

EVILNESS IN VARIOUS FORMS

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Abstract: One of the most frequently asked questions about Coronavirus and evils is that how does this evil align with God's mercy and compassion? If God is Compassionate and Merciful, why does He make people suffer with diseases like Corona? The present article to answer this question first explains various forms of evils as mentioned in Quran and traditions.

Key words: evils, divine mercy, power of infallibles regarding evils

Introduction

“Disease is in various forms: punishment and a disease that causes death.”
disease as a test, disease as a

According to this narration, the wisdom behind some diseases is test, the wisdom of some others is punishment and the wisdom of the third category is the cessation of life. Since the wisdom of adversity befalling a child is not of the first or second type, therefore, in the case of a child who dies from a disaster, this adversity is a means for termination of life. Life is a grace and bounty from God, and whenever He wishes, He can recall this grace and bounty and one of the tools for seizing life is sickness.

Therefore, as far as others are concerned, it can be said that the disease that affects the child can be a test or a punishment or advancement, but for the child itself, it is either a means for taking his life or becomes a test for him after reaching puberty. Of course, there may be other

wisdoms too which we aren't aware about.

It should be noted that the answer of most theologians to this question is the theory of reciprocity and grace that was previously reviewed. Reciprocity or recompense is for the child himself, and grace can be for the child or others.

Evil and Divine Mercy

One of the most frequently asked questions about Coronavirus and evils is that how does this evil align with God's mercy and compassion? If God is Compassionate and Merciful, why does He make people suffer with diseases like Corona?

We answered this question somewhat in the argument of the principle of God's existence and the argument on divine wisdom. In the argument on the principle of God's

existence, we proved that the attribute of benevolence, meaning the bestowal of all pleasures and the prevention of all suffering, is rationally neither possible nor obligatory. From the point of view of revelation and narration too, such an attribute has not been proven; rather the opposite has been expressed.

In the argument on divine wisdom too, the wisdom behind evils were mentioned. According to these wisdoms, even though evil brings with itself pain and suffering, it can provide a basis for human beings to achieve the perfection and prosperity of this world and the hereafter by taking advantage of these opportunities. In this manner, evil can turn into mercy.

Here we add this point which constitutes the third answer. To explain further, God's attributes of action is different from His attributes

of essence. God's attributes of essence or inherent attributes are absolutely irrefutable to God and God cannot lack those attributes. For example, God is Omniscient, Omnipotent, All-Living and Eternal. These attributes are absolutely proven to God and it is impossible for Him to possess a particle of ignorance, helplessness, death and transience. However, in the case of attributes of action such as justice and wisdom, as well as mercy and anger, God possesses the power to act against these attributes and, for example, does not show His mercy or does not forgive a sin.

Of course, God's attributes of actions are of two categories. Some of these attributes, such as justice and wisdom, are irrefutable to God in absolute terms, i.e. although God has the power to do an unjust act, but based on the reason for proof of

justice, He will never do injustice. But this is not the case in most of the attributes of actions like mercy and wrath where by reason and narration, God can show mercy and forgive a sin as well as show His wrath and not forgive and instead punish the sinner. In the first case, He acts according to the attribute of mercy and grace and in the second case has acted in accordance with the attribute of wrath and justice. In Dua-e-Iftitah, we recite:

وَأَيَّقَنْتُ أَتَّكَ أَنْتَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّاحِمِينَ فِي
مَوْضِعِ الْعَفْوِ وَالرَّحْمَةِ، وَأَشَدُّ الْمُعَاقِبِينَ فِي
مَوْضِعِ النَّكَالِ وَالنَّقْمَةِ

"I am certain that in the case of pardon and mercy, You are the most Merciful of all,

*And in the case of punishment and revenge, You are the harshest punisher."*¹

According to these lines of supplication, if God acts in accordance with forgiveness and kindness, He is the most Merciful of all the merciful, and if He wishes to act in accordance with defiance, punishment and torment, He is the harshest of the punishers, just as He did with the tribes of Aad, Thamood and Lot in this world, and will do so with a group in the hereafter.

Of course, all of God's actions, whether Mercy or Wrath, are with wisdom.

It should also be noted that it is human beings themselves who, by their own free will, turn the restricted goodness and evil into an unlimited goodness or evil. As in the Corona era, those who take valuable lessons from it and turn towards God and hasten to help others, they transform the restricted evil and pain of Corona into unlimited grace and

pleasure. On the other hand, those who, with the emergence of Corona, make the most of it to rebukereligion, God and the Ahl'ul-Bayt (a.s.) and attack the people's beliefs or hoard goods that are needed by the people or sell them at exorbitant prices, make the restricted evils and pains of Corona a channel for their misery in this world and the hereafter, and consequently turn the limited evil into unlimited evil and Hellfire. Of course, God's will, which has come to us through religion, is that all human beings should be of the first kind; So He has commanded us to adopt patience and help others and to have trust in Himself.

