

Aqeedah Corner

The Islamic Aqeedah views the life in a remarkably comprehensive way. It leaves no room for man to speculate about such fundamental issues as creations and sustenance. Indeed the signs of Allah (swt) are in abundance for those who think. It is our intention that the issue of sustenance (Rizq) be discussed in the following two ways:

1. Observing the "Status Quo" followed by a rationale that links the subject under discussion i.e., sustenance to the reality.
2. In the light of the Quran.

The Rational View:

Observing our environment, we cannot help noticing an eco system that remarkably sets up an impeccable balance on earth. No less obvious is the fact that our life cycle is one on dependence. Although what we observe around us suggests that, we along with other life forms are partners in a cyclic but interdependent relationship, what is more important (and often overlooked) is the underlying 'need' that every life form exhibits. Furthermore, our limitations (in time, in space etc.) and the limits of the universe as a whole (refer to Aqeedah Corner issue 4) only point out to the inevitable fact that the universe and all that it contains can only be sustained by an infinite and eternal entity.

The argument can be more simply summarized as; any limited entity cannot be self sustained since that would be analogous to a perpetual motion machine generating infinite energy. That contradicts with our motion of a limited body.

In the Light of the Quran:

O Prophet, say to them, "My Lord gives abundantly to whomever of His servants He will and sparingly to whom He wills. What ever you spend, He replenishes it by other provisions; He is the best of providers." Saba : 39

The word 'Khair ar-Raziqun' used in the Ayah means the best of providers. Allah (swt) has used this word to impress the fact that He is the best provider among all those whom we might think are in any way connected with arranging the provisions. Hence it should be clearly understood that our sustenance depends only upon Him, and we can neither earn more nor get less than what Allah (swt) has determined for each one of us.

"How many are the creatures that carry not their own sustenance? It is Allah (swt) who feeds (both) them and you: For He hears and knows (all things)." Ankabut : 60

None of the birds and animals of the land and sea carries its own provisions, but nonetheless Allah (swt) has planned ways to provide for them through His bounty. Allah (swt) affirms here that He feeds us like the rest of His creations. Like elsewhere in the Quran Allah (swt) brings forth tangible for people to ponder upon but there are some who still deny the truth. People tend to overlook the obvious and indulge themselves in erroneous conclusions, simply because they fail to understand the reality of their own existence and what surrounds them. Such shallow thinkers hold numerous material means and people like themselves responsible for their sustenance. This is the primary reason for the so called 'economical insecurity' that so many among suffer from.

"It is He who shows you His signs and sends down for you sustenance from heaven, but such a one learns lessons who turns to Allah (swt) again and again." Momin : 13

Sustenance here implies the rain for every kind of sustenance that man gets in the world depends ultimately on the rainfall. Allah (swt) presents this one single sign out of His countless signs as if to draw people's attention to the fact; If you only consider and ponder over the scheme of this one thing, you will understand that the concept being presented in the Quran of the administration of the universe is true. This arrangement could exist only if the Creator of this earth and its creatures caused it to exist. Sustaining this universe is therefore a sign of His unlimited power. Hence our belief in Allah (swt) is not complete unless we consciously admit that He is our only sustainer.

"Allah is very kind to His setvants; He gives whatever He pleases to whom He wills; He is the All - powerful, the Almighty." Ash-shura : 19

Here Allah (swt) informs us of His mercy and His complete power over His creation. That is His system of providence is functioning under His own might. No one has the power to change it or take away something forcibly from Him, or prevent Him from providing for somebody. We should only seek from Him and be grateful for whatever He provides us with. Only then will we find true satisfaction within ourselves. Moreover, our efforts to fend for ourselves or our families is not a guarantee for certain amount of provision. It is an obligation upon us to work for our livelihood using the permissible means and not to exceed the limits of Allah (swt) to satisfy our greed for more. But while doing so we must remember that Allah (swt) is the only provider and He provides us with as much as He wills.

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