

Creed (Aqeeda) Must Be Decisive

The Creed (AQEEDA) is that which the heart or inner consciousness accepts and believes in completely and confidently. It originates from the Arabic verb (AQADA): meaning to bind in a knot. "ALLAH DOES NOT BLAME YOU FOR VAIN TALK IN YOUR FAITH BUT HE CENSURES YOU FOR WHAT YOU HAVE BOUND YOUR OATH ON". The source of belief (E' TEQAD) or to have Aqeeda is the affirmation of the heart with the mind.

"THE ARABS SAID WE BELIEVE, SAY, NO YOU DID NOT BELIEVE BUT YOU SURRENDERED (BECAME MUSLIMS), AND FAITH HAS YET TO ENTER YOUR HEARTS".

"YOU WOULD NOT FIND PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE IN ALLAH AND IN THE LAST DAY ALLIED TO THE ENEMIES OF ALLAH AND HIS MESSENGER EVEN IF THEY WERE FATHERS, THEIR SONS, THEIR BROTHERS, OR THEIR KINDRED. THOSE ARE WHOM HE INSCRIBED FAITH IN THEIR HEARTS, AND ASSISTED THEM WITH HIS WITH SPIRIT".

During supplication (DO'A), the Prophet (peace be with him) used to say:

"O' Allah affirm the faith and glorify it in our hearts and make us hate disbelief (KUFUR), dissolution (FUSK) and disobedience (ESIYAN)".

The meaning of faith, is the decisive belief which conforms with reality and which is obtained through evidence. The decisive belief is that which has no doubt, an indecisive belief may contain doubt or uncertainty. That it conforms with reality means it does not contradict reality. Belief must be obtained through evidences otherwise it would not yield indecisiveness.

There are two kinds of evidence for belief.

1. The intellectual evidence. An intellectual evidence can be arrived at through the senses eg. belief in Allah. Allah says, the meaning of which:

"VERILY IN THE CREATION OF THE HEAVENS AND EARTH, THE DIFFERING NIGHT AND DAY, THE FLOATING SHIPS IN THE SEA BRINGING BENEFIT TO PEOPLE, AND WHAT WATER ALLAH SENDS DOWN FROM THE SKY BRINGING LIFE TO EARTH AFTER DROUGHT. AND CREATING ALL KINDS OF ANIMALS. THE DIRECTING OF WINDS AND THE CLOUDS BETWEEN THE SKY AND EARTH ARE ALL SIGNS FOR THOSE WHO HAVE INTELLECT.

2. A transformative evidence. A transformative evidence is one which can not be arrived at through the senses eg. Belief in the angels. The mind cannot be used to prove the existence of angels. However, the intellect can establish belief in the existence of Allah and that the Quran is the speech of Allah. Therefore when Quran tells us of the existence of angels this is then a transformative evidence, ie. it is based on an intellectually derived source, namely, the Quran.

"AND WHEN WE SAID TO THE ANGELS PROSTRATE TO ADAM AND THEY SO DID"

"AND WE HAVE SET NONE BUT ANGELS AS GUARDIANS OF THE FIRE".

When once complete and decisive belief conforms with the intellectual approval of the mind, one is said to have belief (AQEEDA).

The Islamic Aqeeda is the belief in Allah, His angels, His holy books, His messengers, the Last Day, and fate and destiny, the good and bad of which are decided by Allah S.W.T.

"IT IS NOT RIGHTEOUSNESS THAT YOU TURN YOUR FACES TOWARDS EAST OR WEST, BUT IT RIGHTEOUSNESS TO BELIEVE IN GOD, AND THE LAST DAY, AND THE ANGELS, AND THE BOOK, AND THE MESSENGERS".

Also from the Hadith of Jibreel peace be with him, narrated by Omar, may (Allah be pleased with him): Jibreel asked "Tell me what is belief",

the Messenger replied, "To believe in Allah, His angels, His scriptures, His Messengers, the Last Day and Faith and Destiny whether good or bad".

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN

CREED& DIVINE LAW

The legislative rule (HOKM SHARAI) is defined as the speech of the legislator in connection with the actions of the individuals through requisition (EQ'TEDAA), option (TAKHYEER), or stipulation (WAD'A). Actions like buying and selling, leasing, hiring, prayer and upholding Punishments are all legislative rules.

On the other hand, the unity of God, the belief in Messengers, the infallibility of the prophets, and the belief that the Quran is from Allah, all fall the sphere of Aqeeda.

