

A Question and its Answer

Question: Now that we know that suffering and hardship could be used for the benefit of the individual, let us see what the benefits are in more detail. But, at this very point you might ask: Even if I agree that there is goodness and purpose in suffering, why couldn't God create the same result without suffering? If He is Omnipotent and Wise, why did He prescribe for us to go through all this difficulty and hardship to reach a developed stage?

We can answer this question in many ways, but there is a very basic answer that cuts the root of the problem from the very bottom and shows how narrow and unwarranted our questions are.

Answer: "Justice means to have a method and current according to a law (or a set of laws). So, unless there is a law outside a being who has to conform to that law, we cannot conceive justice.

A person is just when his method and practice is according to a law (or a set of laws) which its reality is outside the belonging of that person and is not changeable by that person. For example, in society there is a law that workers should be paid. This law is a reality outside the choice of the individuals. In other words, they cannot change this law individually. If somebody pays the worker he has observed justice and if he does not, he has not observed justice.

"This principle about justice, does not apply to God at all, since there is no law which can be outside the realm of God's power or choice and no law can restrict Him. Therefore, we say that God's actions are according to Divine 'hikmah' or purpose, and not according to laws which we create through our knowledge and desires, and falsely compare them with His justice. In other words, the clay in the hands of the potter cannot make laws for the potter, and cannot compare the potter's justice with those laws."¹

This was the first answer that makes the question vanish completely. There is also another answer to the question. But before we go to that, let us repeat the question once again:

"Why do we have to go through all these difficulties, created by God, in order to reach a developed stage?" We need to study the orders of existence to understand the second answer.

1. Muhammad Taqi Ja'fari in an interview.

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