

Qadr and Akhirah As the articles of faith

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Part 1

The Six Pillars of Faith in Islam

1. Belief in Allah
2. Belief in His Angels
3. Belief in His Books
4. Belief in His Messengers
5. Belief in the Last Day, and
6. Belief in the Divine Preordainment and Divine Decree (Qada wa Qadr)

(See Hadith Jibril)

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• حَدَّثَنَا وَكَيْعٌ، حَدَّثَنَا كَهْمَسٌ، عَنْ ابْنِ بُرَيْدَةَ، عَنْ يَحْيَى بْنِ يَعْمَرَ، عَنْ ابْنِ عُمَرَ، أَنَّ جِبْرِيْلَ، عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ لِلنَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَا الْإِيْمَانُ قَالَ أَنْ تُؤْمِنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَبِالْقَدْرِ خَيْرِهِ وَشَرِّهِ فَقَالَ لَهُ جِبْرِيْلُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ صَدَقْتَ قَالَ فَتَعَجَّبْنَا مِنْهُ يَسْأَلُهُ وَيُصَدِّقُهُ قَالَ فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ذَلِكَ جِبْرِيْلُ أَتَاكُمْ يُعَلِّمُكُمْ مَعَالِمَ دِيْنِكُمْ.

• It was narrated from ‘Umar that Jibril صلى الله عليه وسلم said to the Prophet :

“What is faith (*Iman*)? He said: “To believe in Allah, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day and the divine decree, both good and bad,” Jibreel said to him: You have spoken the truth. He said: We were amazed that he asked him and then confirmed his answers as being correct. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said: “That was Jibril, who came to teach you your religion.” (*Musnad Ahmad*, Book 2, Hadith 108)

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- **Jabir bin 'Abdullah narrated that the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w) said:** “A slave (of Allah) shall not believe until he believes in Al-Qadar, its good and its bad, such that he knows that what struck him would not have missed him, and that what missed him would not have struck him.” (Vol. 4, Book 6, Hadith 2144)

" لَا يُؤْمِنُ عَبْدٌ حَتَّى يُؤْمِنَ بِالْقَدْرِ خَيْرِهِ وَشَرِّهِ حَتَّى يَعْلَمَ أَنَّ مَا أَصَابَهُ لَمْ
يَكُنْ لِيُخْطِئَهُ وَأَنَّ مَا أَخْطَأَهُ لَمْ يَكُنْ لِيُصِيبَهُ "

Belief in the Divine Preordainment and Divine Decree (Qada wa Qadr)

Belief in this article means that Almighty Allah has created everything and has foreordained its proper measure. There are 4 facets of Qadr:

- 1. Knowledge of Allah** that it encompasses everything, all of His Actions and all the actions of His slaves.
- 2. Pre-recording** that Almighty Allah recorded everything in a tablet that He Kept with Himself known as '*al-lawh al-mahfuz* (The preserved tablet)'

أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ فِي كِتَابٍ ۚ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ

Knowest thou not that Allah knows all that is in heaven and on earth?
Indeed it is all in a record and that is easy for Allah.

(Al-Haj 22: 70)

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3. The Will of Allah that nothing related to Allah's Actions or His slaves' actions can occur without His Permission. Al-Qasas (28: 68):

وَرَبُّكَ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيَخْتَارُ^ق مَا كَانَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ^ج سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَتَعَالَى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

AND [thus it is:] thy Sustainer creates whatever He wills; and He chooses [for mankind] whatever is best for them Limitless is God in His glory, and sublimely exalted above anything to which they may ascribe a share in His divinity!

4. Creation that Almighty Allah created all creation, its attributes and all its functions. Al-Furqan (25: 2): “He has created each thing and determined it with [precise] determination.”

وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ فَقَدَرَهُ تَقْدِيرًا

Important points to Understand “Qadr”

The term Qadr is normally translated as “predestination.” This is a good translation, but sometimes this does not help to understand the term in broad sense. “Measuring out” is another translation. For a better understanding, one should look into the implications of the term:

1. **Creative Power, Allah is Qadir** To have power is to have the ability or capacity to do or make something, to perform an act, to achieve a goal. The Qur’an tells us repeatedly, “Allah is powerful over all things,” so his power—in contrast to ours—is unlimited.

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- **2. Good and Evil** The hadith of Gabriel says, "measuring out, the good of it and the evil of it." This measuring out is done by Almighty Allah. Modern sensibilities often find this point particularly offensive. How can a supposedly good God parcel out evil? This reaction is understandable, but a bit premature. The Arabic word for good is *khayr*, while the word for evil is *sharr*. Good and evil in English are exceedingly broad terms, but typically they involve a moral judgment. In contrast, the Qur'anic context of *khayr* and *sharr* does not usually imply a statement about right and wrong, but rather about the benefit or loss that something brings. The good and evil that are measured out have to do with the things that people wish to have or to avoid. The issue here is not a moral good and evil, but rather a good and evil relative to the view of the person who is receiving it. Thus, in the hadith of Gabriel, when the Prophet referred to both the good and the evil of the measuring out, he had in view human judgment about the situation. We suffer a loss, so that is evil for us. We receive a benefit, so that is good.

