



Analysis of Islamic Thinkers' Views on the Verses of the Purpose of Creation with Emphasis on the Hierarchy of Worship

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Abstract

The ultimate end of God's actions is one of the most challenging issues among Islamic theologians. In the meantime, the Ash'arites emphasize the negation of the purpose of the actions of Supreme Being. In contrast, most Mu'tazilites and all Imams believe in the generality of the existence of purpose in divine actions. Despite the differences in the purposefulness of the actions of the Almighty, the determination of creation is both intellectually and narratively agreed upon by all Islamic thinkers. In the intervening time, some verses refer to the purposefulness of the creation of the universe and some specify the purpose of human creation as well. In the meantime, due to the variety of Quranic interpretations, thinkers consider the experiment, serving God and attaining mercy as the most significant goal of human creation. According to the internal evidences of the verses, the goals mentioned in the Quran are not only in conflict but also in a way complementary to each other. Among the mentioned goals, "worship", given its ranking, has a particular venue; as, given the general meaning of worship, which encompasses all practical and scientific aspects of human life; It could be regarded a goal for some existential stages and a tool for others. Namely, worship is the initial stage, servitude is the middle stage and the manifestation of lordship and guardianship is the ultimate stage of the goal of creation that the perfect human has attained. The current research is mainly based on descriptive-analytical method through library data collection.

Keywords: *Islam; Quran Verses; Thinkers' View'; Purpose of creation; Hierarchy of Worship*

Introduction

The order of each phenomenon and its persistent coherence in existence is undeniable; as the integrated system of creation can be considered as a manifestation of its purposefulness. According to theologians, the ultimate end in wise actions, the emergence of existential wisdom in the whole universe, the coherent connection in the phenomena all confirm the purposefulness of the world.

In conventional negotiations, the term "purpose" is widely used; as it is called the result of voluntary work, such that the autonomous doer considers it from the outset and makes any efforts to accomplish it. In general, "goal or purpose" as motivation, that is, the agent of the doer and the stimulus

of the doer, is something that evokes the doer to carry out the action and if it was not, the doer would not do it. With this conceptual meaning, one cannot consider the purpose and ultimate end for God; that is, one believes in the goal and purpose of the doer that the doer demands to achieve the purpose by his own work. The goal that is inspiring the doer means what makes the doer be a doer is the objective that the doer obviously seeks to obtain in his action. This requires a defect in the doer; that is, having such a goal and purpose would seem merely true in potential doers and in creatures and is not true about the creator. Having such goals traces back to perfection, that is, the doer is in quest of acceding what he does not have. (Taherzadeh, 1999: 33)

The necessity of current research on the purpose of creation firstly lies in the fact that the motive of truth-seeking and secondly to the perfectionism aspiration of human through elucidating that the curious soul of human discovers the purpose of creation by observing the instability of the life in universe and the mysteries of the world of creation. In the meanwhile, human who believes in God and resurrection considers a purpose for his existence and the survival of the universe and seeks perfection. One of the most important ways to achieve the goal of creation is to wisely exploit the verses of the Holy Book that was revealed to human by the creator.

In the present study, the researchers seek to answer three basic questions: First, according to the verses of the Quran, what is the purpose of human creation? Second, among the verses referring to the ultimate end of human creation in various interpretations, what is the relationship among these goals? Third, what is the relationship between the status of worship and servitude, and what is the relationship between them and the other purposes of human creation?

Quite a few researches have been carried out regarding the purpose of creation. Among these surveys, the only one that is corresponding to the present research is the article of Mr. Abdolrahim Soleimani Behbahani and Ahmad Shojaei entitled as "*Worship and Philosophy of Creation*", which was published in the winter of 2013 in issue No. 88 of the Journal of Islamic Speech. In the above article, the authors intend to respond the existing doubts about divine worship and its details by taking a polemical approach. While in this research, in addition to explaining the theologians' view about the existence of the ultimate cause in divine actions, we classify the verses of the purpose of human creation. In the following, we will recount in particular the views of thinkers about the degrees of worship, the distinction between worship and servitude, and the intermediate and primary purpose of worship. Eventually, we will determine the purpose of creation according to the degree of worship.

1. Existence of the Ultimate Cause in Divine Actions

Regarding the ultimate cause in divine actions, two clarified perspectives could be proposed among the theologians for assessment: 1- Relative deniers of the existence of the ultimate cause in divine actions; 2- Proponents of the existence of the ultimate cause of divine actions. The first view has been put forward by the Ash'ari. Although they do not absolutely deny the principle of purposefulness, they disagree with its generality and necessity. Given that the Ash'ari do not consider anything obligatory on God and believe in the good and the bad aspects of the Sharia; consequently, in their opinion having a purpose is not obligatory. Accordingly, in their opinion, God has no intention in creatures and none of the creatures could be considered as God's purpose. (See: Fayyaz Lahiji, 2004: 308)

In contrast, there is a second view that advocates of Mu'tazele and Imamieh are of its supporters. These two groups believe in the generality of purpose in divine actions. The difference is that the Mu'tazele consider divine actions to have a purpose that goes back to their obligors and interests (Ash'ari, 1411 AH: 253) while the Imamieh consider the actions of the Almighty to have a purpose, but they consider his purpose and ultimate end as the same as his essence and not superfluous to him. (Sadr al-Din Shirazi, 1981: 2 / 270-271) It merits mention that one of the attributes of God is that he is "absolutely self-sufficient". In the meantime, if his intention in doing an action is to benefit himself or others, it conflicts

with his absolute needlessness, because it requires assistance. On the other hand, God is wise and it is impossible to observe aimless vocation from the source of wisdom. In general, it can be briefly stated that: God has no purpose in his actions other than his essence; but this purpose is the same as the current knowledge of actions, which is the same as the divine will and providence and the transcendent essence of God. In other words, the action of the Supreme Being is that of the sort of "manifestation"; Such that before taking an action, he has a detailed knowledge of his action and this knowledge of action is the same as general knowledge of his essence. (See: Tabatabai, 2009: 2/119)

