

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

ALI 295: The Nature of Knowledge in Shi'i Narrations

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The Human Intellect ['AQL]

- The **عقل** is a tool which allows us to learn, comprehend, understand, reflect...
- It is an intermediary which allows us to be receptive to the commandments of God, and teachings of the prophets and divine sources of knowledge.
- The intellect cannot understand God, the prophets, the books, the Imams on his own...but it has the potential to take us to reach our limits.



Guidance Toward the Light

- Allah (swt) says in the Holy Qur'an (5:15-16):

• يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولُنَا يُبَيِّنُ لَكُمْ كَثِيرًا مِمَّا كُنْتُمْ تُخْفُونَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَيَعْفُو عَنْ كَثِيرٍ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ نُورٌ وَكِتَابٌ مُبِينٌ

- Oh People of the Book! Indeed our Messenger has come to you making clear to you much of what you concealed of the Book and passing over much. Indeed there has come to you light and a clear Book from Allah.

• يَهْدِي بِهِ اللَّهُ مَنِ اتَّبَعَ رِضْوَانَهُ سُبُلَ السَّلَامِ وَيُخْرِجُهُم مِّنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ بِإِذْنِهِ وَيَهْدِيهِمْ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ

- “With it Allah guides him who will follow His pleasure into the ways of safety and brings them out of utter darkness into light by His will and guides them to the right path.”

Imam al-Kadhim's Advice to Hisham bin al-Hakam (V)



- “Oh Hisham! God did not send down the prophets and the messengers except that the people know God...so the best of them is the one who responds to that call, and knows Him.”
- The prophets revive the intellects.
- The intellect follows the path of the prophets innately.

Imam al-Kadhim's Advice to Hisham bin al-Hakam (VI)

- يا هشام! ان الله على الناس حجتين : حجة ظاهرة و حجة باطنة . فاما الظاهرة فالرسل و الانبياء و الائمة، و اما الباطنة فالعقول
- Oh Hisham! Surely God presented over the people two proofs. The apparent proof and the hidden proof. The apparent are the messengers, the prophets and the Imams. And in regards to the hidden, it is the intellects.
- يا هشام! ان الله تبارك و تعالى اكمل للناس الحجج بالعقول
- “Oh Hisham! Surely Allah the Exalted and the High [presented] the evidences over the human being by means of the intellect...”
- The are two types of حجة which are present over us:
 - The Prophet and Messengers
 - The Intellect

Imam al-Kadhim's Advice to Hisham bin al-Hakam (VII)

يا هشام! كيف يزكو عند عملك و انت قد شغلت قلبك عن امر ربك و اطعت هواك غلبة عقلك

- “Oh Hisham! How can you purify your actions when your heart has been overtaken by your own desires as oppose to the command of God?”
 - In Du‘a Sabah, we recite,
 - **إِلَهِي قَلْبِي مَحْجُوبٌ**; My God, my heart is veiled!
 - **وَنَفْسِي مَعْيُوبٌ**; My soul is deficient!
 - **وَعَقْلِي مَغْلُوبٌ**; **My intellect is defeated!**
 - **وَهَوَائِي غَالِبٌ**; **My desires are victorious!**

Imam al-Kadhim's Advice to Hisham bin al-Hakam (VIII)

- يا هشام! نصب الحق لطاعة الله ، و لا نجاة إلا بالطاعة ، و الطاعة بالعلم و العلم بالتعلم ، و التعلم بالعقل يعتقد، و لا علم إلا من عالم رباني ، و معرفة العلم بالعقل
- “Oh Hisham! Truth has been placed in obedience to God. And there is no victory except by obedience. And obedience comes by knowledge. And knowledge is received through learning. And learning comes through the seeking intellect. And there is no knowledge except from a godly scholar. And true understanding of knowledge is through the intellect...”
- يا هشام قليل العمل من العالم مقبول مضاعف، و كثير العمل من أهل الهوى و الجهل مردود
- “Oh Hisham! A little action from the knowledge person is accepted with addition. And a lot of action from the people of desire and ignorance is rejected...”

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