

Sharhu Babi 'l-Hādi 'Ashar 21 Rabi II 1442 / 07 Dec 2020 1

Justice of God

- Section IV of Sharh Bābi 'l-Hādi 'Ashar deals with 'adl (العدل), the Divine Justice.
- 'Adl is a positive attribute (*as-sifāt ath-thubūtiyyah*), it could easily be described under al-Qādir, the Powerful, who has the ability to do whatever He wants but His actions are all based on justice.
- It is discussed separately in Shi'a theology because it touches upon issues which distinguishes the Shi'a theological school from other groups.

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The issues discussed under section:

1. The concept of rational good & evil (*al-husn wa 'l-qubh al-'aqli*). ✓
2. Humans are free in their actions (*al-jabr wa 'l-ikhtiyār...*). ✓
3. God is free from all evil (*al-qubh*).
4. God never does anything without a purpose.
5. Bestowing grace (*lutf*) is incumbent upon God.
6. Those who suffer in this world deserve recompense for their suffering.

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The Basis of "Good" & "Evil"

- But what is the basis of classifying deeds as good and evil?

1. Ashā'irah: Classifying "good" and "evil" is based on shara' (religious sources). In other words, deeds are **neutral** as far as being good or evil is concerned; and if it is good, its *because* the shara' says so or if it is evil, its *because* the shara' says so.
2. Imāmiyyah & Mu'tazilah: Certain deeds are known to be "good" or "evil" *based* on 'aql (reason) irrespective of religious sources.

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The Basis of "Good" & "Evil" (2)

- Allāmah al-Hilli (para 111):
- "...Reason (al-'aql) of necessity passes judgement that certain actions are good (hasan) such as returning the trust back, being charitable, truthfulness that is beneficial; and that certain actions are evil (qabih) such as injustice and a harmful lie...
- "Moreover, if the rational basis of their goodness or evilness is denied, then they can be denied by the shara', because the act of lying by shara' wouldn't be considered evil."

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The Basis of "Good" & "Evil" (3)

- To prove that the rational basis is a universal & obvious matter, Allāmah al-Hilli (para 111), refers to the atheists of India who also considered certain actions as good or evil without believing in any religious injunction.
- He further says denying the rational basis will ruin the basis of religious criterion of basic good & evil. If lying is not evil by itself, then it means that God & the prophets can lie – so even if they "say zulm is evil," that statement could be a lie!

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The Basis of "Good" & "Evil" (4)

- Fadhil Miqdad puts it as follows:

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    graph LR
      A[act has] --> B[no moral value (e.g., sleepwalking)]
      A --> C[a moral value]
      C --> D['aql disapproves it = evil (qabih)']
      C --> E['aql approves it = good (hasan)']
    
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“Good” & “Evil” is Used in 3 Senses (1)

1. Something that has a quality of perfection (e.g., knowledge is good) or imperfection (e.g., ignorance is bad).
2. Something that is agreeable to nature (e.g., pleasure) or disagreeable to nature (e.g., pain).
3. Good means doing something that deserves praise in this *world* and reward in the *hereafter*; and evil means doing something that deserves blame in this *world* and punishment in the *hereafter*.

no dispute in rational basis of these two

dispute on rational basis of this meaning

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“Good” & “Evil” is Used in 3 Senses (2)

3. “Good” means doing something that deserves praise in this *world* and reward in the *hereafter*; and “evil” means doing something that deserves blame in this *world* and punishment in the *hereafter*.
 - **Ashā'irah:**
there is no rational basis for good or evil in this case.
 - **Shi'a & Mu'tazilah:**
there is rational basis for good or evil in this case – irrespective of the shara' judgement.

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1. The concept of rational good & evil (*al-husn wa 'l-qubh al-'aqli*). ✓
2. Humans are free in their actions (*al-jabr wa 'l-ikhtiyār...*). ✓
3. God is free from all evil (*al-qubh*).
4. God never does anything without a purpose.
5. Bestowing grace (*lutf*) is incumbent upon God.
6. Those who suffer in this world deserve recompense for their suffering.

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3. God is Free from all Evil

- Al-Hilli (para 123) & Fādhil Miqdād (para 124): God cannot do anything evil (*qabih*).
- Evil is done because of three reasons:
 1. One does evil out of ignorance
 2. One does evil for an incentive or need
 - (a) A person may do evil for need of something.
 - (b) Or because he thinks that there is some good in that evil.
- ✓ But Allah is All-Knowing and also free from need, and there is no goodness in evil.