Some scholars, such as Ibn Sina, believe in the *amnesty theory* in creation and divine actions and negation of any ultimate cause of the doer. In his view, God is merciful, not that his ultimate cause is forgiveness. Accordingly, God is very generous to the point that he created the universe, not that he created to forgive. In Sheikh Al-Rais' view, true merciful is one who without any enthusiasm or intellectual desire for something has bestowed intentions. (Tousi, 1996: 3/145). Therefore, God, who is merciful has no purpose and cannot pursue a purpose in vile things. (Ibid: 149) In his view, God's purpose in his actions is the same as divine providence. He considers providence as God's knowledge of all things, which causes everything to be at its best. In this case, creation will be in harmony with the awareness of the best optimal system, without the need for intention and excessive desire from God. (Ibid: 318)

Three philosophers, namely Qutbuddin Razi, Khajeh Nasir and Fakhr Razi, have the same perceptions (Ibid: 142,144,151) Mulla Sadra also recites the same theme through the verse "It is He Who hath created for you all things that are on earth" (Al-Baqarah, 29)¹ (Sadraddin Shirazi, 1987: 2/274). Fakhr Razi also states the same thing in his interpretation. (Fakhr Razi, 1420 AH: 3 / 331-332)

Moreover, the wise consider the absoluteness of God in terms of existence and perfection as the reason for his forgiveness. Therefore, the reason for the creation of the universe is the absoluteness of the Supreme Being. Mulla Sadra in clarifying the generosity of God decalred: "God's perfection in the creation of things is due to the perfection of existence and the end of the universe in such a way that all beings and goodness are imparted from him. (Sadraddin Shirazi, 1975: 121)

A summary of what has been argued about the ultimate cause in divine actions is as following:

- 1- God does not need a plan prior to his action;
- 2- His action is purposeful, but his purpose is not outside his essence;
- 3- The purpose is the emergence of perfection;
- 4- In the emergence of the perfection of the action, the creatures will also reach perfection.

2. Purposefulness of Creation in the Quran

In some verses of Quran, the purpose of creation has been mentioned; such as the verse "Men who celebrate the praises of Allah, standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides, and contemplate the (wonders of) creation in the heavens and the earth, (With the thought): "Our Lord! not for naught Hast Thou created (all) this! Glory to Thee! Give us salvation from the penalty of the Fire" (Al-Imran: 191).²Philosophers syntactically interpret the word "Falsehood"³ to be considered as the presence of God's actions not God. Accordingly, the meaning of the verse is that creation is neither vain, nor that God did not create the universe in vanity. Some interpreters commented on of the verse as follows: The word Falsehood⁴ is the adjective for the eliminated gerund of creation⁵ or that of Subject out of object (5).

¹ هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعاً بِقَرِهِ/ 29

² الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَمًا وَ قُوعُودًا وَ عَلَى جُنُوبِهِمْ وَ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَ الْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَاطِلًا سُبْحَانَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ - آل عمران/ 191

³ باطلاً

⁴ Ibid

Therefore, the meaning of the verse is as follows: O God, You have created the universe on the basis of wisdom and expediency. (See: Tantawi, 1997 AD: 2/374; Deobandi, 1385: 1/441; Zahili 1411 AH: 4/208; Thalabi, 1422 AH: 3/233; Ibn Jozi, 1422 AH: 1/361; Zamakhshari, 1407 AH: 1 / 454). Of other verses that the interpreters of the two sects have applied in expressing the purposefulness of the universe is "Not for (idle) sport did we create the heavens and the earth and all that is between!" (Al Anbiya, 16).⁶ In explaining this verse, the interpreters consider the word "sport" to be a description of creation, not the creator. Accordingly, the verse is in the state of proving the ultimate end for the creation, not the Creator. (See: Tabatabai, 1995: 14/365; Fazlullah, 1419 AH: 15/198; Zamakhshari, 7 1407: J3 / 107; Samarkandi, 1416 AH: 2/422).

3. Purposefulness of the Verses of Human Creation

The purpose of human creation has been cited in various verses. In a quick glimpse, these goals seem to be conflicting and incommensurable. In this section, we seek to analyze these verses to explain their relationship.

3.1 Categorization of Verses Relevant to the Purpose of Human Creation

3.1.1 Caliphate

The verses referring to being the divine caliph, the prostration of the angels to Adam and accepting the status of divine trust and other cases indicate in a way that human is the ultimate end of creation. In the meantime, in some verses such as the verse "When they disregarded the warnings that had been given them, we rescued those who forbade Evil; but We visited the wrong-doers with a grievous punishment because they were given to transgression" (An'am / 165)⁷, the status of caliphate is assigned to human beings and is considered as one of the purposes of creation. Explaining the generality of the human caliphate, Allameh Tabatabai states: the mentioned caliphate is not exclusive to Adam, rather his progenies also share in this position with him. Then the meaning of teaching names is that God has entrusted this knowledge to human beings, hence that its effects gradually and permanently appear in this type of creature, whenever he is conducted in his direction, he can put that deposit into action. (Tabatabai, 1995: 1/178) Appointing a caliph is merely for the purpose that the caliph and his successor represent God by glorifying, praising and sanctifying him. This crucial issue heavily depends on divine mercy and man's resemblance to God and leading towards a pure life. Human, through faith in God, righteous deeds, performing *Shariah*⁸ and absolute servitude of God, has depicted the attributes and deeds of a successor and obtained the merit of the divine caliphate to deposit the place of appearance of the divine names.