Evil and Divine Destiny and Providence:

In this discussion, the question under review is whether all evils, including natural and moral

evils, is the result of divine fate and destiny?

As an introduction, it should be said that '*Qadha*' and '*Qadar*' (fate and destiny) is one of the imperative teachings of Islam which has been emphasized in the Qur'an and hadiths. The Holy Quran stipulates:

إِنَّا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَاهُ بِقَدَرٍ

*"We have indeed created all things by (precise) measure"*²

هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ طِينٍ ثُمَّ قَضَىٰ أَجَلٌ

*"He it is Who created you from clay, then He decreed a term"*³

In hadiths, more than the belief in '*Qadha*' and '*Qadar*', the satisfaction in '*Qadha*' and '*Qadar*' has been emphasized. Amir al-Mu'minin Ali (a.s.) says:

الإيمانُ أَرْبَعَةٌ أَرْكَانٌ: الرِّضَا بِقَضَاءِ
اللَّهِ وَالتَّوَكُّلُ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَتَفْوِيضُ الْأَمْرِ إِلَى اللَّهِ
وَالتَّسَلُّيمُ لِأَمْرِ اللَّهِ

“Faith has four pillars: Contentment with the decree of Allah, reliance on Allah, entrusting the affairs to Allah, and submission to Allah’s command.”⁴

It is mentioned in hadith Qudsi that Allah said:

من لم يرض بقضائي ولم يؤمن بقدري
فليتمس إليها غيري

“Whoever is not satisfied with My decree and does not believe in My destiny, then seek⁵ a god other than Me”

All this emphasis is because the Divine fate and destiny shows God's Sovereignty and Supremacy. In fact, the one who is not satisfied with the Divine fate and destiny, is

actually not satisfied with God's rule and Sovereignty.

Some hadiths indicate that nothing emerges in heaven and earth unless seven things have occurred, of which ‘Qadha’ and ‘Qadar’ are amongst them. For such hadiths, the late Kulaini has chosen the title:

«في أنه لا يكون شيء في السماء والأرض إلا بسبعة»

Meaning: *“Nothing occurs in the heavens and the earth except by means of seven.”⁶*

Imam Sadiq (a.s.) says:

لَا يَكُونُ شَيْءٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ إِلَّا
بِهَذِهِ الْخِصَالِ السَّبْعِ بِمَشِيئَةٍ وَ إِرَادَةٍ وَ قَدَرٍ وَ
قَضَاءٍ وَ إِذْنٍ وَ كِتَابٍ وَ أَجَلٍ فَمَنْ زَعَمَ أَنَّهُ يُقَدَّرُ
عَلَى نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ فَقَدْ كَفَرَ

“Nothing happens in the earth and in heaven except by these seven things: By Providence, Will,

destiny, decree, permission, book and appointed time. He who reckons that he can violate one of these is an infidel."

These hadiths present the generality of 'Qadha' and 'Qadar'. Nevertheless, the kind of 'Qadha' and 'Qadar' of God regarding the phenomena of the universe, of which natural evil is also a part, is different from the 'Qadha' and 'Qadar' related to man's voluntary actions, of which moral evil is also a part. In the case of voluntary acts of man, in 'Qadha' and 'Qadar', human authority is seen, and God decrees some of the affairs which He knows human beings would voluntarily perform, and gives it permission and helps us to perform it while for some other affairs, He does not decree or helps or even creates obstacles. Consequently, we can't perform those things. On the other hand, in

the case of natural affairs, God decrees His own actions and not the human actions. Thus, some verses ascribe evils (sufferings) to God and some verses attribute the evils to human beings. The below two verses explicitly reflect these two matters:

أَيْنَمَا تَكُونُوا يُدْرِكَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ وَلَوْ كُنْتُمْ فِي بُرُوجٍ مُّشِيدَةٍ وَإِنْ تُصِيبْهُمْ حَسَنَةٌ يَقُولُوا هَذِهِ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَإِنْ تُصِيبْهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ يَقُولُوا هَذِهِ مِنْ عِنْدِكَ قُلْ كُلٌّ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ فَمَا لَهُمْ لَئِنْ لَمْ يَأْتِ الْبُرُوجَ لَمْ يَكُونُوا يَفْقَهُونَ حَدِيثًا

"Wherever you are, death will overtake you, even if you are in towers built up strong and high!" If some good befalls them, they say, "This is from Allah"; but if evil befalls them, they say, "This is from you." (O Prophet). Say: "All things are from Allah." But what has come to these people, that they can hardly understand anything?'

مَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ حَسَنَةٍ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ وَمَا
أَصَابَكَ مِنْ سَيِّئَةٍ فَمِنْ نَفْسِكَ وَأَرْسَلْنَاكَ لِلنَّاسِ
رَسُولًا وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا

“Good and evil, whether
sweet and bitter, small and great,
are all from God.”⁹

“Whatever good befalls you
is from Allah; and whatever evil
befalls you is from yourself. We sent
you as an Apostle to mankind, and
Allah suffices as witness.”⁸

الخير والشر كله من الله

“Good and evil are all from
God.”¹⁰

These two verses have come
in succession. In the first verse, evil
is attributed to God and in the
second verse evil is attributed to
man.