The Aqeeda is a doctrine which must be taken decisively in conformation with reality through definite evidences. The legislative rules are connected with the conviction that this Aqeeda is correct in presenting man with solutions to his problems. It is thus permissible to

accept indefinite evidences in order to carry out an action, after all, it is the action which is in question not the belief.

The scholars have called the thought which deal with beliefs as Basics (USOOL) and those which deal with actions as Branches (FOROO'A). It is thus compulsory to know the beliefs of one's religion as they are the most necessary ingredients of religion.

"KNOW THAT THERE IS NO GOD EXCEPT ALLAH

This is a request in the singular form indicating that it is a duty for every individual (FARD AYN) to learn his beliefs through confirmed evidences. But the knowledge of legislative rules which are involved with actions, is considered a duty of sufficiency (FARD KEFAYA). It is sufficient for the scholars (MUJTAHEDEEN) to be able to extract these legislative rules from the relevant texts and for an imitator to follow, whether follower or a commoner. He maybe ask to learn as well as act, or to learn and teach others, or merely for knowledge.

"WE HAVE NOT SENT BEFORE THEE BUT MEN WHOM WE REVEAL TO THEM. SO ASK THE PEOPLE OF KNOWLEDGE IF YOU KNOW NO NOT."

Here, Allah Exalted, asked those without knowledge to seek it from the knowledgeable. It is also permitted for the follower to switch from an opinion of one scholar to another - according to the strength of evidence. This, however, is not permitted in matters of belief (Aqeeda). Allah S.W.T dispraises those who follow blindly in the footsteps of their forefathers.

"AND WHEN ABRAHAM SAID TO HIS FATHER AND HIS TRIBE: WHAT ARE THESE IDOLS YOU ARE ADDICTED TO? THEY SAID: WE FOUND OUR FATHERS WORSHIPPING THEM".

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN KNOWLEDGE

AND CONJECTURE (THANN)

THANN has been translated to mean conjecture, guess, probability and suspicion. It is the opposite of certainty but stronger than possibility. Conjecture leads to favouring either inclination - or disbelief - with the possibility of the other extreme still remaining. While conjecture (THANN) indicates inclination to one of the possibilities over all the others. That is why it is called (GHALABAT-ETHANN). It is well known that all matters which require Ijtehad are based (GHALABAT-ETHANN) on the highest degree of probability. In other words, every Mujtahed

acknowledges the possibility of error in his Ijtehad. Ijtehad is defined as "the exertion of utmost ability by the Mujtahid in arriving at a legislative rule (HOKM SHARAI)".

Doubt (SHAKK) indicates equal inclination to believe either possibility without favouring neither.

Furthermore, The word Thann (conjecture) does not contain an opposite meaning like for example the ward (KOR'A) which refers to the leading and the purity cycle in the monthly period of a woman. Also it is a common term as is the word (AYN) which means, a spy, or a spring.

Therefore from the view point of the conjecture, the legislative are of two parts:

- One which relates to the authenticity of text, thus definite (QUATEY- ETHUBUT) or not definite in their authenticity (THANNEY- ETHUBUT).

- The other relates to their understanding or significance, thus definite (QUATEY- EDDALALA) or not definite in their significance (THANNEY-EDDALALA).

The definite in its significance, is the text which can only convey one, and only one, meaning. Thus THANN (conjecture or probability) is two fold, first from the viewpoint of understanding and second due to its authenticity of text. Take for example the verses:

"AND THE THIEF (MAN OR WOMAN) SEVER THEIR HAND".

As well as being authentic, the verse is definite in its meaning, i.e. to cut the hand of each man or woman who steal.

"AND ALLAH PERMITTED SELLING AND FORBADE USURY (RIBA)".

This verse also has one definite meaning.

The similarity or duality in the meanings is mentioned in the Quranic verse:

"SOME VERSES OF IT ARE FIXED, THEY ARE THE BASIS OF THE BOOK, BUT OTHERS ARE SIMILAR"

i.e. in meaning. Some of these dualities occur in the verse:

"AND LET THE DIVORCEES AWAIT THREE DAYS' (KORO'A). The word (KORO'A) used here could mean the bleeding or the purity cycle. Therefore the verse is indefinite in its understanding.

Also in the verse: "UNLESS THEY (THE WOMEN) OR HE WHO HOLDS THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE MARRIAGE GIVE PARDON ". Here the responsibility may be with the husband or the guardian of the bride, thus the verse portrays more than one meaning and is indefinite in its understanding.