Unlike Allameh, Fakhr Razi has considered the caliphate to mean inheritance and succession of predecessors. In his words, there seems to be no purpose in creation, rather, naturally, every newfound nation replaces the previous nation and acquires the characteristic of replacing the occupation of the land. (Fakhr Razi, 1420 AH: 14/192) Zamakhshari also mentions the same expression in the interpretation of Kashaf. (Zamakhshari, 1407 AH: 2/84)

Theosophists believe that the purpose of creation is a perfect human being. According to them, the criterion of the divine caliphate is the knowledge of the divine names. In the meantime, the knowledge of names has been more institutionalized and actualized in the perfect human; hence, he has more perfection and is accountable for higher degree of the caliphate. In other words, the divine caliphate is of the type of existential perfection and doubtful that its highest degree is in the possession of the perfect human and its lower degrees belong to pious human beings. (Javadi Amoli, 2004 A: 3/40)

⁵ خلقا

⁶ وَ مَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَاءَ وَ الْأَرْضَ وَ مَا بَيْنَهُمَا لِأَعْبِيْن. انبياء/ 16

⁷ هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَكُمْ خَلَائِفَ الْأَرْضِ. انعام/ 165

⁸ Religious Law

In some hadiths, the Holy Prophet has been introduced as the ultimate cause of creation: “If you were not, I would not create the heavens” (Majlisi, 1404 AH: 16/405). Since the Prophet and the Imam are the most perfect human beings and the ultimate end of creation is also the realization of the most perfect human beings; it is as if the Prophet and the Imam are the ultimate end, as the purpose of creation.

3.1.2 Divine Experimentation

In some verses, the Devine experimentation of human beings is mentioned as the purpose of creation; such as the verse “He Who created Death and Life, that He may try which of you is best in deed: and He is the Exalted in Might, Oft-Forgiving”. (Al Mulk/2)⁹

According to the phrase “try you”, the creation of the universe is a prelude to the creation of human and we created human to be at a dilemma to pass the test. The result, then, is that the creation of the universe has been for human Devine experiment. Evidently, the experimentation itself is the preface to another purpose. (Mesbah Yazdi, 2007: 174) The idea that "the universe was created to examine you" rests on one of the intermediate goals that there are goals before and after it. (Ibid: 179) In other words, human experimentation is not a means of eliminating human ignorance, but it is a ground for realizing human's latent talents within his sphere of authority.

According to Allameh Tabatabai, good deeds and their goodness are the ultimate end and purpose of human creation. It is also apparent that goodness of deeds is not desirable for itself if it is desirable; rather, it is advantageous since it is involved in achieving the goal of another being. What is inherently desirable is a good life that is not assorted with any defect and is not subject to annulment and misdemeanor. (Tabatabai, 1995: 19/587; Qomi, 1404 AH: 2/378) In the meantime, given the interpretation of “try you” in the verse “It is he who has made you (His) agents, inheritors of the earth: He hath raised you in ranks, some above others: that He may try you in the gifts He hath given you”, (An'am / 165)¹⁰ some philosophers sought to prove that the purpose of creation is to do the best deed. (Thalabi, 1422 AH: 9/356; see: Ibn Jozi, 1422 AH: 2/99; Zamakhshari, 1407 AH: 2/84; Zubaidi, 1428 AH: 1052; Mughniyeh, 1424 AH: 7/375; Bahrani, 1415 AH: 5/435)

By analyzing the interpretations, we find that proving the correctness of the deed (action) for human beings and receiving its reward and chastisement can also be the purpose of creation. The interpretation of “try you” in the verses refers to this fact. Nevertheless, as the interpreters have pointed out, this goal is not the ultimate goal. (Tabatabai, 1995: 19/586)

3.1.3 Mercy

According to some verses, the ultimate goal of human creation is the divine infinite mercy and love: “If thy Lord had so willed, He could have made mankind one people: but they will not cease to dispute” and “Except those on whom thy Lord hath bestowed His Mercy: and for this did he create them: and the word of thy Lord shall be fulfilled: "I will fill Hell with jinns and men all together”” (Hud/ 118-119).¹¹ As interpreters such as Allameh Tabatabai believe, the argument to the verse about the ultimate purpose of creation is acceptable if the pronoun “this” is returned to “Mercy” not “dispute”; he regards the purpose of mercy to be guidance; with the justification that mercy is related to the ultimate goal, which is human contentment. The evidence of this claim is behind the verse “And we shall remove from their hearts any lurking sense of injury ...” (Al A'raf/ 43)¹² which is the anecdote of the people of Paradise and considered guidance as the ultimate end. As in the verse “I have only created Jinns and men, that they

الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ - ملك/2- 9

وَ هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَكُمْ خَلَائِفَ الْأَرْضِ وَ رَفَعَ بَعْضَكُمْ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ دَرَجَاتٍ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِي مَا آتَاكُمْ - انعام/165 10

وَ لَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ لَجَعَلَ النَّاسَ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَ لَا يَزَالُونَ مُخْتَلِفِينَ * إِلَّا مَن رَّجِمَ رَبُّكَ وَ لِيَذَكَّ لِقَاءَهُمْ وَ تَمَّتْ كَلِمَةُ رَبِّكَ لِأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَ النَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ - هود/118-119 11

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وَ قَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي هَدَانَا لِهَذَا - اعراف/43- 12

may serve Me" (Zariyat / 56)¹³ worship has been described as the purpose of creation, because it leads to human bliss. (Tabatabai, 1374: 11/86)

Accordingly, the blissful human being attains divine mercy, and in a way, the ultimate goal of creation is to achieve bliss. Contrary to this approach, Fakhr Razi in explaining the interpretation of "for this did he create them" believes that God has created some nations for mercy and paradise and some for perdition and hell. Evidence of this is the verse "Behold! A party among them said: "Ye men of Yathrib! ye cannot stand (the attack)! ..." (Sajdah / 13)¹⁴ (Fakhr Razi, 1420 AH: 18/412).