وَمَنْ زَعَمَ أَنَّ الْخَيْرَ وَالشَّرَّ بِغَيْرِ
مَثَبِيَّةِ اللَّهِ فَقَدْ أَخْرَجَ اللَّهَ مِنْ سُلْطَانِهِ وَمَنْ زَعَمَ
أَنَّ الْمَعَاصِيَ بِغَيْرِ قُوَّةِ اللَّهِ فَقَدْ كَذَّبَ عَلَى اللَّهِ

“Whoever reckons that good
and evil occurs without God’s Will
has isolated God from His Kingdom
and whoever reckons that sins are
performed without God’s Power has
lied to God.”¹¹

Alike to these two verses, the
traditions too are of two groups. The
first group attributes all goodness
and evil to God while the second
group attributes evil to man. About
the first group, the below hadiths can
be mentioned:

Regarding the second group,
the below hadiths can be mentioned:

الْخَيْرُ وَالشَّرُّ خُلُوهُ وَمُرُهُ وَصَغِيرُهُ وَ
كَبِيرُهُ مِنَ اللَّهِ

مَنْ زَعَمَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالسُّوءِ وَالْفَحْشَاءِ
فَقَدْ كَذَّبَ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَمَنْ زَعَمَ أَنَّ الْخَيْرَ وَالشَّرَّ
أَلَيْهَ فَقَدْ كَذَّبَ عَلَى اللَّهِ

“Whoever reckons that God enjoins evil and immorality has lied against God, and whoever reckons that good and evil is ascribable to him, then he has lied against God.”¹²

3. *الْخَيْرُ فِي يَدَيْكَ وَالشَّرُّ لَيْسَ إِلَيْكَ*

“Good is in Your hands only, and there is no way for You to do evil.”¹³

Based on the discussions outlined so far, some correct and compatible interpretations can be presented about the integration of the above two verses:

1. The primary and limited evil relates to God, but the ultimate and unlimited evil applies to man's discretion. We discussed this topic at the very start of our discussion and under the title of concept of evil.
2. Natural evils, such as floods, earthquakes and diseases, is created by God, but moral evils, such as war and oppression, is created by human

beings. This matter, which is a clear affair, is confirmed by Ali ibn Ibrahim in his exegesis of the above two verses based on verses of the Qur'an and hadiths.

3. According to the evidences of 'Qadha' and 'Qadar' that were initially mentioned, all the evils, whether natural or moral, relates to God because it occurs with 'Qadha' and 'Qadar' and the causative permission of God, but moral evils has relevance to man because it is created by man's free will and desire. All the more, many of the natural evils are the result of human sins. This matter is acknowledged by the author of Al-Burhan Fi Tafsir al-Qur'an by narrating a hadith from Tafsir-e-Aiyashi.

All the three points are true and are derived from verses and hadiths, and according to these three points, evil in some way, is

attributed to God and in some other way to human beings.

The conclusion of our discussion is that all evils, in the sense that it is subject to Divine ‘Qadha’ and ‘Qadar’ and God’s permission, it is attributed to God. However, some evils are created by God, such as natural evils, and some evils are created by human beings, such as moral evils.

Evil and Acceptability of Prayers:

One of the questions that evil, and especially the coronavirus evil has created is:

Now that all the people are engaged in prayers and requesting God to destroy the coronavirus, so why this isn’t happening, while God says in the holy Qur’an:

وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ

“And your Lord says: Call upon Me, I will answer you”¹⁴

وَ إِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ
أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ

“And when My servants ask you concerning Me, then surely I am very near; I answer the prayer of the suppliant when he calls on Me”¹⁵

In reply to this question, there are two discussions. The first discussion is, what does “answering prayer or supplication” really mean? Secondly, does the fulfillment of supplication bear certain conditions and obstacles? The second argument, accordingly, is divided into two discussions: Conditions of fulfillment and the obstacles to fulfillment of prayers.

In the first discussion, it should be said that literally, the two words أُجِيبُ and أَسْتَجِبُ which are mentioned in the above two verses,

have the same meaning according to the lexicologists and both mean “answering”. Johari says:¹⁶

الجواب معروف. يقال أجابه وأجاب
عن سؤاله، والمصدر الإجابة...والإجابة و
الاستجابة بمعنى.

Answering (to a question/request) has different meanings commensurate with the question and request. For example, the answer to a scientific question has one meaning and to a request for fulfillment of some task, it has a different meaning. But in all cases, including request for fulfillment of a task, there are two meanings. One meaning, which is specific to أجابه (acceptance), is to fulfill and attend to what has been asked and requested. The second meaning, which is the general meaning, is to pay attention to the request and not ignoring such request. This general meaning comprises both a specific

meaning as well as other types of attention and reaction to the request.

