

WHY MAN IS TESTED BY GOD?

Allah tells us that our life on the earth is a test. He is testing each and every human robot to know whether he accepts Him as the Master and obeys His directions. The test of human beings began on the earth with the arrival of the first human couple. A question that is generally asked in this context is: what is the need of a test when Allah has pre-determined everything and knows what a human being is going to do in his life? This question is an offshoot of the belief that the fate of a person has already been fixed by Allah and therefore what one does is what Allah ordained for him. This belief is not consistent with the Quran. It is this wrong belief that gives rise to the question about testing. The following discussion attempts to clarify this misconception.

“And the hypocrites also. These were told: Come, fight in the way of Allah, or (at least) drive (The foe from your city). They said: Had we known how to fight, we should certainly have followed you. They were that day nearer to unbelief than to Faith, saying with their lips what was not in their *qalbs* but Allah has full knowledge of all they conceal.” (Q. 3:167)

“Those men, (Allah) knows what is in their *qalbs*; so keep clear of them, but admonish them, and speak to them a word to reach their very souls.” (Q. 4:63)

“You may defer (the turn of) any of them that you please, and you may receive any you please: and there is no blame on you if you invite one whose (turn) you had set aside. This were nigher to the cooling of their eyes, the prevention of their grief, and their satisfaction - that of all of them - with that which you have to give them: and Allah knows (all) that is in your *qalbs*: and Allah is All- Knowing, Most Forbearing.” (Q. 33:51)

“Allah’s good pleasure was on the believers when they swore Fealty to you under the Tree: He knew what was in their *qalbs*, and He sent down tranquility to them; and He rewarded them with a speedy victory.”

(Q. 48:18)

All these verses inform us that Allah knows what is on our *qalbs*. Allah has not mentioned in the Quran that He has pre-determined the decisions and actions of a person in his life. On the other hand what Allah tells us is He has left it to the sole discretion of the individual (i.e., his *qalb*). It is this divine diktat that endows us with the freewill and makes us unique and distinct from the rest of the living world. The situation may be contrasted with that of other living beings. They do not enjoy this privilege. They are totally programmed biocomputers. Allah has pre-determined the working of all other organisms under different situations. They cannot take their own decisions but can function only as programmed. Obviously, there is no need to test them. They are like our robots. We know beforehand what the actions and responses of our robots will be under a set of conditions because they operate strictly according to our programs. But we are not

like our *robots* or animals. It is Allah who gave us the physical and mental abilities and He has full knowledge of what each and every human being is capable of. It is Allah's program (bioprogram) that determines the potentials and limitations of each one of us. All parts of human body except one are programmed by Allah. The only part, which Allah permitted to act on its own, is the human *qalb*. Therefore the functioning of the human *qalb* must be seen in that light. Thus with God-given ability and freedom, human *qalb* takes decision on its own and directs the human system (body) to act. It is therefore the performance of the *qalb* whether it will obey Allah's directives or not that is put to test. Allah is testing *only* the performance of the *qalb* (the organ that takes decisions) and not of any other part of human body; every other part works as programmed. *Human qalb is the only component in the entire universe that has been given freedom by Allah to function on its own will.* Everything else in this universe is totally programmed. If Allah had desired to have the human mind take decisions as He wants, He would not have given it the freewill, in which case human being will be a totally programmed system like animal. There would not have been any need for testing. But Allah's intention is to bestow freewill and consciousness to human mind and test to know who obeys Him and who obeys Him not. Allah wants us to live in His interests in accordance with His directives and accept Him as our Master willingly. Allah wants such a willful conscious submission originating from the *qalb* of man rather than a programmed obedience. Through numerous verses Allah informs us about the freedom given to human *qalb* and that human conscious (voluntary) actions are not pre-determined by Him. There are a large number of Quranic verses that tell us so. Consider the following (emphasis added):

“Generations before you We destroyed *when they did wrong*: their apostles came to them with clear-signs, but *they would not believe!* Thus do We requite those who sin. Then We made you heirs in the land after them, *to see how you would behave.*” (Q. 10:13-14)

“Allah said: I will send it (a table set from Heaven to Jesus) down unto you: But *if any of you after that resists faith*, I will punish him with a penalty such as I have not inflicted on any one among all the peoples.” (Q. 5:115)

“We have revealed for you (O men!) a book in which is a Message for you: *will you not then understand?* How many were the populations We utterly destroyed *because of their iniquities*, setting up in their places other peoples?” (Q. 21:10-11)

“Do men think that they will be left alone on saying: “We believe”, and that *they will not be tested?* *We did test those before them, and Allah will certainly know those who are true from those who are false.*” (Q. 29:2-3)

“But never did a single one of the signs of their Lord reach them, but they turned away there from. And now they reject the truth when it reaches them: but soon shall they learn the reality of what they used to mock at.

See they not how many of those before them did We destroy?-generations We had established on the earth, in strength such as We have not given to you - for whom We poured out rain from the skies in abundance, and gave (fertile) streams flowing beneath their (feet): yet for their sins We destroyed them, and raised in their wake fresh generations (to succeed them).” (Q. 6:4-6)

Look at the questions and statements in these verses. Such questions and statements galore in the Quran. These messages indicate that Allah has not pre-determined the functioning of the human mind; instead, they imply that Allah has given freedom to human *qalb* permitting it to act on its will. Those who go against Allah’s interests, He punishes them. This will explain the need for testing human beings. A few more verses are presented here to show that human *qalb* is not programmed (italics added).