Despite the discrepancy of notions between Allameh Tabatabai's view and Fakhr Razi's, from the Allameh's interpretations of the verse "He Who created Death and Life, that He may try which of you is best in deed: and He is the Exalted in Might, Oft-Forgiving" (Al Mulk/ 2)¹⁵; it implicitly conveys that the main goal is to create good people. His interpretation is as follows: The verse also refers to the fact that the purpose of creation was to bring goodness to the servants, as in this verse there is no mention of sin and dreadful deeds and castigation. He has alleged only good deeds that the creation of life and death is to find out which deeds are superior. Hence, owners of good deeds are the main purpose of creation, but others have been created for them. (Tabatabai, 1995: 19/587)

However, in the second verse of Al Mulk it seems that the purpose of creation is Divine experimentation; but this is a superficial view, since it was in fact intended to convey mercy. Therefore, the conflict in the verses is superficial that can be resolved with a little contemplation. Accordingly, human creation is to attain mercy and divine immeasurable guidance.

3.1.4 Return to God

According to some verses, returning to God is introduced as the ultimate end of human creation; the evidence of this claim is the verse "He will say: "Did you think that We created you in vain and that you would not be returned to Us?" (Al Muminun/ 115)¹⁶. The word "Us" demonstrates the human path to infinite perfection and end. According to the verse, if there are not resurrection and return to the Almighty, creation is in vain; That is why God has stated the resurrection and returning to God as the end. This logic has been recurring motifs in many verses of the Quran.

In interpreters' view, vain is something that has no real end and is the opposite of wisdom. Accordingly, the purpose of whether you thought we created you in vain? Did you think that there is no wisdom and wise end in your creation? Then, in refuting this notion, he turned the verse to the interpretation of "you would not be returned to Us?" (Matridi, 1426 AH: 7/501) That is, if there is no return to God, creation is in vain. Accordingly, since the true return of human beings is to God, the meaning of the verse is as follows: Creation is not in vain, but purposeful.

Through scrutinizing the verses which mainly describe the return of all creatures, especially man, to God, we reveal the fact that the goal is to return to the essence of God. Accordingly, the ultimate goal of the creation of creatures and the end of their journey is the essence of God. Furthermore, since all beings are considered to be divine acts and creations, their ultimate end is also the essence of God.

3.1.5 Insight & Wisdom

Some interpreters, based on the verse "I have only created Jinns and men, that they may worship Me" (Dhariyat / 56)¹⁷, believe that the purpose of the creation of jinn and man is to attain insight towards God. They interpreted "to worship" as "to know". The justification of interpreters who have deduced

¹³ وَ مَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ذاريات/56

¹⁴ وَ تَمَّتْ كَلِمَةُ رَبِّكَ لِأَمَلَانِ جَهَنَّمَ مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ سجده/13

¹⁵ الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا مَلِك/2

¹⁶ أَمْ فَحْسِبْتُمْ أَنَّمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ عَبَثًا وَأَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا تُرْجَعُونَ مؤمنون/115

¹⁷ وَ مَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ذاريات/56

worship in the verse as insight is that: In fact, worship is to put oneself (servant) in a state of humiliation and servitude and to turn oneself towards the position of God. (Tabatabai, 1995: 18/420) Some theosophists also announce: "Our main purpose is to turn the hearts of God's servants to what they were created for, which is the insight and wisdom of God, which is above all blisses, and nothing is its prelude". (Mousavi Khomeini, 1994: 155)

Some narrations are in harmony with the epistemology within the purpose of creation; the evidence of this claim is the following holy hadith: I was a hidden treasure; I demanded to be known, thus I created the people to be known. (Majlisi, 1404 AH: 84/199) In fact, worshiping God is to achieve this insight towards him and until thorough insight and wisdom occur, true worship would not be accessible. (See: Amin, 1361: 12/334) In a narration of Imam Hussein (AS), insight is also explicitly introduced as the ultimate end of creation. Imam Hussein (AS) articulated the speech to his companions: O people, God did not create his servants, unless they know him and when they know him, they will worship him. (Qomi, Bitā: 9)

Based on the above justifications, it is feasible to comprehend the interdependent relationship between worship and insight. In the sense that worship although arising from insight, is also insight-generating. Subsequently, worship in a way is the ultimate end of insight and vice versa.

3.1.6 Worship

Some verses such as the verse "I have only created Jinns and men, that they may worship Me" (Dharyyat / 56)¹⁸ have emphasized only on the issue of worship and servitude and explicitly introduces it as the ultimate goal of the creation of jinn and man. (See: Zamakhshari, 1407 AH: 4/406; Tabarsi, 1415 AH: 4/184; Fakhr Razi, 1420 AH: 28/129) The meaning of most interpreters in explaining the ultimate purpose of creation could be justified if "may" before "worship" is to express the end and not the sequel; because the requirement of the sequel is that all jinns and human beings must worship God, while in reality, many jinns and humans refuse to worship God. Therefore, calling "may" before "worship" requires penetration of lie in the word of the Almighty. (See: Tousi, Bitā: 9/397; Alam al-Huda, Bitā: 3/195; Tabarsi, 1415 AH: 9/269)

While Fakhr Razi, believes that "may" before "worship" is to express the end, but reminds the end of the ultimate goal. According to him, what shall be reminded to the servants is that the servants were not created except for worship. In the meantime, however, the profession of the prophets is to guide the individuals and worship God; but if people do not accept the words of the prophets in guidance, but perform worship, they ought not to be upset, for the reason that worship is the principle norm. The testimony of this claim is that God conditionally states about guidance in the verse "So turn away from them: not thine is the blame" (Dharyyat / 54)¹⁹: You Shall not be disturbed that they are not guided; However, this phrase has not been used for worship. Therefore, worship is vitalmm for everyone and has no conditions (Fakhr Razi, 1420 AH: 24/129).