In hadiths, both meanings have been mentioned. In other words, both specific meanings and other meanings for acceptance are mentioned, all of which fall under the general meaning of answer and fulfillment. In some hadiths from the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) which are narrated in the books of both sects (Shia and Sunni), three meanings have been mentioned for the answer to prayers:

answering one’s prayer immediately,

accumulating its reward and saving for the hereafter,

eliminating evil to the extent of goodness requested in prayers:

« مَا مِنْ مُسْلِمٍ دَعَا لِلَّهِ سُبْحَانَهُ دَعْوَةً لَيْسَ فِيهَا قَطِيعَةٌ رَجِمَ وَلَا إِنْتُمْ إِلَّا أَعْطَاهُ اللَّهُ بِهَا أَحَدَ خِصَالٍ

ثَلَاثَةٌ إِمَّا أَنْ يُعَجَّلَ دَعْوَتُهُ وَ إِمَّا أَنْ يَدَّخَرَ لَهُ وَ إِمَّا أَنْ يَدْفَعَ عَنْهُ مِنَ السُّوءِ مِثْلَهَا»

“A Muslim who prays to God, and his prayer is not about something sinful or breaking ties of kinship, then God will grant him one of three things:

Either his request and wish is fulfilled, or saves it for him until the Hereafter or would avert an equivalent amount of evil away from him.”¹⁷

In some hadiths, forgiveness of sins instead of warding off an evil is mentioned as God's third positive reaction to supplication (as answer to supplication):

مَا مِنْ مُؤْمِنٍ يَدْعُو اللَّهَ إِلَّا اسْتَجَابَ لَهُ إِمَّا أَنْ يُعَجَّلَ لَهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا أَوْ يُؤَجَّلَ لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ وَ إِمَّا أَنْ يُكَفِّرَ عَنْهُ مِنْ ذُنُوبِهِ بِقَدْرِ مَا دَعَا مَا لَمْ يَدْعُ بِمَا أَنْتُمْ

“There is no believer who calls on God but that God answers him: He either fulfills his prayer in this world, or delays it for the Hereafter, or He forgives his sins to the extent he has prayed, provided his prayers was not for a sin.”¹⁸

In some hadiths, answer to prayers has been mentioned to mean either fulfillment of one's request in this world or fulfillment in the Hereafter:

ما من مؤمن يدعو بدعوه الا استجيب له؛ فان لم يعطها في الدنيا أعطىها في الآخرة»

“There is no believer who prays but that his prayer is answered; If he is not given in this world, it will be given to him in the Hereafter.”¹⁹

In one hadith, answer to pray has been given a special meaning such that if the prayer is not fulfilled,

a good deed would be written for the supplicant.

إذا دعا أحدكم بدعوة فلم يستجب له، كتبت له
حسنة

“If one of you pray and call on Him, and He does not fulfill (your request), a good deed would be written for him.”²⁰

Therefore, response or fulfillment of one’s prayers is used both in specific as well as in general sense, for which four instances have been mentioned so far.

As per one narration, once a heretic asked Imam Sadiq (a.s.) that although in the Quran, God has promised to answer prayers, so why the prayers of the helpless and oppressed are not fulfilled?

Imam (a.s.) replied:

“There is no one who calls Him but that He answers him. لا) (استجاب له) As for the oppressor, his prayer goes unanswered until he repents to God. But in case of the righteous person, whenever he prays, God will answer his prayers (استجاب له) and will put off calamities that are unknown to him, or will save a great reward for the Day he needs it, and if the request His servant has put forth is not good for him, then He will refrain from fulfilling it. It could be dear to a believer to pray to God for something he does not know is right or wrong. Sometimes the servant asks his Lord to destroy someone who is still alive, or asks for rain at an inappropriate time, while God Himself is All-Wise, by the delicacy He has created the creatures. And numerous similar instances can be found. So get the drift of this matter.”²¹

At the beginning of hadith, the fifth example for answer to prayers is mentioned in the general sense. This example concerns an oppressor and wrongdoer, and God's response to him is that He rejects his prayer until repentance, which if he repents, he will be treated like an innocent one. In the case of the oppressed person, fulfillment of his prayer implies that either his request is abided by or God rewards him abundantly.