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God is Free from all Evil (2)

3. It will defeat the purpose of *nubuwwat*:

- ✓ If evil is permissible for God, then even lying would be okay. And if that is the case, then there can be no confidence in the messages that come from prophets.
- This is the belief of the Mu'tazila and the Imāmiyyah.
- The Ashā'irah believe God can do evil also because He is Omnipotent.
- They doesn't realize that God is also All-Knowing and Wise, not only Omnipotent.

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God is Free from all Evil (3)

- Why God can't do evil (*qabih*):
 - barrier: He is All-Knowing. ✓
 - incentive:
 - need *
 - goodness in evil *
 - it erodes confidence in divine messages (*nubuwwat*) since lying would be okay.
- So there is a barrier against evil and no incentive to do so, therefore, Allah cannot do evil...

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4. God Acts with Aim & Purpose

- The Mu'tazilah & the Imāmiyyah believe that God's action are based on aim and purpose. They believe so because God's actions are based on knowledge and wisdom, and a wise person doesn't act aimlessly or without a purpose.
- The Ashā'irah believe that God can act without an aim or purpose. They believe that since God is All Powerful, He can do whatever He wants even if it does not have a purpose.

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God Acts with Aim & Purpose (2)

(a) The Qur'an supports our view:

- أَمْ فَحَسِبْتُمْ أَنَّمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ عَبَثًا وَأَنْتُمْ إِيَّانَا لَا تُرْجَعُونَ - Do you think that We have created you for play (i.e., without a purpose) and that you will not return to Us. (23:115)
- وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ - I did not create the jinn and humans except to serve Me. (51:56)
- وَمَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَاءَ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا بَاطِلًا ذَلِكَ ظَنُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَوَيْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنَ النَّارِ - We have not created the sky & the earth & whatever is between them uselessly; that is the view of those who disbelieve... (38:26)

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God Acts with Aim & Purpose (3)

(b) Reason also supports our view:

- Acting without a purpose and aim is evil (*qabīh*).
- The Wise God can't do something evil.
- Moreover, the purpose of God's action is not for Himself, it is for the benefit of the people.
- Furthermore, the best benefit for people is the *thawab* and to earn the *thawab*, the rules of shari'ah is necessary – that is known as *taklif*.

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5. Lutf is Incumbent upon God

- “Lutf” means what brings the person near to obedience of God and keeps him away from disobedience.
- It does not mean that God compels anyone to obey or prevents anyone from disobeying; it means that He provides help in guiding the people, especially a person who is serious in following the divine guidance.
- “Lutf” is wājib upon God because if He doesn't to that it defeats His purpose of creation and that is evil.

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2. Humans are free in their actions (*al-jabr wa 'l-ikhtiyār...*). ✓
3. God is free from all evil (*al-qubh*). ✓
4. God never does anything without a purpose.
5. Bestowing grace or extra help (*lutf*) is incumbent upon God.
6. Those who suffer in this world deserve recompense for their suffering.

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6. Recompense for the Sufferings

Suffering & Pain

element of evil is known ↓ = this is our doing (<i>qabīh</i>)	element of evil is not known ↓ = there is good in it (<i>hasan</i>)
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Recompense for the Sufferings (2)

Suffering & Pain

element of evil is known ↓ this is our doing (<i>qabīh</i>)	element of evil is not known ↓ there is good in it (<i>hasan</i>)
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←

1. The person deserves the pain.
2. The suffering entails extra benefit for the person.
3. The suffering everts greater danger for him.
4. It is a common or natural occurrence.
5. It entails defending oneself.

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Recompense for the Sufferings (3)

➤ If it is caused by God, then:

1. There must be a benefit in that suffering for the person or someone else. (Based on wisdom.)
2. God must adequately compensate the person who suffered.

= Not compensating will constitute injustice.

➤ If it is caused by us, then:

- It is wājib on God to avenge the wrongdoer either in this world or the hereafter.

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Recompense for the Sufferings (4)

➤ More about the compensation for suffering:

1. The person deserves the compensation; it is not luft or thawab.
2. The compensation should be continues.
3. The compensation could be in this world or in the hereafter based on God's wisdom.
4. In the hereafter, if the person is
 - a) ahlul Jannah: it will be spread out for him.
 - b) ahlun Nar: some of his 'azab will be reduced.
5. The suffering caused by nature or other situations – God should compensate those **who suffered: in this world or in hereafter.**

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