Drawback

If the purpose of creating jinn and human is for the sake of worship, a purpose violation occurs; as we undoubtedly notice that many individuals as atheists, apart from not worshipping God, deny divinity. Moreover, many people who acknowledge God and the attributes of divinity do not persevere in the position of worship and servitude.

¹⁸ Ibid

¹⁹ قَوْلَ عَنْهُمْ فَمَا أَنْتَ بِمَلُومٍ - ذَارِيَات/ 54

Response

If the purpose of worshipping jinn and humans was a benefit for the essence of the glorious Divinity, a purpose violation occurred; while, the benefit of their worship will be for themselves. Therefore, it is doable that the verse intends to express the fact that I did not create the jinn and mankind in vain, rather, the purpose of their creation is to worship voluntarily so that they may profit my mercy and benevolence on creation. Verses “No Sustenance do I require of them, nor do I require that they should feed Me” and “For Allah is He Who gives (all) Sustenance,- Lord of Power, Steadfast (for ever)” (Dhariyat / 57-58)²⁰ testify that creation is only by mercy and benevolence, not for my own benefit. “May” before "worship" may also refer to the wisdom of the creation of the people. In this case, it is remarkably similar to the verse "The Book was sent down to you to expel the people from the darkness to the light" (Ibrahim / 1)²¹ according to which, the wisdom of the revelation of the Book is to guide people from the darkness of disbelief to the light of faith. (Amin, 1982: 12/335)

In general, according to the verse "I have only created Jinns and men, that they may worship Me" (Dhariyat / 56)²², worship is the purpose of the creating jinn and man, not the deification of God. In other words, worship is the goal of the creature, not the Creator. It is not the case that God created man to achieve a goal such as becoming a deity, so that he did not reach the goal through the rebellion of the rebels; since Glorious God is Self-sufficient and it is impracticable for a self-contained divinity to do something to attain a goal. (Javadi, Amoli, 1383 A: 1/429; Homo, 1383 B: 391)

3.1.6.1 Degrees of Worship

As briefly stated, the verse "I have only created Jinns and man, that they may serve Me" (Dhariyat / 56)²³ relies only on the issue of worship and servitude and explicitly introduces it as the ultimate goal of creating jinn and man. In contrast to such a goal, we never encounter in the Quran the logic that man was created to know as much as possible and do as much as he can, until attaining his goal of creation; Rather, man was created to worship God, and the worship of God is the goal itself. If man knows more and can do more, but pays no attention to the issue of knowing God, that is the prelude to worship, and worshipping God; He has not taken a step towards the goal of creation. In the Quran, when human creation is mentioned, it refers to its creator. In addition, when knowledge is mentioned, its instructor is reminded as well: “Proclaim! (or Read!) in the name of thy Lord and Cherisher, Who created ...” (Al Alaq/ 1-5)²⁴

Therefore, according to the above meaning, in Islamic logic, the main purpose of life can be nothing but a deity. That is, the Quran demands to create a human being having a goal and an ideal; a goal and an ideal that is no more than God and that is enough. Everything else has an antecedent aspect, not the aspect of originality, independence and the main goal.

Quran in verses describing the perfect human or reciting on behalf of perfect human beings introduces them as follows: They have perceived the purpose of life well and work on the same goal and take practical steps. As it says via Ibrahim's speech (AS): "For me, I have set my face, firmly and truly, towards Him Who created the heavens and the earth, and never shall I give partners to Allah." (Al An'am/ 79)²⁵ “Verily, my Lord hath guided me to a way that is straight- a religion of right,- the path (trode) by Abraham the true in Faith, and he (certainly) joined not gods with Allah." (Al An'am/ 162)²⁶

²⁰ ما أريدُ مِنْهُم مِّن رِّزْقٍ وَ مَا أريدُ أَنْ يُطْعَمُونَ * إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الرَّزَّاقُ ذُو الْقُوَّةِ الْمَتِينُ-ذاريات/57-58

²¹ كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ لِتُخْرِجَ النَّاسَ مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ -إبراهيم/1

²² وَ مَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ- ذاريات/56

²³ Ibid

²⁴ اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ * خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ * اقْرَأْ وَ رَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ * الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ * عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ-علق/1-5

²⁵ إِنِّي وَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّذِي فَطَرَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ حَنِيفًا وَ مَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ-انعام/79

²⁶ قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَ نُسُكِي وَ مَحْيَايَ وَ مَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ- انعام/162

Accordingly, the true monotheist does not regard the relation of the beings of the universe as the relation of the parts of the body. He does imagine the universe as a body of which one part of the sky and the other part of the earth and other animals and humans are other parts. Although there is a way of communication between all the parts of the body, but the true monotheist does not know the relationship and connection of objects of this kind. He sees a "he" in all things; such that "he" at first sight is the same as "he" in the last view and "he" in the appearance is as the same as "he" that is hidden: "He is the First and the Last, the Evident and the Hidden:(5276) and He has full knowledge of all things" (Al Hadid/ 3) ²⁷(Samadi Amoli, 2002: 1/143).

Imam Ali in subtle interpretations about how creatures relate to the Creator says: "He is with everything, but not in such a way that he is his companion and adjoining, he is apart from everything, but not as far away from him. (Seyed Razi, 1432 AH: Sermon 1) and also states: "God is within things, neither in the form of incorporation and is out of them, nor in the form of separation". (Ibn Babawiyah, 1398 AH: 308; Majlisi, 1404 AH: 4/304) Therefore, knowing God has degrees, and every human being has a different knowledge of God. According to the sages, the degrees of monotheism are based on the degrees of theist; otherwise, monotheism has no degrees. (Samadi Amoli, 2002: 1/146) As the sages reach the consensus, the human soul is not extensive on which a single ruling can be issued. The soul is an assortment of the powers of lust, anger, and wisdom, each of which seeks its own perfection and essence, and occasionally lust attracts human and from time to time anger does it; in the meantime, the power of wisdom cannot be perfected without religious worship. (See: Ibn Sina, 1993: 30-31) Therefore, everyone will perform different worship due to the difference in the dominance of the power of wisdom over other powers.