In another hadith, the same matter is mentioned, of course, not only about the oppressor, but also about the oppressed:

فِيمَا أَوْحَى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى إِلَى دَاوُدَ عَلَيْهِ
السَّلَامُ: مَنْ انْقَطَعَ إِلَيَّ كَفَيْتُهُ، وَ مَنْ سَأَلَنِي
أَعْطَيْتُهُ، وَ مَنْ دَعَانِي أَجَبْتُهُ، وَ إِنَّمَا أُوجِزُ دَعْوَتَهُ
وَ هِيَ مُعَلَّقَةٌ وَ قَدْ اسْتَجَبْتُهَا لَهُ حَتَّى يَتِمَّ قَضَائِي،
فَإِذَا تَمَّ قَضَائِي أَنْفَذْتُ مَا سَأَلَ. قُلْ لِلْمَظْلُومِ: إِنَّمَا
أُوجِزُ دَعْوَتَكَ وَ قَدْ اسْتَجَبْتُهَا لَكَ عَلَى مَنْ ظَلَمَكَ،
حَتَّى يَتِمَّ قَضَائِي لَكَ عَلَى مَنْ ظَلَمَكَ؛ لِضُرُوبٍ

كثيرة غابت عنك و أنا أحكم الحاكمين: إما أن
تكون قد ظلمت رجلاً فدعا عليك فتكون هذه بهذه
لا لك و لا عليك، و إما أن تكون لك درجة في
الجنة لا تبلغها عندي إلا بظلمه لك؛ لأني أختبر
عبادي في أموالهم و أنفسهم.

One of the things that the Almighty Allah revealed to Davoud (a.s.) was this: "Whoever relies solely on me, I will suffice him, (and will make him needless of My creatures), and whoever asks me, I will fulfill his wish, and whoever calls upon Me, I will answer him, except that I will delay his supplication and keep My answer postponed until My verdict is issued, and when My verdict is issued, I will fulfill his wish. Say to the oppressed one: I will answer your curse against the one who has oppressed you, but I will delay it until My verdict is actualized for you regarding the one who has oppressed you. And this is so because of various reasons which

you aren't aware of, and I am the best Judge. Or it is because you too have oppressed someone, and he has cursed you. Therefore, that curse is against this curse, that is, I will neither accept your curse nor his curse against you, or it is because I will grant you a level in heaven (in the face of the oppression meted out to you) which you wouldn't have attained it but for this oppression imposed on you, because I test My servants with their lives and wealth."²²

This hadith stipulates that although the prayer has been answered, it is postponed and there are reasons for its postponement.

In a hadith from Imam Sadiq (a.s.), the sixth example has been mentioned for 'answer to prayers', and that is the curse of the despotic infidel. This hadith states that because God has promised to answer

and respond to the supplicant, He answers the idolaters in such a way that He curses them:

كَانَ فِيمَا وَعَظَ اللَّهُ تَبَارَكَ وَ تَعَالَى بِهِ عَيْسَى بْنَ مَرْيَمَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ أَنْ قَالَ لَهُ: يَا عَيْسَى ... قُلْ لِيُظْلَمَةَ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ: لَا تَدْعُونِي وَ السُّحُوتُ تَحْتِ أَحْضَانِكُمْ، وَ الْأَصْنَامُ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ؛ فَإِنِّي وَأَيْتُ أَنْ اجِيبَ مَنْ دَعَانِي، وَ أَنْ أُجْعَلَ إِجَابَتِي إِيَاهُمْ لَعْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ حَتَّى يَنْفَرُوا.

“It was in what Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, exhorted Jesus, son of Mary, (a.s.), that: O Jesus... say to the unjust among the Children of Israel: Do not call upon Me while the lawlessness is under your arms and idols are in your houses; I have made a firm covenant with Myself to answer those who call upon Me, and My answer unto them shall be curse upon them until they disperse.”²³

The outline of the discussion in the first place is that answering and fulfillment are used in both the

general and specific senses. Answering in the general sense is the absolute answer, which includes a variety of answers, six of which we have found in hadiths, which are: cursing the despotic infidel, rejecting a request and postponing it until the unjust repents, forgiving the sins, reward and benefit for the Hereafter, expelling an evil other than the evil being prayed for, and fulfilling the supplication. The specific meaning of answering and fulfillment is the actualization of the sixth case.

However, in the second discussion, i.e. the conditions and obstacles of prayer, it should be said that in verses of the Qur'an and hadiths, several conditions have been mentioned for answering one's prayer. The list of these conditions comprises of: Knowing God, sincerity, righteous deeds, purity and legitimacy of income, praying heart

and soul, hope in none but God, uprightness in prayer. Similarly, there are several obstacles to fulfillment of prayers, the most important of which are sin, injustice and helping the unjust, disobeying parents, severing relationship, adultery, drinking intoxicants, abandoning enjoining the good and forbidding the evil, not giving significance to salat, slandering, music, non-fulfillment of Divine covenant, relying on others and Divine wisdom.

The question that arises about these conditions and obstacles is whether these are related to the general meaning of acceptance (of prayer) or its specific meaning?

It appears that these conditions and obstacles are about the specific meaning of acceptance. For example, when it is said that injustice is an obstacle to fulfillment

of one's prayers, it does not mean that God does not answer the prayer of the unjust, because as we saw in the above hadiths, God responds to the prayer of even a despotic infidel, but His answer to him is either curse or postponement of request until the time he repents.