KNOWLEDGE (ELM)

Knowledge is the opposite of ignorance and it leads to certainty i.e. QUATEY as opposed to THANN. Allah (SWT) says: "KNOW THAT THERE IS NO GOD BUT ALLAH". Some derivatives of the word (Elm) are used in Arabic to describe the knowledge of Allah (SWT):

Aleem -"Hearer and most knowledgeable"

A'lem -"The knowing of present and future"

Allam -"The all knowing of the unknown"

So the word knowledge (Elm) has been used to describe the knowledge of Allah which has to be certain and Infallible.

In the verse of Quran where THANN (probability) is used to convey certain knowledge, the key to understanding that the probability has now become certainty is the statement to which it is

connected. For example Allah (SWT) says, "THOSE WHO SUSPECT THEY ARE MEETING, THEIR LORD". Here the word THANN (think) is connected to the statement 'Meeting their lord'. Therefore it increases the level of THANN (probability) to the level of certainty. Because meeting their lord is a certainty, hence Thann becomes definite.

ALLAH BLAMES BELIEVING

IN CONJECTURE

Allah SWT in the Quran defames those who follow conjecture in more than one verse. It must be noted that the context in all these verses is common to the subject of Aqeeda.

1)

“IT IS NOT BUT NAMES YOU AND YOUR FOREFATHERS USED FOR WHICH ALLAH HAS NOT SENT AUTHORITY. THEY FOLLOW NOTHING BUT CONJECTURE AND WHAT THEIR SOULS DESIRE EVEN THOUGH THERE HAVE ALREADY COME TO THEM GUIDANCE”. [Al-Najm: 23]

2)

“THOSE WHO BELIEVE NOT IN THE HEREAFTER, NAME THE ANGELS WITH FEMALE NAMES. BUT THEY HAVE NO KNOWLEDGE THEREIN. THEY FOLLOW NOTHING BUT CONJECTURE; AND CONJECTURE AVAILS NOTHING AGAINST THE TRUTH” [Al-Najm: 27-28]

3)

"BUT MOST OF THEM FOLLOW NOTHING BUT CONJECTURE TRULY CONJECTURE CAN BE OF NO AVAIL'. [Yunos: 36.]

4)

“VERILY THOSE WHO DISPUTED ABOUT HIM WERE SUSPECIOUS AND WITH NO CERTAIN KNOWLEDGE, BUT ONLY CONJECTURE TO FOLLOW, FOR AS SURELY THEY KILLED HIM NOT” [Al-Nisa'a: 157]

5)

“WERE YOU TO FOLLOW MOST OF THOSE ON EARTH, THEY WOULD LEAD YOU AWAY FROM THE PATH OF GOD. THEY DO NOTHING BUT GUESS”.

[Al-An'am: 116]

6)

'LIKEWISE DISBELIEVED THE ONES BEFORE THEM UNTIL THEY HAD A TASTE OF OUR SEVERITY, SAY: HAVE YOU ANY KNOWLEDGE (IRREFUTABLE) TO SHOW TO US. YOU FOLLOW NOTHING BUT CONJECTURE, AND YOU DO NOTHING BUT GUESS'. [Al-Anaam: 148]

7)

“BEHOLD, VERILY TO GOD BELONGS ALL CREATURES IN THE HEAVENS AND ON EARTH. AND WHAT PARTNERS DO THEY FOLLOW OTHER THAN ALLAH. THEY FOLLOW NOTHING BUT CONJECTURE AND THEY DO NOTHING BUT GUESS”. [Yunos: 66.]

8)

"NOT WITHOUT PURPOSE WE CREATED HEAVEN AND EARTH AND ALL BETWEEN. THAT WERE THE CONJECTURE OF THE UNBELIEVERS. BUT WOE TO THE UNBELIEVERS FROM A BLAZING FIRE'. [Ssad: 27]

9)

"AND WHEN IT WAS SAID THAT THE PROMISE OF GOD WAS TRUE, AND THAT THE HOUR WAS NOT DOUBTFUL, YOU SAID WE DO NOT KNOW OF THE HOUR: WE DEEM IT NOT BUT A CONJECTURE AND WE HAVE NO FIRM ASSURANCE'.

