

(Note: Wherever the word “you” or “your” is singular and refers to one human being, it is printed with an italic y, as in: you. Wherever such a word refers to God, the letter y is printed in capital, as in: You.)

For Fast 28 – September 8

Topic: (T) *Taqdir* (Predestination)

Note: This is a topic which philosophers, thinkers, scholars, theologians, scientists, etc have been discussing for thousands of years. I don't think I will be able to resolve in the next 2 or 3 pages!

Are a person's actions predestined and willed by God? Since God already knows what a person will do, does it mean his actions are not done by his own choice? It is not easy to resolve this, but according to the Quran a person should always bear in mind that God allows him to choose his course of action.

- “And the *judging* on that day will be just; so as for those whose good deeds are heavy, they are the successful. And as for those whose good deeds are light, those are they who ruined their souls because they disbelieved in Our messages.” — 7:8-9

How can God *judge* people for their deeds if He Himself has destined them to commit them without any choice on their part? This judgment is mentioned in the Quran a very large number of times.

- “And certainly you will be questioned as to what you did.” — 16:93
- “... he (the Prophet) is responsible for the duty imposed on him, and you are *responsible for the duty imposed on you*. And if you obey him, you go aright.” — 24:54
- “...that Allah may repay each soul what it has earned. Surely Allah is Swift in reckoning.” — 14:51

Being *questioned* about your deeds, bearing *responsibility* for your duty, and being *repaid* by God for what you have *earned* — none of this would arise if a person was merely acting out his/her destiny.

- “And He it is Who accepts *repentance* from His servants and pardons evil deeds, and He knows what you do.” — 42:25
- “And surely I am Forgiving toward him who *repents* and believes and does good, then walks aright.” — 20:82

Repentance means that you change your wrong, old ways and adopt good ones. The choice of repenting or not is being offered, which you take or not.

- “The Truth is from your Lord; *so whoever wishes*, let him believe, *and whoever wishes*, let him disbelieve.” — 18:29
- “...that no bearer of burden bears another's burden, and that man can have nothing

but what he strives for, and that his striving will soon be seen, then he will be rewarded for it with the fullest reward” — 53:38-41

You are responsible for discharging the burden of duty placed on you. Only by striving will you achieve your goal, not by relying on fate or destiny.

- “The idolaters say: If Allah pleased we would not have set up partners (with Him) nor our fathers, nor would we have made anything unlawful (through superstition). Thus did those before them reject (the truth) until they tasted Our punishment. Say: Have you any knowledge so you would bring it forth to us? You only follow a conjecture and you only tell lies. Say: Then Allah’s is the conclusive argument; so if He had pleased, He would have guided you all.” — 6:148-149

The idolaters asserted that their idol-worship and evil practices were God’s will; otherwise God would have stopped them. The reply to their assertion is that Allah reveals His will through His chosen messengers, so bring forth any Divine revelation that you possess sanctioning idolatry. Furthermore, Allah’s pleasure is that everyone should walk in the right path, but people are never compelled by Him to accept the right way, much less could they be compelled to follow the wrong course. Man was created with a will free within certain limits to act as he pleases.

- “Allah does not impose on any soul a duty beyond its ability. To its benefit is what it earns (of good), and to its detriment is what it works (of evil). Our Lord, do not punish us if we forget or make a mistake. ...” — 2:285

Allah imposes on a soul a duty which is to the extent of its ability. If it carries it out, it is to its advantage, if it fails to do so, it is to its harm. It is clear from this that He cannot make it impossible for someone to do good by making it his destiny to do wrong.

The taqdir mentioned in the Quran refers to the unavoidable laws of nature which various things are subject to, and which impose limitations on them:

- “and the sun moves on to its destination. That is the ordinance (*taqdir*) of the Mighty, the Knower.” — 36:38
- “(God is He) Who created everything, then ordained for it a measure (*taqdir*).” — 25:2
- “Surely We have created everything according to a measure (*qadar*).” — 54:49
- “Glorify the name of your Lord, the Most High! Who creates, then makes complete, and Who measures, then guides” — 87:1-3

This speaks of four Divine acts: *creation, completion, measuring, and guiding*. Man is *created* from a very humble and small beginning. Then he develops gradually to *complete* human form. Then a measure is set as to how far he can progress. That measure or limit is his *taqdir*. Then he is given guidance, and it is up to him to develop himself to the fullest measure.