In many hadiths, instead of making acceptance conditional, other interpretations such as 'judgement of one's request' are made conditional. Imam Baqir (a.s.) say:

الإمام الباقر عليه السلام : إِنَّ الْعَبْدَ يَسْأَلُ اللَّهَ الْحَاجَةَ فَيَكُونُ مِنْ شَأْنِهِ قَضَاؤُهَا إِلَى أَجَلٍ قَرِيبٍ أَوْ إِلَى وَقْتٍ بَطِيءٍ ، فَيُذْنِبُ الْعَبْدُ ذَنْبًا فَيَقُولُ اللَّهُ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى لِلْمَلَكِ : لَا تَقْضِ حَاجَتَهُ وَاحْرَمُهُ إِيَّاهَا ، فَإِنَّهُ تَعَرَّضَ لِسَخَطِي وَاسْتَوْجَبَ الْجِرْمَانَ مِنِّي .

"[Sometimes] one asks something from God and it is His Honor to fulfill it in the near or later date. But later, he commits a sin. Thus, God,

*the Blessed and Exalted, says to the angel: "Do not fulfill his wish and deprive him of it, because he has invited My anger and deserves deprivation."*²⁴

When people ask why our prayers weren't answered and accepted, it is in reference to the specific meaning of acceptance, and therefore, in reply, there are two ways to express: either it is said that the specific acceptance is subject to such issues like wisdom, and in the case of a specific prayer, this prayer is not compatible with Divine wisdom. Or it is said that the acceptance (of prayer) has taken place in the general sense, and for example, as an acceptance, God has considered a reward for the person praying, and has not fulfilled his prayer because it is against wisdom and so the specific meaning of

acceptance has not been accomplished.

Evil and the Knowledge and Power of the Infallibles:

One of the questions upraised after the outbreak of Coronavirus is whether the infallibles can destroy this evil or whether they know the cure for this disease? Besides this question, other questions have been raised such as whether the Imam of the Age (a.t.f.s.) or other Imams fall ill or not? And if so, what do they do to combat their illness? If the infallibles have knowledge of the unseen, why don't they always use it?

Such questions are related to the unseen knowledge of the infallibles and their creative *Wilayah* (mastership), and here, there exists a wide range of discussions. From the viewpoint of hadith, the best sources

in this regard are the book of *Kafiy* Al-Kulayni and the book, *Basa'ir al-Darajat* by SaffarQummi, which contains hundreds of hadiths proving the extensive sciences and the creative and legislative *Wilayah* of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and his Ahl al-Bayt (a.s.). Here, we briefly present reports from some chapters of the book, *Al-Hujjah* (Book of Divine Proofs) of Kafi.

One of the chapters of Kafi's book is that the Imams possess the **knowledge of what was and what will be and nothing is hidden from them**. In a part of the first hadith of this chapter, which is authentic and narrated by Imam Sadiq (a.s.), it is mentioned as follows:

وَكُنْتُ بَيْنَ مُوسَى وَالْحَضِرِ لَأُخْبِرُكُمَا أَيُّيَا عَلَمٍ مِنْهُمَا وَ لَأُنْبَأُكُمَا بِمَا لَيْسَ فِي أَيْدِيهِمَا لِأَنَّ مُوسَى وَ الْحَضِرَ عَ أُعْطِيَا عِلْمَ مَا كَانَ وَ لَمْ يُعْطِيَا عِلْمَ مَا يَكُونُ وَ مَا هُوَ كَائِنٌ حَتَّى تَقُومَ السَّاعَةُ وَ قَدْ وَرَّثْنَاهُ مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ص وَرَائَهُ.

“If I had been with Musa and Khizr, I would have informed them that I am more knowledgeable than themselves and would have informed them of things they did not know, for Musa and Khizr, upon whom be God’s Blessings, had the knowledge of the past but did not possess the knowledge of the present and future till the Day of Judgment, while we have inherited this knowledge from the Messenger of God.”²⁵

Another chapter concerns: **Whenever the Imams want to know something, they will know it immediately.** Imam Sadiq (a.s.) says:

إِذَا أَرَادَ أَنْ يَعْلَمَ الشَّيْءَ أَعْلَمَهُ اللَّهُ ذَلِكَ

“If the Imam wishes to know something, God will give(teach) him the knowledge of that thing.”²⁶

The knowledge referred to in these hadiths is other than the extensive knowledge that the infallibles possess and they are related to instances where its knowledge is not present with them and whenever they wish, God gives them the knowledge of it. These hadiths seem to be general and includes every instances except some special case like the time of coming of Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.) or the time of resurrection which are exceptional.