[Al-Jatheya: 32]

10)

"AND YOU DID NOT SEEK TO HIDE YOURSELVES, LEST YOUR HEARING, YOUR SIGHT, AND YOUR SKIN BEAR WITNESS AGAINST YOU. BUT YOU THOUGHT THAT GOD KNEW NOT MANY OF THE THINGS THAT YOU DID. SUCH WAS THE CONJECTURE THAT YOU ENTERTAINED WITH YOUR LORD, ONE WHICH BOUGHT YOU TO DESTRUCTION, AND YOU HAVE BECOME LOOSER"

[Fusselat 22 23]

11)

"AND THEY CAME TO THINK AS YOU THOUGHT, THAT GOD WOULD NOT RAISE UP ANYONE". [Al-Jinn 7]

12)

"AND THERE ARE AMONGST THEM ILLITERATE WHO KNOW NOT OF THE BOOK BUT DESIRES, AND THEY DO NOTHING BUT CONJECTURE"

[Al-Baquara:78]

These verses are very clear in censuring those who follow conjecture, probability and guess in Aqeeda without having a definite proof or evidence. If we trace the words proof "SULTAN" and warrant "BURHAN", we will see that they refer to decisive evidences.

Allah SWT said, the meaning of which:

"THEY SAY GOD HAS BEGOTTEN A SON! GLORY BE TO HIM. HE IS SELF SUFFICIENT. HIS ARE ALL THINGS IN THE HEAVENS AND ON EARTH. NO PROOF (SULTAN) HAVE YOU FOR THIS. DO YOU SAY ABOUT GOD WHAT YOU KNOW NOT?'

"HE WHO WORSHIPS WITH GOD A PARTNER HE HAS NO PROOF OF, HIS RECKONING WILL BE WITH HIS LORD. TRUELY THE UNBELIEVERS WILL NOT PROSPER OR HAVE THEY DECIDED TO PUT GOD BESIDE HIM. SAY BRING YOUR PROOF"

"DO YOU TAKE ANOTHER GOD WITH ALLAH? SAY TO THEM BRING YOUR PROOF IF YOU WERE TELLING THE TRUTH"

"AND WE HAVE SENT MOSES WITH OUR VERSES AND A CLEAR PROOF"

"AND WE TOOK FROM EVERY NATION A WITNESS AND SAID: BRING YOUR PROOF.

THEN THEY KNEW THAT THE TRUTH IS WITH ALLAH, AND THEY LOST ALL THAT THEY FABRICATED".

"AND THEY SAID, NO ONE WILL ENTER PARADISE EXCEPT THE JEWS AND THE CHRISTAINS. SUCH WAS THEIR DESIRE. SAY BRING YOUR PROOF IF YOU ARE REALY TRUTHFUL".

"THOSE WHO ARGUE AGAINST THE SIGNS OF GOD WITHOUT HAVING A PROOF. THEY HAVE PRIDE IN THEIR CHESTS THEY WILL NEVER SATISFY".

The condition for the proof (SULTAN) in all the above verses stipulates that it must be decisive, that is to say, it must be a definite and irrefutable evidence. Thus when we say that Aqeeda is the decisive which agrees with the reality and through evidence, we mean an irrefutable one.

The first verse: "IT IS NONE BUT NAMES YOU AND YOUR FOREFATHERS USED" is talking about Aqeeda. The unbelievers claimed that those idols and the angels are daughters of God which they worshipped as intercessors between them and God, while at the same time they slaughtered their new-born females!

The verse exclaims "...DO YOU HAVE THE MALE AND TO HIM (GOD) IS THE FEMALE"? The whole verse is:

"...HAVE YOU SEEN THE LAT AND UZZA, (NAMES OF IDOLS), AND MUNAT THE THIRD ONE DO YOU HAVE THE MALE AND TO HIM (GOD) IS THE FEMALE ? THAT IS THEN AN UNFAIR DEAL IT IS NONE BUT NAMES YOU AND YOUR FATHERS USED..."

The second verse: "THOSE WHO NOT IN THE, NAME THE ANGELS WITH FEMALE NAME" is also talking about Aqeeda. It is dispraising the unbelievers for following conjecture in their claim about the identity of the angels for which they have no evidence.

In the third verse, Allah (SWT) is saying to the pagans, the meaning of which:

"SAY, ARE THERE AMONGST YOUR PARTNERS ONE WHO GUIDES TO THE TRUTH. SAY, ALLAH GUIDES TO THE TRUTH. SO IS THE ONE WHO GUIDES TO THE TRUTH FIT TO BE FOLLOWED OR HE WHO GUIDDES NOT UNLESS GUIDED. HOW CAN YOU SO JUDGE? BUT MOST OF THEM FOLLOW NOTHING BUT CONJECTURE AND CONJECTURE CAN BE OF NO AVAIL".