Therefore, since the knowledge of God is miscellaneous in the servants, their worship is also diverse. The argumentative reason for this issue is the statement of Imam Ali who says: "A group of people worship God willingly (for Paradise); this is the worship of merchants and some worship him out of trepidation. This is the worship of slaves and group worships God for the gratitude of the blessings (and that he is worthy of worship), this is the worship of the emancipators. (Sayyid Razi, 1432 AH: Wisdom 237)

The verses of the Quran also deal with these three types of worship. In most of the verses that recite the deeds and attributes of God in terms of his Lordship, the presentation of a terrifying auditor image of God with severe punishments and quick reckoning prevails foreboding and fright have been strongly recommended as a worthy position towards him. (See: Raad / 21; Mulk / 21; Fatir / 18) Forgiveness, mercy, and divine blessings are the rewards of one who is God-fearing, pious, and obedient. (See Al A'raf / 56) In a number of verses of the Holy Quran, faith and servitude to God are mentioned as trade. (Fatir / 29; Saf / 10) and those who do not enter into this deal will see their loss on the Day of Resurrection. (Ghafir / 27; page / 26)

According to most interpreters, faith could be enhanced; thus faith has degrees. This result leads to the second consequence, according to which the servitude of the Supreme Being is directly related to the difference in degrees of faith; therefore, servitude will also have degrees. This narration simply bears out this claim from the Prophet who said: "Two people of my nation stand for prayer and their genuflection and prostration are the same, while the difference between their prayers is equal to the distance between heaven and earth". (Ibn Abi Jomhor, 1405 AH: 1/322; Majlisi, 1404 AH: 81/249)

3.1.6.2 Distinguish Between Worship and Servitude

Some scholars believe that: "The principle of servitude means humility." (Johari, 1399 AH: 2/503) According to Javadi Amoli, the above concept is not the lexical meaning of the word, but the

²⁷ هُوَ الْأَوَّلُ وَالْآخِرُ وَالظَّاهِرُ وَالْبَاطِنُ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ-حديد/3

indispensable meaning; since humility will be transitive with a 'L' Arabic alphabet word but worship is transitive itself. As a result, worship does not mean humility. In general, worship is an act performed with the intention of rapprochement, while all worship is not regarded as the worship of God; rather, the act expressing the servitude of God is worship. Worshipping God is to illustrate one's servitude to God and therefore does not associate with arrogance; as God says: "Call on Me; I will answer your (Prayer): but those who are too arrogant to serve Me will surely find themselves in Hell - in humiliation!" (Ghafir/60)²⁸ (Javadi Amoli, 1383 A: 1/418)

Some scholars believe that the position of servitude is higher than worship. The reason for this superiority is that worship is considered to be something that is pleasant to God; but servitude is the satisfaction of anything that is being issued from God. (Hosseini Zubeidi, 1414 AH: 5/84) Accordingly, servitude also means absolute submission to God. This state is in fact the result of the complete and sincere worship of God.

In other words, the meaning of servitude is to reach a degree of knowledge and purity of heart and a degree of existence in which one considers no credit for oneself and other creatures and observes nothing but God and finds all beings, including himself, bounded by the will of God; Therefore, he is called the servant of God (bounded to God). Therefore, it can be asserted: servitude means the self which exists in the truth to be perished and everything is a manifestation of truth. Given the verses: "To Him is due the primal origin of the heavens and the earth: How can He have a son when He hath no consort? He created all things, and He hath full knowledge of all things" and "That is Allah, your Lord! There is no god but He, the Creator of all things: then worship ye Him: and He hath power to dispose of all affairs". (Al An'am/ 101-102)²⁹ Anybody who considers God as the Creator of the universe then must worship him. It seems that the basic requirement of believing and accepting God as the Creator is to worship Him.

In addition, given the prominent aspects such as insight and knowledge (Tabatabai, 1374: 18/420), affinity (Tousi, Bitā: 9/399) and monotheism (Qomi, 1404 AH: 2/331) mentioned in the interpretation of "to worship", the truth of servitude could be attained. Accordingly, the truth of servitude is obtained with the mysticism, closeness and monotheism of human beings. In general, worship is considered as a universal and hierarchical meaning, one degree of which is the end for another degree. Therefore, we can consider servitude, as the highest degree of worship, an end for other degrees. Such that if we mean worship as affinity, worship can be considered as the end of closeness and affinity can be regarded as the end of worship; that is, each of them is an origin in a degree and an end in another one, and there is an interdependent relationship between them and it can be declared that worship arises from closeness and on the other hand is generating affinity.