Another chapter is the chapter concerning the **Exalted Name of God** (*Ism A'zam*). According to the hadiths of this chapter, each prophet has been given a few letters from the Exalted Name by virtue of which, they performed miracles. Asif bin Barkhiya, the minister of Hazrat Sulaiman, was given one letter with the help of which he brought the throne of Bilqis from

Yemen to Palestine in the blink of an eye, while 72 of the 73 letters of the Exalted Name has been given to our Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and his Ahl'ul-Bayt (a.s.).²⁷

كفى بالله شهيداً بيني وبينكم ومن عنده علم الكتاب

“Allah is sufficient as a witness between me and you and he who possesses the knowledge of the Book.”²⁸

In the hadiths belonging to both sects, the person *who possesses the knowledge of the Book* is considered to be Amir al-Mu'minin (a.s.). Among them, twenty-one hadiths has been narrated about this matter in the book, *Basa'ir al-Darajat*.²⁹ On the other hand, according to verse 40 of Sura al-Naml, the person *who had knowledge of the book* (علم من الكتاب), who according to the hadiths was Asif bin Barkhiya, the minister of

Sulaiman, was able to bring the throne of Bilqis from Yemen to Palestine in the blink of an eye.

By comparing someone *who possesses all the knowledge of the book* and knows 72 letters of the Exalted Name with someone *who has a knowledge of the book* and knows one letter of the Exalted Name, one can perceive the knowledge, power and the creative *Wilayah* of the Ahl'ul-Bayt (a.s.).

The above matter is a gist of the vast knowledge and power of the infallibles.

Now going back to our discussion, can the Infallibles, including the Imam of the Age (a.t.f.s.), cure themselves and others or destroy a virus? The answer is that this task is very small and insignificant in the face of their vast knowledge and power, and certainly

the Infallibles know the way to cure the Coronavirus and the way to destroy it. And what has been said recently about the Imam's need for a physician are unfounded.

If we take a look at the hadiths related to health and treatment, which 2055 hadiths on this subject have been collected in the book Encyclopedia of Medical Hadiths, written by AyatullahReyshari, we will see that the Prophets and Imams have been introduced as those well versed in medical science and to what extent the infallibles have expressed the importance of medicine and the necessity of learning it.³⁰

In the debate between Imam Sadiq (a.s.) and the Indian physician in the congregation of Mansur Abbasi, the Indian physician first introduced himself as more knowledgeable than the Imam and

others, but after Imam expressed a few medical points, at the end, while proclaiming the *Shahadatain* (testifying the Islamic faith), he said to the Imam, "أنتك اعلم اهل زمانك".³¹

In this book, 78 hadiths have been narrated about general health recommendations.³² Also, there are 831 hadiths about the manner of keeping healthy each and every organ of the human body and the diverse moods of man. Besides, 571 hadiths have been narrated about the treatment of various diseases with whatever is offered by nature.

Such volume of hadiths, many of which are narrated in authentic books like Kafi and possess reliable chain of transmission, highlights the knowledge of the Infallibles about medical sciences and health issues and treatment of diseases.

Nevertheless, it is not certain to us whether the Infallibles will or will not use their extensive knowledge, particularly their medical know-how, in destroying the Corona virus in the world, because it may be God's Decree and Will to test the people with this virus.

Basically, God has set up natural and ordinary principles in the world, and the golden rule is that these principles are not broken except in special cases. For this reason, people are asked to refer to a specialist when they need any specialists such as doctors, but based on the doctrine of Divine decree and destiny, where nothing happens without the Will of God, people are directed to pray to God and take recourse to the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and the Ahl'ul-Bayt (a.s.).

Therefore, according to divine principles, the Imams too

suffered from illness, though they possessed the power to cure themselves. Of course, it's possible that they may or may not use this power to cure themselves and others.

Regarding the reasons why the Infallibles refrain from using the unseen knowledge in various cases, the following points can be mentioned:³³

1. In the discussing about the logic behind evils, we divided these logics into three parts: General logic, special logic related to the Infallibles and the special logic connected to sinners. The first two types apply to the Infallibles. General wisdom, which is test, should befall all the people, and it is against divine wisdom that the Infallibles, by using their extensive knowledge and power, exempt themselves from this test. In case of special wisdom too, it is for the promotion of degree and

perfection of the Infallibles, and it is not right for the Infallibles to deprive themselves of this perfection. Therefore, in most cases, they choose patience in the face of problems and do not utilize their knowledge of the unseen and their creative power.

2. One of the reasons for employing less the knowledge of the unseen is to prevent people from exaggeration. Amirul-Mu'minin (a.s.) says:

وَاللَّهِ لَوْ شِئْتُ أَنْ أُخْبِرَ كُلَّ رَجُلٍ مِنْكُمْ بِمَخْرَجِهِ وَ
مَوْلَجِهِ وَ جَمِيعِ شَأْنِهِ لَفَعَلْتُ وَ لَكِنْ أَخَافُ أَنْ
تَكْفُرُوا فِيَّ بِرَسُولِ اللَّهِ (ص)

“I swear by God, if I want, I can inform each of you from the beginning till the end of your affairs, and from all aspects of life, but I fear that by disclosing such information, you will turn disbelievers towards the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.).”³⁴

Apparently, Imam (a.s.) means that if he exposes his knowledge of the unseen, people will exaggerate about him and elevate him to the level of God or Prophet, and thus become disbelievers towards the religion of Islam and the holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.).