“Allah did indeed fulfil His promise to you when you with His permission were about to annihilate your enemy,-*until you flinched and fell to disputing about the order, and disobeyed it after He brought you in sight (of the booty) which you covet.* Among you are some that hanker after this world and some that desire the Hereafter. Then did He divert you from your foes *in order to test you* but He forgave you: For Allah is full of grace to those who believe.” (Q. 3:152)

“What you suffered on the day the two armies met, was with the leave of Allah, in order that *He might test the believers...*” (Q. 3:166)

“Those who believe, then reject faith, then believe (again) and (again) reject faith, and go on increasing in unbelief,- Allah will not forgive them nor guide them on the Way.” (Q. 4:137)

”O you who believe! Allah does but make a trial of you in a little matter of game well within reach of your hands and your lances, *that He may test who fears him unseen:* any who transgress thereafter, will have a grievous penalty.” (Q. 5:94)

“(David) said: “He has undoubtedly wronged you in demanding your (single) ewe to be added to his (flock of) ewes: truly many are the partners (in business) who wrong each other: Not so do those who believe and work deeds of righteousness, and how few are they?”...and David gathered that *We had tried him:* he asked forgiveness of his Lord, fell down, bowing (in prostration), and turned (to Allah in repentance).”

(Q. 38:24)

“We punished the people of Pharaoh with years (of droughts) and shortness of crops; *that they might receive admonition.*” (Q. 7:130)

“So We sent (plagues) on them: mass death, locusts, lice, frogs, and blood: Signs openly self-explained: but they were steeped in arrogance,- a people given to sin. Every time the penalty fell on them, they said: “O Moses! On your behalf call on your Lord in virtue of his promise to thee: If you will remove the penalty from us, we shall truly believe in you, and we shall send away the Children of Israel with you. *But every time We removed the penalty from them according to a fixed term which they had to fulfil,- Behold! they broke their word!* So We exacted retribution from them: We drowned them in the sea, because they rejected Our Signs and failed to take warning from them.”

(Q. 7:133-136)

“When My servants ask you concerning Me, I am indeed close (to them): I listen to the prayer of every suppliant when he calls on Me: *Let them also, with a will, Listen to My call, and believe in Me: That they may walk in the right way.*”

(Q. 2:186)

“We broke them up into sections on this earth. There are among them some that are the righteous, and some that are the opposite. *We have tried them with both prosperity and adversity in order that they might turn (to us).*”

(Q. 7:168)

“We had already, beforehand, taken the covenant of Adam, *but he forgot: and We found on his part no firm resolve.*”

(Q. 20:115)

“We inflicted punishment on them; *but they did not humble themselves to their Lord nor did they submissively entreat, until We opened on them a gate leading to a severe punishment: then lo! They plunged in despair therein.*”

(Q. 23:76-77)

“That which is on earth we have made but as a glittering show for the earth, in order that We may test them - *as to which of them are best in conduct.*”

(Q. 18:7)

“And say: “The truth is from your Lord.” *Then whosoever wills, let him believe, and whosoever wills, let him disbelieve.* Verily, We have prepared for the Zalimoon (polytheists and wrong-doers, etc.), a Fire whose walls will be surrounding them (disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah). And if they ask for help (relief, water, etc.) they will be granted water like boiling oil, that will scald their faces. Terrible the drink, and an evil Murtafaqa (dwelling, resting place, etc.)!”

(Q. 18:29)

“O David! We did indeed make you a vicegerent on earth: so judge thou between men in truth (and justice): *Nor follow thou the lusts (of thy heart), for they will mislead thee from the Path of Allah.* For those who wander astray from the Path of Allah, is a Penalty Grievous, for that they forget the Day of Account.”

(Q. 38:26)

“And *We did try Solomon:* We placed on his throne a body (without life); but he did turn (to Us in true devotion): He said, O my Lord! Forgive me, and grant me a kingdom which, (it may be), suits not another after me: for You are the Grantor of Bounties (without measure)”

(Q. 38:34-35)

Prophet Abraham’s trial of sacrifice of his only child is a classical case.

“Then, when (the son) reached (the age of) (serious) work with him, he said: O my son! I see in vision that I offer thee in sacrifice: Now see what is your view! (The son) said: O my father! Do as you are commanded: you will find me, if Allah so wills one practising Patience and Constancy! So when they had both submitted their wills (to Allah., and he had laid him prostrate on his forehead (for sacrifice), We called out to him “O Abraham! *you have already fulfilled the vision.*” - thus indeed do We reward those who do right. *For this was obviously a trial.*”

(Q. 37:102-106)

These messages are self-explanatory in that Allah tells us that He is testing each human being to know whether he obeys and lives in accordance with His directions. If Allah had created us pre-determining our actions what is the need for testing us? On the other hand human species is a unique creation to which Allah has given full freedom to act according to the wishes of the *qalb*. That being the case, what makes one think that Allah has pre-determined the decisions the human mind makes? What we should realize is that Allah wants a creation, which on its own volition applying the mind with God-given freewill recognizes the power and supremacy of the Creator and submits to Him in all humility. That is why Allah created human beings with a *qalb* with exclusive decision-making freedom. Voluntary submission to the Will of Allah by such a creation can alone satisfy Allah’s ego. Being the creator Allah alone has ego and Allah alone can have ego. This would mean that it is the presence of mind in human biosystem with freedom to take decision and act that necessitated testing; and what Allah tests is whether an individual willingly accepts Allah’s supreme authority and obeys His instructions. Only such of His human robots will be selected and deployed in Heaven – the earth of the next eternal universe – to live there as Allah’s obedient robots.