As mentioned, the worship of individuals is hierarchically ranked according to their knowledge. These rankings also are true for servitude. The essence of servitude to God is submission and humility to religious commands and doctrines; as Fakhr Razi considers servitude to be absolute submission to the commands of God; on the opposite side it is rebellion that is resistance against Him. (Fakhr Razi, 1420 AH: 1/250) Therefore, human's servitude to God is a kind of relationship arising from genesis and creation of man. The Creator of human has initially placed an essence in his being that flourishes only through worship and servitude and if he ignores to pay attention to his servitude for a moment, his past deeds will not be productive for him: "This day are (all) things good and pure made lawful unto you. The food of the People of the Book is lawful unto you and yours is lawful unto them. (Lawful unto you in marriage) are (not only) chaste women who are believers, but chaste women among the People of the Book, revealed before your time, - when ye give them their due dowers, and desire chastity, not

²⁸ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ - غافر/60

²⁹ بَدِيعَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لَهُ وَلَدٌ وَلَمْ تَكُنْ لَهُ صَاحِبَةٌ وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ * وَقَاعْبُدُوهُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَكِيلٌ - انعام/101-102

lewdness, nor secret intrigues if any one rejects faith, fruitless is his work, and in the Hereafter he will be in the ranks of those who have lost (all spiritual good)” (Al Ma’idah/ 5)³⁰

Given what has been argued, our findings mainly conclude that servitude is a highly elevated position, the attainment of which requires the creation of conditions in human beings. In the meantime, the accomplishment of perfect human beings such as prophets and saints to lofty positions has also been made probable by this servitude. In the interim, the Holy Prophet (PBUH) is in the ultimate end of servitude in comparison with other prophets. Like other prophets, he has two aspects: "the aspect of revelation with God" and "the aspect of negotiating with the servants of God". Among the attributes expressing the relation of that Imam with God, the attribute of servitude (absolute servitude) is more prominent and superior than all other attributes; since the attribute of servitude provides a ground for any perfection in the servant and it is regarded as his promotion ladder to attain any sublime positions. Worship is not a forgery position; therefore it is not compulsory for someone to testify about it. Unlike the position of prophethood and Imamate which requires martyrdom in terms of being fabricated, simultaneously, in order to avoid exaggeration and false belief that its source is unity and other heresies, it is necessary for every Muslim to testify to the worship of those luminous essences and since it precedes the prophecy and its prelude, it paves the way for the testimony to the prophecy to express its precedence as well. This precedence has also been mentioned in the verses of the Quran: “He said: "I am indeed a servant of Allah. He hath given me revelation and made me a prophet” (Maryam/ 30)³¹ “Blessed is He who sent down the Criterion to His servant, that it may be an admonition to all creature” (Al Furqan/ 1)³² (Javadi Amoli, 1383 A, J 3/197).

3.1.6.3 Intermediate Goal and Precedence of Worship

Although in verse No.56 of Dhariyat, worship is regarded as the purpose of creation; but contemplation on the evidence in some verses, the research finding is that worship itself is a prelude for achieving a superior goal. For instance, from the verse “O ye people! Adore your Guardian-Lord, who created you and those who came before you, that ye may have the chance to learn righteous” (Al Baqara/ 21)³³, the current study conclude that worship is the turning point to attain piety. According to the interpreters, piety is the ultimate goal and *raison d'être* of worship. With the confession that piety is the perfection of the soul and the worship of God is the basic ground for fulfilling this existential perfection. Therefore, one shall worship God. (Javadi Amoli, 2004 A: 2/369)

In addition, piety is not the ultimate and absolute goal, rather, a relative and additional goal and is itself a preface and context for achieving other goals; since piety is a provision: “For Hajj are the months well-known. If anyone undertakes that duty therein, let there be no obscenity, nor wickedness, nor wrangling in the Hajj. And whatever good ye do, (be sure) Allah knoweth it...” (Al Baqara/ 197)³⁴ and provision is not a destination. In the Holy Quran, piety is also acknowledged as a ground for reaching "salvation": “O ye who believe! Persevere in patience and constancy; vie in such perseverance; strengthen each other; and fear Allah. that ye may prosper” (Al Imran/ 200).³⁵ Hence human's salvation is in meeting God, therefore, man does not attain piety until he worships, and he has no provision to traverse the celestial path towards God and meet the truth until he attains piety. (Javadi Amoli, 1383 A: 2/371) Accordingly, the goal of salvation is the same as approaching God and returning to one's origin.

Furthermore, in proportion to the verse “It is Allah Who is my Lord and your Lord; then worship Him. This is a Way that is straight” (Al Imran/ 51; Maryam/ 36; Al Zukhruf/ 64)³⁶ and “Did I

³⁰ وَ مَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِالْإِيمَانِ فَقَدْ حَبِطَ عَمَلُهُ وَ هُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ. مائده/ 5

³¹ قَالَ إِنِّي عِنْدَ اللَّهِ ءَاتِنِّي الْكِتَابَ وَ جَعَلْنِي نَبِيًّا - مريم/ 30

³² تَبَارَكَ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ الْفُرْقَانَ عَلَى عَبْدِهِ لِيَكُونَ لِلْعَالَمِينَ نَذِيرًا - فرقان/ 1

³³ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ وَ الدِّينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ - بقره/ 21

³⁴ تَزَوَّدُوا فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّقْوَى - بقره/ 197

³⁵ وَ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ - آل عمران/ 200

³⁶ إِنَّ اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَ رَبُّكُمْ فَأَعْبُدُوهُ هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ - آل عمران/ 51؛ مريم/ 36؛ زخرف/ 64

not enjoin on you, O ye Children of Adam, that ye should not worship Satan; for that he was to you an enemy avowed?*" And that ye should worship Me, (for that) this was the Straight Way?" (Ya sin/ 60-61)³⁷ Sincere worship of the Almighty has been described as "straight path." It is clear-cut as long as human is on the way; he has not yet reached his final destination. Also, in verses such as verse No.43 of Al-Imran, No.112 of Al Tawbah and No.26 of Al Hajj, a part of prayer such as prostration and bowing is mentioned as a means of closeness to God. According to the verse: "Day, heed him not: But bow down in adoration, and bring thyself the closer (to Allah)" (Al Alaq/ 19)³⁸ intimacy with God is the ultimate goal of prostration and worship, and in a way, worship cannot be achieved without the intention of affinity and closeness.