- **Trial** The Qur'an often says that God measures out good and mercy to test people's faith and to allow people to prove their own nature—not to God, of course, because he already knows their nature. They are demonstrating their nature to themselves, so that they will have no objections when they reach their destination in the next world. People who have faith in the measuring out—both the good of it and the evil of it—will recognize that God knows what he is doing, even if their personal desires are constantly thwarted. They will show their gratitude to God when he gives and they will have patience when he withholds. Such reactions will prove their faith. But they will not have demonstrated faith if they act in the way that the Qur'an repeatedly stigmatizes (employing words such as good and evil, mercy and wrath): "When We bless the human being, he turns away and keeps aloof, but when evil touches him, he is in despair" (17:83). The proper response to good, mercy, and blessing is gratitude, while the proper response to evil, wrath, and harm is patience and hope.
- When the Koran takes the benefits of both good and evil into account, it sometimes employs the words trial (bala') and testing (fitna): "We try you with evil and good as a testing, and then unto Us you shall be returned" (21:35).

- **Freedom:** Free will and predestination need to be understood as complementary expressions of the human situation. Neither explains the situation fully. One useful way to understand how the two ideas are related is to think again in terms of *tanzih* and *tashbih*. In respect of tanzih, human beings have no knowledge, power, desire, or freedom, since these are divine attributes and belong exclusively to God. But in respect of tashbih, human beings reflect these divine attributes. The attributes belong to God, but they are put into effect through human beings. If God can "do whatever He desires," so also, in respect of tashbih, human beings can do whatever they desire.

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- there are two basic modes of freedom, "freedom from" and "freedom for." We want freedom from oppression, and we want freedom for speech and for the things that we enjoy. In human affairs, these two kinds of freedom often conflict. When we gain freedom to enjoy a wealth of consumer goods, for example, we may bring about terrible oppression for peoples in other parts of the globe who have to suffer the consequences of exploitation and ecological devastation. The flip side of freedom's coin may well be slavery. What is good for you may be evil for someone else. Your freedom can be another's slavery, or it can even be your own slavery. Look at all the people who, in their desire to be free to have a good time, enslave themselves to demeaning jobs.

- Hence, in the Islamic view, "freedom from" is to be free from the constraints placed on us by created things and to serve God. "Freedom for" is to choose the right/good over the wrong/bad in every case. People should desire to be free for knowledge, power, good, and everything positive and truth. Hence freedom from the wrong/bad comes down to the same as freedom for the right/good. There can be no contradiction. Both are tawhid.

Belief in Qadr and Excuse of Negligence

Imam Muslim may Allah have mercy upon him narrated that the Prophet sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam said: "The final destination, in Hell or Paradise, is already determined for each one of you." A man said: "Should we depend on this fact, O Messenger of Allah?" (Meaning, to abandon doing good deeds) He sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam said: "No! Perform (good) deeds, because everyone will be helped (to go on the path that will lead him to his destiny)." Then he read the verse (which means): "As for he who gives [in charity] and fears Allah... We will make smooth for him the path of ease (goodness)." [Quran: 92:5-7]"

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- Allah conveyed His commandments to His slaves and did not require them to do what is beyond their capacity; He says: “So fear Allah as much as you are able...” [Quran: 64:16]
- Allah also Says: “Allah does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity...” [Quran: 2:286] If the slave is forced to do whatever deeds he performs, then Allah would have required from him what is beyond his capacity, and this is a false belief. For this reason, Allah forgives sins that take place because of ignorance or forgetfulness.

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• عَنْ سَلْمَانَ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ " لَا يَرُدُّ الْقَضَاءَ إِلَّا الدُّعَاءُ وَلَا يَزِيدُ فِي الْعُمُرِ إِلَّا الْبِرُّ "

- **'Salman narrated that the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w) said: "Nothing turns back the Decree except supplication, and nothing increases the life-span except righteousness."** Vol. 4, Book 6, Hadith 2139

Benefits of Believing in Qada and Qadr

1. **Peace of mind:** A Muslim who believes in Divine Decree and Predestination will have his mind at ease when he knows for certain that what befell him could not have missed him and what missed him could not have reached him.
2. **Contentment:** It doesn't make him grieve about anything because he doesn't say things that reflect discontent like “if I did such and such then such and such would have happened”. Also, he doesn't worry too much about the future because he believes that everything is already written. What he should worry about is his deeds and doing good.

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3. Boost up the willpower and the determination: It gives him the will power and determination to go forward in the way of Allah. A Muslim doesn't fear anybody because he knows that no one has the power to afflict harm on him without it being decreed by Allah. The Prophet sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) clarified this point to Ibn Abbas may Allah be pleased with him saying:

“...If the whole nation were to gather together to benefit you they would only benefit you with that which Allah had already written for you and if the whole nation were to gather to harm you they could only harm you with that which Allah had already written to harm you. The pen has been lifted and the ink has dried (a phrase meaning: everything has been decreed or settled)”. [At-Tirmithi]

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4. **Become modest and humble:** It teaches the Muslim to be modest and humble. This is so because everything that a Muslim does is by the Will of Allah so if he succeeds he knows that Allah helped him in doing it; he doesn't succeed because he is intelligent or because he is rich or because he deserves it, and, likewise, a person isn't poor because he is stupid. This stops pride and arrogance from creeping to his heart because he knows that Allah can afflict him with harm and deprive him from the bounties he boasts about.

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5. Total dependence upon Allah: A Muslim takes precautions, does as much as he can and then depends upon Allah because the Divine Decree does not stop him from taking precautions and utilizing worldly means.

The Prophet sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) said: “Take precautions as everybody is guided to that which has been destined for him.” As for you should drink to quench your thirst. If something bad comes, it is because of our bad doings and if something good reaches us then it is from Allah's grace.

Almighty Allah Says: “What comes to you of good is from Allah, but what comes to you of evil, [O man], is from yourself.” [Quran 4:79]