-beings and oppress them be not punished for

their misdeeds? The affirmation of the Last Day is not irrational but its denial is. Modern science has evolved to the point where it admits the finity of this world and its eventual doom. If scientists can create new creatures from the stem cells then why not that Supreme Force which created the mankind out of nothing in the first instance, bring them back to life once again? If modern means of intelligence can uncover the hidden facts and mysteries then why not the Creator of the Universe gather them before Him for a reckoning and giving them their books of accounts?

The point is not that the belief in the Last Day is rationally untenable but that it is the wrong-doers who desire to lead a licentious life free from all moral restraints. They do not want any restrictions on the pursuit of their wayward desires. That is why it has been declared in the holy Quran:

﴿أَيَحْسَبُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنْ نَجْمَعَ عِظَامَهُ﴾ ﴿٢﴾ ﴿بَلَىٰ قَدَرِينَ عَلَىٰ أَنْ تُسْوَىٰ بِنَانِهِ﴾ ﴿٤﴾ ﴿بَلْ يُرِيدُ الْإِنْسَانُ لِيَفْجُرَ أَمَامَهُ﴾ ﴿٥﴾ ﴿يَسْتَأْذِنُ بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ﴾ ﴿٦﴾ ﴿أَيَّانَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ﴾ ﴿٦﴾ ﴿الْقِيَامَةُ: ٣ - ٦﴾

(Translation of meaning) [*“Does man suppose that We cannot put his bones together again? Hark! We are capable of remaking his whole structure. But man aspires to carry on his wrong-doing. He queries: When is the Day of Rising?”* (Al-Qiyamah: 3-6)].

The belief in the Day of Judgment makes man responsible and infuses in him a sense of accountability. It exhorts him to perform good deeds and avoid the evil ones. It restrains man from misusing his power and potential and redirects his energies for the struggle for the sake of noble objectives. Further, the belief in the Last Day provides a guarantee for world peace and security and blocks the inroads of evil and corruption whether on the level of an individual or a society or the country. It gives a meaning and purpose to human life. It places the whole order of the universe in a true perspective: This universe has not been created by some careless player as his plaything. It is but an arena for performance of good deeds for the ultimate pleasure of our Creator. In this perspective every man lives a life of piety and virtue, pays due regard to the rights of other fellow-beings, and dedicates himself to the service of the mankind. Furthermore, he wants to excel in this field to obtain the pleasure and satisfaction of his Creator on the Day of Reckoning. The holy Quran and the Tradition of the holy Prophet contain a comprehensive description of the various stages and varying phenomena of the Last Day. Since we as human beings are incapable of comprehending these transcendental phenomena by our senses we must believe faithfully in the totality of what has been described in the holy Quran and the Tradition of the Prophet (*sallAllahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*).

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