Therefore, although given the verse "'I have only created Jinns and men, that they may serve Me" (Dharyat/ 56)³⁹, worship is the goal of human creation, but this is an intermediate goal, not an ultimate one; as the supreme goal is to attain faith and assurance for which worship would be deposited as the means; the verse "And serve thy Lord until there come unto thee the Hour that is Certain" (Al Hijr/ 99)⁴⁰ confirms this point. (Javadi, Amoli, 1383 A: 1/429) In other words, worship is also the goal and benefit of creation, but an intermediate goal; Because the ultimate goal is for human to reach the destination of assurance from the bridge of worship and preserve the extract of many years of worship in the container of faith; for until human has not reached assurance, his worships, beliefs, morals, and in short, everything may be subject to deterioration and destruction, but when he is assured with a firm belief, he feels relieved. (Ibid, 1388: 2 / 406-407)

It should be noted, however, that monopoly is noticeably deduced from verse No.56 of Dharyat; that is, the purpose of the creation of the creature is to worship God and nothing but the purpose of creation is other than divine worship. The point is that the above verse has been stated in the form of denial and proof; That is, its content is analyzed into two positive and negative theorems and such provisions require exclusion; that is, everything that human beings do is superfluous and vain and is outside the scope of the purpose of creation if that is not worshiping of God or a prelude to divine worship. (Ibid, 1383: b / 392) In this case, worship means obedience, and obedience conveys arranging things according to God's guidance. Worship is not just colloquial jurisprudence obligations, rather, it includes all aspects of life and human being must be a devotee in in all these aspects; it means to obey the divine guidance. Likewise, worship is not restricted to practice and includes some scientific worship, such as contemplation on *Al Asma ul Husna*⁴¹ of Divine and contemplation on psychic and spiritual verses, as well as the intention of affinity. (Ibid, 1389 A: 308)

Therefore, given the scope of worship, every intention and action issued from an individual for the pleasure of God is considered worship. It is very lucid that creatures are incapable of true worship of the Almighty. In the meantime, the perfect human has reached such a lofty destination that all his actions and aspects of life are devotional. Accordingly, in some thinkers' views, worship in its conventional (known) meaning is a goal for some existential stages and for some other stages that are superior to conventional worship is regarded as a means not a goal. Subsequently, that some of the God's servants in the path of worship and servitude reach a degree where they have guardianship over many matters. They leave behind the degrees of property and kingdom and reach the horizon of the guardianship. Their life and existence have become pervasive and they are present in all degrees of existence. With this explanation, we can declare: the purpose of human life for "toddlers" who have not yet seen the intricacy of the path is "worship" and for the others is "servitude"; but none of them is the ultimate goal of life, rather, the ultimate goal goes far beyond these two ones and it is the manifestation of divine Lordship as

³⁷ 61-60/يس/ أَلَمْ أَعْهَدْ إِلَيْكُمْ يَا بَنِي آدَمَ أَنْ لَا تَعْبُدُوا الشَّيْطَانَ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ * وَ أَنْ اعْبُدُونِي هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ -

³⁸ 19/علق- وَأَسْجُدْ وَاقْتَرِبْ -

³⁹ 56/ذاريات/ وَ مَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ -

⁴⁰ 99/حجر/ وَ اعْبُدْ رَبَّكَ حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَكَ الْيَقِينُ -

⁴¹ The most magnificent names of God

the result of the emancipation of the servant in the guise of worshiping God; and this is the purpose of life for exceptional individuals. (Ibid: 177)

As a result, given the limitation in verse No.56 of Dhariyat, obedience can be considered as a generally broad meaning of worship, which is not specific to devotional issues (unchallengeable and binding although unsupported by human reason)⁴², rather, it also includes Tawasoli rulings. Such worship, which is performed only by the perfect human, encompasses the whole range of human life and is not restricted to action and also consists of some scientific worship. Such an extensive meaning of worship is regarded as a purpose for some existential stages and considered as a mean for some others. In the meantime, only a perfect human being passes through the primary and intermediate stages of worship and reaches a superior stage. In other words, the perfect human has passed the most primitive and general stages of life, that is, "worship," and attains the truth of servitude. He accomplishes the status of guardianship and manifestation of the divine lordship after he considered nothing but worship for himself and the whole system of existence and paid no attention to his desires except for his true master and owner. This sublime stage, which entails the gift of assurance and intuition, leads to the attainment of the perfect human to servitude and beyond, the realization of the final goal of creation.

Conclusion

Reflecting on the verses expressing the purpose of human creation, we find that none of these purposes are in conflict with each other, rather, some of them are considered as primary goals, some as intermediate goals, and some as ultimate goals. In fact, each of them is a complement to the other and leads us to the ultimate goal. The evidence in the verses of the Qur'an is the best guide in this regard. For example, experimentation is one of the primary goals of creation, and servitude is the intermediate goal, and certainty and attainment of meeting the Supreme Being is the ultimate goal. Evidence of this claim is that according to the verses, worship is the basis for achieving piety, and piety is also described as the prelude to attaining salvation. The goal of salvation is approaching God. Accordingly, man attaining the status of divine worship can handle experimentations well, such that enjoys the blessing of certainty and also enjoys inner purity and intuition.

In the meantime, given the degrees of worship, it can be considered as the primary, intermediate and ultimate goal of creation. The merchant and monarchical belief in worship and limiting it to devotional matters is the primary goal of worship. Attaining the status of servitude, according to which worship encompasses the entire areas of human scientific and practical life, is the intermediate goal of worship. In the end, attaining to the status of certainty and intuition, the horizon of guardianship and the manifestation of divine Lordship, is the end of worship and the goal of creation. Thus, although the verses of the Quran express a seemingly independent expression about the philosophy of creation, but in all of them there is a single soul as the goal of the creation of man, which in a word can be called "perfect man", who has attained the highest status attainable for mankind, which is nearness to God.

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⁴² Ta'abodi

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