3. Another reason is that they are ideals and norms for the people, and a person can be a model when he lives like the common people and suffers problems like them, and not live like angels. Therefore, the Infallibles often used their sciences to solve people's religious problems and questions because it was their main duty but in other cases, they used their extraordinary sciences and powers to the extent necessary. In response to Humran who asked why, despite the extensive knowledge and power of the Imams and their status before God, they were subdued by the unjust Caliphs and met with

numerous problems, Imam Baqir (a.s.) replied as follows:

وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ يَا حُمْرَانُ حَيْثُ نَزَلَ بِهِمْ مَا نَزَلَ مِنْ
ذَلِكَ سَأَلُوا اللَّهَ أَنْ يَدْفَعَ عَنْهُمْ وَالْحُوا عَلَيْهِ فِي
إِزَالَةِ مُلْكِ الطَّوَاعِيَةِ وَذَهَابِ مُلْكِهِمْ لَزَالَ أَسْرَعُ
مِنْ سَيْلِكَ مَنْظُومٍ انْقَطَعَ فَتَبَدَّدَ

“O Humran, if any of the Imams in their times of hardships and problems had requested God to repel them and if they insisted Him to destroy the rule of the tyrants, certainly the tyrants would be destroyed in a blink of an eye.”³⁵

¹Tahzhib al-Ahkam, V.3, page 108.

²SuraQamar, verse 49; Also, refer to SuraHijr, verse 21 and SuraShura, verse 27.

³Sura Al-Anam, verse 2.

⁴Kulaini, Al-Kafi, V.2, p.56

⁵Ibn Babawayh, Al-Tawhid, page 371

⁶Kulaini, Al-Kafi, V.1, p.149

⁷SuraNisa, verse 78

⁸SuraNisa, verse 79

⁹Barqi, Al-Mahasin, V.1, page 284.

¹⁰Ibid, page 283

¹¹Kulaini, Al-Kafi, V.1, p.158

¹²Ibid, page 156; Barqi, Al-Mahasin, V.1, p.284

¹³Kulaini, Al-Kafi, V.1, p.310

¹⁴SuraGhafir, verse 40

¹⁵SuraBaqarah, verse 186

¹⁶Johari, Al-Sihah, V.1, page 104. Refer to Al-Manzur, Lisan, V.1, page 283, Zabaidi, Taj al-Arus, V.1, page 388, Askari, Al-Furuq fi al-Lugha, page 217

¹⁷Wasa'il al-Shia, V.7, page 27. Refer to Ibn Fahd, Ada al-Da'i, page 24 and 34; Sho'airi, Jame 'al-Akhbar, page 369; Ibn Shu'ba, Tuhaf al-Uqul, page 280; Sharif Al-Radhi, Tanbih al-Ghafilin, page 401; Zaid ibn Ali, Musnad Zaid, page 420, Ahmad-ibn-Hanbal, Musnad Ibn Hanbal, V.4, p.37

¹⁸Wasa'il al-Shia, V.7, page 27; Dailami, A'lam al-Din, page 278; Refer to Sharif Al-Radi, Tanbih al-Ghafilin, page 401.

¹⁹Zaid-ibn-Ali, Musnad Zaid, page 156

²⁰Muttaqi Hindi, Kanz al-Ummal, V.2, page 71 and page 67.

²¹Tabarsi, Al-Ihtijaj'ala ahl al-lijaj, V.2, page 228

²²Ibn Fahd, Ada al-Da'i, page 31; Dailami, Irshad al-Qulub, page 153; Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 14, p. 42, hadith 34.

²³Ibn Babawiyah, Al-Amali, page 608; Kulaini, Al-Kafi, V.8, page 133; Ibn Shu'ba, Tuhfal al-Uqul, page 497; Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, V. 93, p. 373, hadith 16.

²⁴Kulaini, Al-Kafi, V.2, page 271, hadith 14; Ibn Taoos, Falah al-Masa'il, page 95, hadith 33; Ibn Fahd, Ada al-Da'i, page 198; Mufid, Al-Ikhtisas, page 31; Majlisi, Bihar Al-Anwar, vol. 93, p. 377, hadith 19.

²⁵Kulaini, Al-Kafi, V.1, page 260. It's worth mentioning that out of the six hadiths of this chapter, five hadiths are authentic.

²⁶ Ibid, page 258

²⁷ Ibid, page 230

²⁸SuraRa'd, verse 43

²⁹ Refer to SaffarQummi, Basa'ir al-Darajat, V.1, page 213

³⁰MuhammadiReyshari, Encyclopedia of Medical Hadiths, V.1, page 32-46

³¹ Ibid, page 46

³² Ibid, page 88-120

³³ Refer to Yusufiyan, "Imam's knowledge of the unseen" Encyclopedia of Imam Ali (a.s.), V.3. page 363-365

³⁴ Sharif al-Radhi, Nahjul-Balagha, Sermon 175

³⁵Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, V.26, page 150