The subject of conjecture (THANN) here is Aqeeda, namely, seeking guidance in Worship.

The fourth verse "VERILY THOSE WHO DISPUTED ABOUT HIM ARE SUSPECIOUS" is describing the state of uncertainty that surrounded the Jews when they argued about the prophet Isa (Jesus) peace be with him. Some of them said: "He should not be killed he is a god", some said: "If this is Isa where is our comrade?" and "If this is our comrade, where is Isa?". Others said: "The face is Isa's and the body is our comrade's", and it was said "He was raised to the heaven'. All these are speculations about the belief in Isa, clearly the verse is addressing the question of Aqeeda. In the fifth verse, the subject is also about Aqeeda;

"WERE YOU TO FOLLOW MOST OF THOSE ON EARTH, THEY WOULD LEAD YOU AWAY FROM THE PATH OF GOD". To be away from the path of God is to believe in something other than Islam. The verse starts: "AND THE WORD OF YOUR LORD F'OUND ITS FULFILMENT IN TRUTH AND IN JUSTICE, NO ONE CAN CHANGE HIS WORDS FOR HE IS THE ALL HEARING THE ALL KNOWING. AND WERE YOU TO FOLLOW MOST OF THOSE ON EARTH, THEY WOULD LEAD YOU AWAY FROM THE PATH OF GOD. THEY FOLLOW NOTHING BUT CONJECTURE, AND THEY DO NOTHING BUT LIE, VERILY GOD IS MOST AWARE OF THOSE WHO ARE ASTRAY AND THOSE WHO ARE GUIDED".

The sixth verse discusses the pagans claim that God's will determined their disbelief and ignorance. Allah, in his revelation to His prophet, questions them for an evidence for this accusation announcing that they follow nothing but their own suspicion and conjecture.

"THOSE POLYTHEISTS WILL SAY: IF ALLAH WISHED WE AND OUR FATHERS WOULD NOT HAVE DISBELIEVED, NOR PROHIBITED ANYTMNG. LIKEWISE DISBELIEVED THE ONES BEFORE THEM UNTL THEY HAD A TASTE OF OUR

SEVERITY. SAY: HAVE YOU ANY KNOWLEDGE (IRREFUTABLE) TO SHOW TO US. YOU FOLLOW NOTHING BUT CONJECTURE AND YOU DO NOTHING BUT GUESS”.

Similarly, in all the thirteen verses, the subject of discussion is limited to the question of Aqeeda. They all conclude with disgracing or censuring those who determine their faith upon conjecture, guess, or uncertainty:

“THEY DO NOTHING BUT GUESS”, “AND YOU BECAME LOOSERS”, “THEY WOULD GUIDE AWAY FROM GOD’S PATH”, “DO YOU SAY ABOUT GOT WHAT YOU HAVE NO KNOWLEDGE OF”... and so on. This can only lead to one conclusion: faith must be based on confirmed knowledge and definite evidence; anything other than that is haram and must be rejected.

Furthermore, Allah dispraises those who copy others in matters of faith (Aqeeda) without an evidence. The two words proof (SULTAN) and proof (BURHAN) were used to emphasis and stress the necessity of definite decisive evidence so that Aqeeda may be settled in the heart permanently. The indefinite evidence does not produce certainty "YOU HAVE NO KNOWLEDGE OF"...and so this can not yield belief (Etequad).

It is well known that the scholar who succeeds in his Ijtehad is credited with two rewards, and if he is mistaken, he receives only one. How then can we say that a Mujtahed receives a reward if he reaches the wrong conclusion about a matter of faith? Surely, the punishment for putting Aqeeda in the position of research is a grave and severe one to say the least.

When we stipulate that Aqeeda must be taken through irrefutable evidence (DALIL QUATEY), we are in fact protecting Aqeeda and saving it from doubt, conjecture, contradiction, misinterpretation and from the miscalculations of Mujtahdeen.

It is appropriate at the end of our article to mention that this opinion is held by many pronounced scholars of Fiqh and Hadith;

Some of these scholars are:

Imam -A1-Ezz Ben Abdu-Salam, Imam Kurafi, Imam Nawawi, Imam Ghazali, Imam Sarakhasi, Imam Baghdadi, Ibn Burhan, Ibn Abdul-Berr, Ibn Hajar Ala'squalany, and more recently Imam Kasemi and the Martyr Sayyed Qutb.

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